

Fracking Interests Provide Flood of Funding to Florida Politicians

Don't Let Dirty Energy Cash Block the Fracking Ban

Dirty energy money has flooded the Florida legislature. Over the past five years, oil and gas, utility and other affiliated energy industry political action committees (PACs) and employees gave \$12.0 million to Florida state legislators and major political parties (see Table 1). The donations were heavily weighted to Republicans, with five times the campaign contributions going to the Republican Party and Republican legislators than to Democratic ones (\$10.0 to \$2.0 million, respectively).

One of the biggest political battles in Florida is over fracking, the controversial technique to extract oil and natural gas in the state's delicate ecosystem and including limestone formations in places like the Big Cypress and the Everglades. In 2012, oil and gas companies first submitted applications to use new, unconventional fracking in Florida. The next year the state cancelled the drilling permits of a company doing unapproved fracking-like drilling.

If fracking were approved in Florida, oil, natural gas and electric utility companies would be poised to reap substantial financial benefits, but communities and the environment would bear the brunt of the risky, polluting drilling technique.

In 2015 and 2016, the Florida legislature failed to pass bills that would have paved the way for the approval of fracking. The legislature is now considering banning it. Last month, the Senate committee that had long blocked the legislation held the first ever fracking ban hearing and then unanimously passed Sen. Dana Young's (R- Tampa) fracking ban bill. The legislation has wide support in the Senate but a companion bill has not been taken up in the House.

Special interest money can have a corrosive impact on the democratic process. More than 90 communities representing over 75 percent of Florida's residents have passed resolutions and ordinances opposed to fracking. The Florida legislature should stand with the people of Florida and not with the dirty energy industry by passing the Florida fracking ban.

Food & Water Watch examined the campaign contributions from the oil, natural gas, pipeline, electric utilities

and other vested energy interests between 2012 and 2016. Key findings include:

- **The Florida Republican and Democratic parties received \$9.99 million from oil, gas and utility interests:** The state parties received the vast bulk of the energy interests campaign contributions — four out of five dollars (82.8 percent) went to the parties, not legislators. The parties and leadership determine the legislative agenda. The disproportionate donations to the political parties suggests that the oil, gas and electric utilities have more influence over the parties, leadership and party apparatus. (See Table 1.)
- **The Florida Republican Party received more than four times more funding than the Democratic Party:** The oil, gas and electric utility industries gave \$8.28 million to Florida Republican Party, compared to \$1.71 million to the Democratic Party. (See Table 1.)
- **The oil, gas and electric utilities gave nearly six times more to Florida Republican legislators than Democratic lawmakers:** Republicans received \$1.77 million compared to \$308,000 going to Democrats. (See Table 1.)
- **The top energy PACs gave generously — but much more generously to the GOP:** The PACs of three top oil, gas and electricity companies (and their subsidiaries) each gave more than \$2 million to Florida lawmakers and parties between 2012 and 2016. Nextera Energy (and subsidiaries Florida Power & Light and Gexa Energy) gave \$3.5 million (three times more to GOP than Democrats), Teco Energy (including Tampa Electric Co.) gave \$3.4 million (nearly four times more to GOP), and Duke Energy (including Progress Energy, Progress Energy Service Co. and Panenergy) gave \$2.3 million (nearly nine times more to GOP). The top 10 PACs all gave more than \$75,000 and the top 20 gave at least \$20,000. (See Table 2.)
- **The PACs for corporate partners in the Sabal Trail pipeline (Nextera Energy, Duke Energy and Spectra Energy, and their subsidiaries) gave \$5.9 million — half the total oil, gas and utility PAC donations from 2012 to 2016.**

- **More than 200 current and former Florida lawmakers received \$2.0 million from the oil, gas and electric utility industries — averaging about \$10,250 between 2012 and 2016:** Most of the campaign contributions came from the PACs (\$2.0 million, or 97 percent). (See Table 2 and 3).
- **The Top 50 current lawmaker recipients received half (\$1.1 million) of the oil, gas and electric utility donations to lawmakers between 2012 and 2012 — averaging \$22,450:** Almost all the top fifty lawmakers receiving oil, gas and utility contributions were Republican — there was only one Democrat in the top 50 (Sen. Bill Montford).
- **Legislative leaders are heavily represented in Top 50 oil, gas and electric utility recipients:** The Top 50 list included Florida Senate President Joe Negron (ranked number 1 with \$38,750 in donations), House Majority Leader Ray Rodrigues (ranked 22nd with \$21,500), Senate Majority Leader Wilton Simpson (ranked 33rd with \$19,750) and Speaker of the House Richard Corcoran (ranked 43rd with \$17,000). The Top 50 list also included 19 committee chairs.

Methodology

Food & Water Watch examined all campaign contributions to Florida legislators and the Democratic and Republican parties from industry PACs (both companies and trade associations) and individuals and employees associated with the oil and gas, utility and other energy interests with a vested stake in natural gas for the five years between 2012 and 2016. The analysis included 88 PACs and over 100 individuals. The data was accessed from the National Institute on Money in State Politics (www.followthemoney.org).

The analysis included all donations to legislators and parties from the “Oil & Gas” and “Electric Utilities” sectors and their employees. The analysis does not include Oil & Gas business PACs and individuals that identified as service stations or fuel oil dealers, largely screening out stand-alone gas stations, but many firms are both retailers (gas stations) and wholesalers (marketers and oil transportation jobbers) that are tightly aligned with the petroleum refining industry and are included (this category includes the Florida Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association). It also included selected companies from the “Miscellaneous Energy” sector category with natural gas business interests including Clean Energy Fuel Corp., Duke Energy, Nextera Energy, Panenergy Corp. and Teco Energy. Miscellaneous Energy employee donations were only included if they were affiliated with one of these selected firms. The analysis excludes donations from waste-to-energy, biomass, wind and solar firms and trade associations without natural gas interests.

TABLE 1. Campaign Contributions from Oil, Gas and Electric Utility Industry PACs and Employees

Recipients	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Democratic Lawmakers	\$78,470	\$2,000	\$76,500	\$3,500	\$147,475	\$307,945
Florida Democratic Party	\$734,139	\$355,730	\$218,211	\$215,167	\$190,000	\$1,713,247
Democratic Total	\$812,609	\$357,730	\$294,711	\$218,667	\$337,475	\$2,021,192
Republican Lawmakers	\$398,725	\$9,100	\$546,500	\$20,500	\$799,846	\$1,774,671
Florida Republican Party	\$1,935,707	\$1,806,347	\$3,000,186	\$800,400	\$741,342	\$8,283,983
Republican Total	\$2,334,432	\$1,815,447	\$3,546,686	\$820,900	\$1,541,188	\$10,058,653
Totals	\$3,147,041	\$2,173,177	\$3,841,398	\$1,039,567	\$1,878,663	\$12,079,845

TABLE 2. Top 20 Oil, Gas, Electric Utility PAC Donations to Florida Lawmakers and Major Parties 2012-2016

Political Action Committees	Rank	Florida Democratic Party	Democratic Lawmakers	Democratic Total	Florida Republican Party	Republican Lawmakers	Republican Total	Grand Total
Total PAC Contributions		\$1,713,222	\$300,975	\$2,014,197	\$7,994,813	\$1,722,280	\$9,717,093	\$11,731,290
Nextera Total	1	\$778,842	\$62,000	\$840,842	\$2,491,488	\$169,770	\$2,661,258	\$3,502,100
Florida Power & Light		\$778,842	\$1,175	\$780,017	\$2,245,123	\$635	\$2,245,758	\$3,025,775
Nextera Energy			\$60,825	\$60,825	\$196,365	\$169,135	\$365,500	\$426,325
Gexa Energy					\$50,000		\$50,000	\$50,000
Teco Energy Total	2	\$611,500	\$85,000	\$696,500	\$2,434,771	\$280,317	\$2,715,088	\$3,411,588
Teco Energy		\$611,500	\$85,000	\$696,500	\$2,434,771	\$278,817	\$2,713,588	\$3,410,088
Tampa Electric Co						\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Duke Energy Total	3	\$197,830	\$42,000	\$239,830	\$1,854,553	\$247,635	\$2,102,188	\$2,342,018
Progress Energy Service Co		\$97,500		\$97,500	\$1,250,000		\$1,250,000	\$1,347,500
Duke Energy		\$12,100	\$37,000	\$49,100	\$569,050	\$214,635	\$783,685	\$832,785
Progress Energy		\$83,230	\$5,000	\$88,230	\$25,504	\$33,000	\$58,504	\$146,734
Panenergy Corp		\$5,000		\$5,000	\$10,000		\$10,000	\$15,000
Southern Company Total	4	\$65,250	\$20,000	\$85,250	\$468,500	\$170,317	\$638,817	\$724,067
Gulf Power		\$65,250	\$9,500	\$74,750	\$468,500	\$125,317	\$593,817	\$668,567
AGL Resources			\$10,500	\$10,500		\$42,500	\$42,500	\$53,000
Southern Company						\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Oxbow Carbon & Minerals	5				\$252,500		\$252,500	\$252,500
Sunshine Gasoline Distributors	6	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$7,000	\$149,500	\$71,784	\$221,284	\$228,284
Florida Action Cmte For Rural Electrification	7	\$5,000	\$14,500	\$19,500	\$40,000	\$156,167	\$196,167	\$215,667
Suncoast Pac	8	\$21,800	\$23,175	\$44,975	\$35,000	\$81,135	\$116,135	\$161,110
Municipal Electric	9	\$5,000	\$14,000	\$19,000	\$30,000	\$90,000	\$120,000	\$139,000
Ring Power Corp	10				\$110,000	\$4,500	\$114,500	\$114,500
Chevron Corp	11		\$5,500	\$5,500		\$101,500	\$101,500	\$107,000
Florida Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association	12		\$6,250	\$6,250	\$12,500	\$68,985	\$81,485	\$87,735
Marathon Oil	13		\$5,000	\$5,000		\$73,817	\$73,817	\$78,817
Spectra Energy	14		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$50,000	\$24,000	\$74,000	\$75,000
Florida Natural Gas Association	15		\$6,500	\$6,500		\$51,000	\$51,000	\$57,500
Florida Electric Coop. Assoc.	16	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$22,500	\$42,500	\$47,500
Nat. Rural Elec. Coop. Assoc.	17	\$20,000	\$2,500	\$22,500	\$15,000	\$1,000	\$16,000	\$38,500
Exxon Mobil	18		\$2,000	\$2,000		\$32,300	\$32,300	\$34,300
Gate Petroleum Co	19		\$500	\$500	\$18,000	\$5,500	\$23,500	\$27,000
Florida Propane Gas Assoc.	20		\$1,500	\$1,500		\$21,500	\$21,500	\$23,000

Food & Water Watch analysis of National Institute on Money in State Politics; Total PAC contributions includes donations from all oil, natural gas, electric utilities and other vested energy interests.

TABLE 3. Top 50 Florida Lawmaker Campaign Recipients from Oil, Gas, Electric Utility Industry 2012-2016

Lawmakers	Rank	Party	Senate/House/District	2012	2014	2015	2016	Grand Total
Top 50 Lawmakers				\$237,575	\$378,600	\$3,000	\$503,550	\$1,122,725
Negron, Joe	1	R	Sen-25 (Senate President)	\$7,250	\$14,000		\$17,500	\$38,750
Diaz, Jose F	2	R	Rep-116 (House Commerce Chair)	\$5,150	\$16,500		\$15,000	\$36,650
Benacquisto, Lizbeth	3	R	Sen-27 (Senate Rules Chair)	\$7,850	\$9,500		\$19,100	\$36,450
Young, Dana	4	R	Sen-18 (Senate Health Policy Chair)	\$5,150	\$5,650		\$25,500	\$36,300
Grimsley, Denise	5	R	Sen-26	\$19,150			\$10,800	\$29,950
Latvala, Jack	6	R	Sen-16 (Senate Appropriations Chair)	\$9,650	\$10,750		\$9,000	\$29,400
Artiles, Frank	7	R	Rep-118 (2010 - 2016); Sen-40 (since 2016) (Senate Communications, Energy and Public Utilities Chair)	\$3,500	\$7,000	\$3,000	\$14,200	\$27,700
La Rosa, Mike	8	R	Rep-42	\$1,500	\$13,500		\$12,500	\$27,500
Caldwell, Matt	9	R	Rep-79 (House Govt. Accountability Chair)	\$1,250	\$9,750		\$15,500	\$26,500
Oliva, Jose	10	R	Rep-110 (House Rules & Policy Chair)	\$6,500	\$8,100		\$11,000	\$25,600
Goodson, Tom	11	R	Rep-51	\$6,000	\$8,000		\$11,500	\$25,500
Hutson, Travis	12	R	Rep-24 (Senate Regulated Industries Chair)	\$8,500	\$7,000		\$10,000	\$25,500
Brodeur, Jason T	13	R	Rep-28	\$5,650	\$10,000		\$9,500	\$25,150
Perry, Keith	14	R	Rep-21 (Senate Agriculture Chair)	\$5,950	\$6,350		\$12,500	\$24,800
Nuñez, Jeanette	15	R	Rep-119 (House Speaker <i>pro tempore</i>)	\$5,000	\$7,250		\$12,500	\$24,750
Spano, Ross	16	R	Rep-59	\$5,500	\$8,000		\$11,000	\$24,500
Ingram, Clay	17	R	Rep-1	\$4,750	\$10,750		\$8,500	\$24,000
Peters, Kathleen	18	R	Rep-69	\$3,250	\$9,250		\$10,500	\$23,000
Trujillo, Carlos	19	R	Rep-105 (House Appropriations Chair)	\$3,750	\$7,750		\$11,500	\$23,000
Diaz Jr, Manny	20	R	Rep-103	\$3,250	\$7,750		\$11,000	\$22,000
Hukill, Dorothy L	21	R	Sen-14 (Senate Education Chair)	\$6,750	\$4,000		\$11,000	\$21,750
Mayfield, Deborah J (Debbie)	22	R	Rep-54; Sen-17 (since 2016)	\$3,900	\$7,200		\$10,500	\$21,600
Rodrigues, Ray	23	R	Rep-76 (House Majority Leader)	\$500	\$8,000		\$13,000	\$21,500
Drake, Brad	24	R	Rep-5		\$9,250		\$12,000	\$21,250
Brandes, Jeffrey R	25	R	Sen-24	\$3,500	\$13,500		\$4,000	\$21,000
Harrison, Shawn	26	R	Rep-63	\$5,500	\$6,500		\$9,000	\$21,000
Latvala, Chris	27	R	Rep-67		\$10,500		\$10,500	\$21,000
Santiago, David	28	R	Rep-27	\$5,000	\$10,000		\$6,000	\$21,000
Crisafulli, Steve	29	R	Rep-51	\$5,650	\$15,100			\$20,750
Broxson, Douglas	30	R	Sen-1	\$3,550	\$6,700		\$10,300	\$20,550
Eagle, Dane	31	R	Rep-77	\$6,250	\$7,000		\$7,000	\$20,250
Ingoglia, Blaise	32	R	Rep-35		\$6,500		\$13,500	\$20,000
Simpson, Wilton	33	R	Sen-10 (Senate Majority Leader)	\$5,450	\$10,800		\$3,500	\$19,750
Flores, Anitere	34	R	Sen-39 (Senate President <i>pro tempore</i> , Senate Banking & Insurance Chair)	\$3,100			\$16,500	\$19,600
Lee, Thomas A (Tom)	35	R	Sen-20 (Senate Community Affairs Chair)	\$8,500	\$8,000		\$3,000	\$19,500
Plakon, D Scott	36	R	Rep-29	\$7,900	\$7,000		\$4,000	\$18,900
Beshears, Halsey W	37	R	Rep-7	\$4,575	\$5,500		\$8,500	\$18,575
Raschein, Holly Merrill	38	R	Rep-120	\$3,750	\$4,500		\$10,000	\$18,250
Combee, Neil	39	R	Rep-39	\$3,750	\$7,500		\$6,500	\$17,750
Montford, Bill	40	D	Sen-3 (Senate Commerce & Tourism Chair)	\$7,750			\$10,000	\$17,750
Bileca, Michael	41	R	Rep-115 (House Education Chair)	\$4,750	\$7,250		\$5,500	\$17,500
Baxley, Dennis K	42	R	Rep-23 (2010-2016); Sen-12 (since 2016) (Senate Oversight & Accountability Chair)	\$3,150	\$3,200		\$11,000	\$17,350
Corcoran, Richard M	43	R	Rep-37 (Speaker of the House)	\$7,250	\$4,750		\$5,000	\$17,000
Stargel, Kelli	44	R	Sen-22	\$4,900			\$12,000	\$16,900
Cummings, William Travis	45	R	Rep-18 (House Health & Human Svc. Chair)	\$1,500	\$6,500		\$8,500	\$16,500
Magar, Marylynn	46	R	Rep-82	\$3,250	\$5,750		\$7,500	\$16,500
Passidomo, Kathleen C	47	R	Rep-16 (currently Sen-28) (Senate Ethics & Elections Chair)	\$4,750	\$3,000		\$8,150	\$15,900
Trumbull, Jay	48	R	Rep-6 (House Triumph Gulf Coast Chair)		\$8,250		\$7,500	\$15,750
Renner, Paul	49	R	Rep-24		\$5,500		\$10,000	\$15,500
Ray, Lake	50	R	Rep-12	\$4,100	\$10,000		\$1,000	\$15,100

Food & Water Watch analysis of National Institute on Money in State Politics; Includes PAC and individual contributions from all oil, natural gas, electric utilities and other vested energy interests; there were no contributions to these lawmakers in 2013.