

Friday, January 13, 2012

## **THE INFLUENCE OF PACS and SUPERPACS ON ELECTION**

"Super PACs are a new kind of political action committee created in July 2010 following the outcome of a federal court case known as *SpeechNow.org v. Federal Election Commission*. Technically known as independent expenditure-only committees, Super PACs may raise unlimited sums of money from corporations, unions, associations and individuals, then spend unlimited sums to overtly advocate for or against political candidates. Super PACs must, however, report their donors to the Federal Election Commission on a monthly or quarterly basis -- the Super PAC's choice -- as a traditional PAC would. Unlike traditional PACs, Super PACs are prohibited from donating money directly to political candidates. As of January 13, 2012, 278 groups organized as Super PACs have reported total receipts of \$32,008,813 and total expenditures of \$25,605,258 in the 2012 cycle." "Campaign contributions and lobbying expenditures are not the only ways that money is used influence public policy decisions. Outside groups spent \$33,978,419 during the 2010 election cycle to run ads, make phone calls, distribute literature and engage in other activities to sway the electorate about candidates and issues. Organizations not directly affiliated with political parties accounted for \$30,642,895 of that amount. A January 2010 Supreme Court decision (*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*) now permits corporations and unions to make such expenditures from their treasuries directly and through other organizations. The decision allows such activity to take place without complete or immediate disclosure of who funds such communications, preventing voters from understanding who is truly behind many political messages"

<http://maplight.org/us-congress/guide>

<http://www.opensecrets.org/>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 11:09