

Koch Industries Trying to Kill California Climate Legislation



I think that reading the Koch brothers' contributions to political advocacy causes as *solely* motivated by narrow economic self-interest is both hard to fit with the facts and also grounded in a somewhat implausible view of human psychology. People prefer to situate their activities inside a principled worldview that naturally includes some elements that are unmoored from direct self-interest. That doesn't mean, however, that self-interest is irrelevant. And it certainly doesn't mean that people should accept Julian Sanchez' contention that the Koch brothers' backing of a broad libertarian ideology is something they do *to the exclusion of* conventional rent-seeking:

A company owned by oil billionaires Charles and David Koch has contributed \$1 million to Proposition 23, a November ballot initiative to suspend California's groundbreaking 2006 global-warming law.

The **contribution came from Flint Hills Resources LP, based in Wichita, Kan., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Koch Industries**, the nation's second-largest private company, with estimated annual revenue of \$100 billion. It was posted online Thursday by the California secretary of state.

At any rate, everyone I know who's ever received Koch money is aghast at the suggestion that their integrity might in any way be compromised by said funding. But that's just not how the world works. The point is that thanks in part funding dynamics, you couldn't very well be working at the Cato Institute and start doing a lot of writing about how one reason libertarians ought to ally themselves with the progressive coalition in the United States is that unregulated carbon dioxide emissions constitute a massive violation of the property rights of the adversely effected politicians. Indeed, people get sacked for lesser offenses.

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