



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on March 20, 2012

Obama Campaign Raises \$45 Million in February

While reporting its fundraising activity to the Federal Election Commission, the campaign [tweeted](#) about its purported success in attracting small-dollar contributions:



- Since April 2011, a total of 1.64 million people have pitched in to own a piece of this campaign.
- Every buck helped. 97.7% of February's contributions were \$250 or less, for an average donation of \$59.04.
- 105,000 of the people who donated in February were giving to support this organization for the first time.

February's \$45-million haul was raised jointly by Obama for America, the Democratic National Committee, and two joint fundraising committees — the Obama Victory Fund and the Swing State Victory Fund. Republican Party members indicated that the President's fundraising numbers pale in comparison to his 2008 donations, despite an increase in Democratic Party organizations and the fact that Obama held "more fundraisers in the month of February than any month since announcing for re-election."

"After three years of policies that have left our country with record debt, high unemployment, and soaring gas prices and health care costs, it's clear President Obama is having a hard time convincing voters he deserves another term," asserted Republican Party spokeswoman Kirsten Kukowski.

All in all, Obama's 2012 donations are lagging far behind what they were in 2008, despite more stringent campaign restrictions during the primary process. In February 2008, he raked in \$56.78 million, without the benefit of joint fundraising with the DNC.

The [bulk of the President's donations](#) is streaming from big donors offering the maximum \$35,800 contribution. And while the success of the "Dinner with Barack" contest — which gives donors a chance to win a dinner with Obama — has boosted small donations, *Politico's* Ken Vogel and Robin Bravender reported that the campaign is dropping up to a [third of its budget](#) just to keep small donors contributing:

President Barack Obama ramped up his campaign cash-gathering operation last month, spending roughly \$10 million on fundraising activities between his reelection campaign and a connected Democratic Party committee, according to a POLITICO analysis of reports filed Friday with the Federal Election Commission.

Those costs — more than one-third of the \$30 million the committees spent — reflect efforts to court small and medium donors that are a hallmark of Obama fundraising.

In a plea for financial support, campaign officials are underscoring the impact of Republican super PACs, warning supporters that these committees are raising hundreds of millions of dollars to defeat



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Obama in the 2012 election. In an e-mail to donors, Obama's campaign chief Jim Messina even cited a recent poll showing Republican candidate Mitt Romney leading Obama in a hypothetical general election matchup. "We're looking at a race that will be tighter than you think. And the other side has groups ready to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to tear down President Obama," Messina [wrote](#).

The *Washington Post* [reports](#) that Obama has struggled to attract large donations, bringing in half as many big-time donors as he did at this point four years ago. Overall, the President is surpassing his Republican counterparts in fundraising, and campaign staffers have focused on luring small-dollar donors to stimulate more enthusiasm among voters. The *Post* added:

But Obama lags behind Republican front-runner Mitt Romney in finding donors willing to give \$2,000 or more — a surprising development for a sitting president, and one that could signal more worrisome financial problems heading into the general election. At this point in the last election cycle, Obama had received such large donations from more than 23,000 supporters, more than double the 11,000 who have given him that much this time. President George W. Bush had more than four times that number of big donations at this point in his reelection.

Democrats and political analysts have offered a range of theories as to why Obama's big-dollar contributions have plummeted. The persistently stale economy has placed a damper on fundraising activity. Others see the GOP presidential race as disorganized, consisting of candidates that Obama will easily defeat. "Some people think these Republicans are easy marks, and they aren't taking it as seriously as they need to yet," suggested Judy Wise, one of the Obama campaign's "bundlers."

Of course, while many Democrats and liberal supporters offer their defense, Obama critics [claim](#) that the President's failure to generate productive economic growth has spurred resentment among his former supporters. In other words, the "hope" and "change" slogans that defined Obama's 2008 campaign have failed to deliver, and his 2012 fundraising efforts are consequently inheriting the brunt of the punishment.



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