

Sharing the Value of Your PAC

Talking points and key messages

What are employee-funded PACs?

Since corporations cannot contribute directly to candidates, corporate PACs are voluntary associations of persons who pool their resources in small-dollar donations to increase the impact of their contributions to candidates.

Key Messages

1

Corporate and association PACs play a vital role in the political process.

- PACs educate voters by explaining important issues and candidates' positions on them
- PACs draw millions of people into the political arena, many of whom are first-time donors
- The courts consider contributions freedom of political speech. PACs are a basic extension of the right of individuals to participate in the political process and support candidates who share similar objectives
- PACs offer a chance to broaden the base of political giving in this country, as more people are giving small amounts to candidates than ever before

2

Corporate and association PACs do not consist of corporate funds. They are funded by employees and provide an avenue for employees' voices to be heard.

- Funding is comprised of voluntary, individual contributions from employees separate from a corporation's general treasury
- Corporate and association PAC money make up a modest percent of overall campaign funds as connected PACs are subject to contribution limits of just \$5,000 per election
- While the individual voter is seldom powerful enough to present a particular viewpoint before the government and the public, an association or employee-funded PAC comprised of many individual voters has a better chance of being heard and respected

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Corporate and association PACs work to remain bipartisan and have a voice on both sides of the aisle.

- Many PACs have bylaws that require balanced giving ratios
- PACs represent many different and often competing interests. The nearly 5,000 PACs in the business community do not act as one
- Association and corporate PACs largely support more moderate viewpoints and contribute on a more bipartisan basis than super PACs. Similarly, individual “super” donors and even small-dollar donors are typically drawn to more extreme candidates or positions

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Corporate and association PACs grew out of the original campaign finance reform passed in the 1970s to provide greater oversight and transparency to political contributions.

- Contributions are made public through extensive, detailed reports that are filed with the FEC and available to anyone
- All federal PACs operate under strict limits on what they can give; most do not come close to the maximum allowable contribution of \$5,000 per candidate per election
- Traditional PAC giving has been largely unchanged by the Supreme Court’s *Citizen’s United* decision and has grown modestly compared to super PAC and individual spending

Benefits of PACs

PACs offer **individuals** more ways to participate in the political process and allow members a chance to be involved in decision making.

- Members can serve on the PAC board, recommend candidates, assist in fundraising and attend political events in their local communities
- PACs are also a source of political information through GOTV efforts, special events and opportunities for members to meet elected officials

Having an employee-funded PAC makes **companies and associations** more proactive in the political process.

- PACs allow organizations to support elected officials who believe in their issues
- The PAC is just one tool to advance legislative priorities and supplement other government relations efforts