



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 27, 2015

Koch Brothers' Network to Spend \$900 Million on 2016 Elections

Spokesmen for Freedom Partners, the Koch Brothers-funded "chamber of commerce" and sponsor of their annual winter meeting in Palm Springs, [announced last weekend](#) that its network of over 200 wealthy conservatives is planning on raising nearly \$900 million to invest in the 2016 elections. This is more than double what the network raised and spent during the 2012 presidential campaign, and exceeds what both political parties spent that year put together.



Freedom Partners is building on the momentum from the November elections that gave Republicans control of the Senate and expanded their majority in the House of Representatives. As Freedom Partners President Marc Short remarked, "2014 was nice but there's a long way to go." He noted that his group's ultimate goal is to make the ideals of a free market "central" in American society, adding, "Politics is a necessary means to that end." Freedom Partners invested more than \$400 million in those midterm elections.

The Palm Springs event was the largest ever, drawing more than 450 attendees including, according to Matea Gold, who attended the meeting for the *Washington Post*, "the largest number of first-time contributors to the network."

Freedom Partners is a chamber of commerce tax-exempt group with over 200 members, each paying a minimum of \$100,000 in annual dues. In 2012 the group raised \$256 million, most of which it redirected as grants to various conservative groups such as the Tea Party Patriots. Much of the new money to be raised this year and next will be directed to expanding its field support staff through Heritage Action and Americans for Prosperity along with new highly sophisticated voter targeting programs.

These represent just the tip of the iceberg for Charles (shown) and David Koch, owners of Koch Industries, the second-largest privately held company in the country. In 2008, for example, the three primary Koch foundations contributed to 34 separate political and policy organizations, including:

The Cato Institute

The Mercatus Center at George Mason University

The Institute for Humane Studies

Citizens for a Sound Economy

The Heritage Foundation

The Competitive Enterprise Institute

Generation Opportunity

The Federalist Society



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The Institute for Justice

The Manhattan Institute

The American Enterprise Institute

The American Legislative Exchange Council

The news from Palm Springs was not welcomed by mouthpieces of the Left. The *New York Times* said that the plans to spend nearly a billion dollars influencing the 2016 presidential election “effectively transforms the Koch organization into a third major political party” which will “put enormous fund-raising pressure on Democrats and liberal outside groups.”

Ben Ray, a spokesman for American Bridge, a Democratic-aligned super PAC, scoffed: “What an obscene amount of money! It just goes to show the kind of cold calculation that the Kochs will apply to protect their bottom line.”

In July, 2012, when David Koch hosted a fundraiser for 2012 Republican Party presidential candidate Mitt Romney, it was subjected to massive protests by liberal and progressive groups. At the time Koch called those protests hypocritical and self-serving:

It is ironic that the pretext for the protest is supposed “outrage” at the role of money in politics. Considering the record-setting fundraising by President Obama ... the hypocrisy of the Left and their attempts to mislead the public are obvious. There is a double-standard at work and the message from the Left is that fundraising for their preferred candidates is fine, but donations to those with differing points of view are somehow immoral. The Left’s outrage is selective and hollow.

Nothing was mentioned about the support all manner of leftist groups and individuals have been getting from the notorious George Soros. Soros bragged, “My spending rose from \$3 million in 1987 to more than \$300 million a year by 1992.” In the last 30 years, Soros has pumped into his Open Society Foundations more than \$11 billion. Where was all the outrage while that was going on?

In its analysis of the Soros empire, DiscovertheNetworks.org has barely been able to keep up with it as it has expanded exponentially over the decades. In its alphabetical listing of groups enjoying the billionaire’s largess are just these few from the “A”s:

The Alliance for Justice, best known for its support of the appointment of far-left federal judges;

Americans Coming Together, which organizes pro-Democrat voter-mobilization efforts;

America Votes, another Democrat-voter targeting group;

America’s Voice, a pro-“open borders” group favoring amnesty for illegal aliens;

American Bar Association’s Commission on Immigration Policy, which “opposes laws that require employers ... to verify citizenship or immigration status”;

American Federation of Teachers; and

American Friends Service Committee.

And so on, through 18 more pages.

Well-meaning though the efforts of the brothers Koch appear to be, it’s going to take more than political action to save the American Republic. As John Adams explained: “Our Constitution was made only for a



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moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Political action, while welcome on the side of freedom, must first be informed by an electorate which understands the principles of freedom. It’s a bottom-up effort that starts with education, rather than a top-down movement funded by wealthy conservative donors. That’s why the educational programs of groups such as The John Birch Society and its Freedom Project Education take on such an important role in that fight. Otherwise, as Israel’s King David wrote in Psalm 11:3: “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

Photo of Charles Koch: AP Images

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics.



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