

‘American’ Pie Throwing Contest

By [Jesse Zwick](#) 8/18/10 9:31 AM

If you’re going to make big independent expenditures on behalf of Republicans in this election cycle, it’s pretty much imperative that you place the word “American” in your group’s name somewhere. So far this week, [Americans for Prosperity](#), [American Crossroads](#), and [Americans for Job Security](#) have all taken to the airwaves to support Republicans or attack Democrats.

Less than a day after Denny Heck won the Democratic nomination to run for Congress in Washington’s 3rd district, Americans for Prosperity (AFP) has lined up a new television ad that attacks him for supporting “the liberals’ \$787 billion stimulus that failed to save and create jobs” and for refusing “to oppose new energy taxes that will kill even more jobs.”

It’s a lot like the group’s [previous ad buy](#) that attacked the stimulus as a failed policy in districts with close House races across the country. Only, this one ends by saying, “Tell Denny Heck: We need leadership, not Nancy Pelosi’s failed policies.” Because it ends by urging voters to get in touch with Heck, not to vote against him, the funding behind the \$180,390 ad buy remains a mystery.

What [we do know](#) is that AFP is the third largest recipient of funding from the Koch Family Foundations, a group connected to billionaire libertarian David H. Koch. (The Cato Institute and the [George Mason University Foundation](#) benefit the most from the organization’s largess.) The Koch Family Foundations is funded largely, in turn, by Koch Industries, the second largest privately held company and the largest privately owned energy company in the United States. Koch Industries has also [spent millions of dollars](#) on campaigns denying the reality of global warming, a push that AFP joined.

American Crossroads, for its part, has a new [Ohio ad](#) that cheers Rep. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) as a breath of fresh air in his race against Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher (D): “Portman hears Ohio families, strengthens job creation,” says the ad’s narrator. “Rob Portman...listening, then leading.” The group is spending \$500,000 on the ad and the majority of its funding sources are thus far unknown. American Crossroads did report raising \$3.4 million in June, however, \$1.3 million of which came from from Public Storage Inc. Chairman B. Wayne Hughes.

Finally, Americans for Job Security (AJS) kicked off a two week radio blitz promoting former Rep. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) in his Senate campaign against Rep. Joe Sestak (D-PA). The group is making its first ad buy in Pennsylvania this year, touting Toomey’s plan to create jobs in the media market of Philadelphia and its all-important surrounding suburbs. As a 501(c)(6), we also know very little about AJS’s funding. We do know, however, that [it was launched](#) with a million-dollar contribution from the American Insurance Association, and that the American Forest and Paper Association has also [given more than \\$1 million](#) to the group in past cycles.

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