

# THE DIRTY ENERGY MONEY CYCLE: FIGHTING THE INFLUENCE OF THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY

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## POLLUTERS OUT, PEOPLE IN

Over the past decade, the fossil fuel industry has become increasingly entrenched in our democracy. This trend needs to be reversed if we're going to address the climate crisis and hasten the transition to a clean energy economy.

In the 113th Congress alone, oil, gas, and coal interests gave over \$42 million in dirty energy money to our Senators and Representatives and spent \$308 million on lobbying efforts.

Since 2005, the fossil fuel industry's combined lobbying and campaign contribution total comes to a staggering \$1.7 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Make no mistake, these campaign contributions and lobbying dollars are strategic investments meant to curry favor with decision makers.

The fossil fuel industry gets a huge return on the money it pumps into politics in the form of fossil fuel subsidies and friendly policies allowing the continuation of business as usual, despite the need for massive changes to our energy system.

We must stop the dirty energy money cycle. Our decision makers at every level must be accountable to the interests of their constituents, not those lining their campaign coffers.

People all over the U.S. are joining together to demand a new type of politics, one that protects our climate and doesn't bow to the interests of industry.

It's time to separate oil and state and reclaim our democracy.

## DIRTY ENERGY MONEY: THE PAST DECADE

Since 2005, the following companies have given millions to members of Congress:<sup>2</sup>

<b>KOCH INDUSTRIES:</b> \$5.9 MILLION	<b>DUKE ENERGY:</b> \$4.1 MILLION	<b>CONOCOPHILLIPS:</b> \$2 MILLION	<b>BP:</b> \$1.4 MILLION
<b>EXXONMOBIL:</b> \$5.4 MILLION	<b>CHEVRON:</b> \$3.5 MILLION	<b>MARATHON:</b> \$1.5 MILLION	<b>ROYAL DUTCH SHELL:</b> \$0.5 MILLION

Congress is awash in dirty energy money, with leaders of both parties taking huge sums from the fossil fuel industry since 2005:<sup>3</sup>

<b>CONGRESS TOTAL:</b> \$173 MILLION	<b>SENATE TOTAL:</b> \$58 MILLION	<b>HOUSE TOTAL:</b> \$115 MILLION	
<b>MITCH MCCONNELL:</b> Senate Majority Leader \$2.7 MILLION	<b>PAUL RYAN:</b> Speaker of the House \$715 THOUSAND	<b>HARRY REID:</b> Senate Minority Leader \$294 THOUSAND	<b>NANCY PELOSI:</b> House Minority Leader \$142 THOUSAND

**SINCE 2005, PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS HAVE TAKEN:<sup>4</sup>  
\$31.8 MILLION FROM THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY**

<sup>1</sup> Fossil fuel industry lobbying and campaign contribution totals from [dirtyenergymoney.com](http://dirtyenergymoney.com) and [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org)

<sup>2 & 3</sup> Data sourced from [dirtyenergymoney.com](http://dirtyenergymoney.com)

<sup>4</sup> Data sourced from [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org)

## FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES: AN OIL-DRENCHED CYCLE OF GREED

The fossil fuel industry doesn't invest in politicians just for fun. It does it because it buys loyalty and votes that result in massive giveaways of taxpayer money that our leaders hand out to the industry every year.

Fossil fuel subsidies are government actions that rig the game in favor of fossil fuels compared to other energy sources. They include tax breaks, direct giveaways, cheap loans, exemption from regulation, and much more. Subsidies have existed for centuries, and they are a major reason the industry is still afloat even as renewables take off.

More than 3/4 of known fossil fuels must be kept in the ground for a reasonable chance at staying below 2°C, yet the U.S. funds exploration for new fossil fuels with billions of dollars each year. This is squarely at odds with the Paris Climate Agreement, and with the U.S.'s stated commitment to combat climate change.

Subsidies for U.S. fossil fuel production have grown more than 35% since President Obama took office, despite a 2009 pledge to eliminate them. It's time to quit bailing out the richest industry in history, and invest in a clean energy future.

## FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES: BY THE NUMBERS<sup>5</sup>

### U.S. FOSSIL FUEL PRODUCTION SUBSIDIES

Figures are annual averages based on numbers from 2013 and 2014. In cases where a subsidy benefited both oil and gas production, the amount has been split equally between oil and gas, for illustrative purposes only.

Oil: \$9.6 BILLION per year  
Gas: \$8.3 BILLION per year  
Coal: \$3.0 BILLION per year  
**TOTAL: \$20.9 BILLION per year**

### U.S. FOSSIL FUEL EXPLORATION SUBSIDIES

Figures are based on numbers from 2013. In cases where a subsidy benefited both oil and gas production, the amount has been split equally between oil and gas, for illustrative purposes only.

Oil: \$3.1 BILLION per year  
Gas: \$3.1 BILLION per year  
Coal: \$522 MILLION per year  
**TOTAL: \$6.7 BILLION per year**

## SOLUTIONS

To get POLLUTERS OUT of our politics and PEOPLE IN, we have to address both campaign finance and fossil fuel subsidies.

We need corporations to stop buying our politicians, but that's hard to do when these rich donors are getting an 11,900% return on investment due to subsidies.<sup>6</sup>

Changing this rigged system is going to take sustained pressure from the public and determined action from politicians. Until that happens, our democracy will continue to be bought by the highest bidder.

**Here's how we break the Dirty Energy Money Cycle and reclaim our democracy:**

- Phase out all subsidies for U.S. fossil fuel production by 2020 at the latest;
- Require yearly, transparent reporting of fossil fuel subsidies;
- Refuse all campaign donations from the fossil fuel industry;
- Mandate strict disclosure of all campaign donations and bring an end to "dark money";
- Reform our broken campaign finance system to ensure that all voters can have a say.

<sup>5</sup> All fossil fuel subsidies data sourced from Empty Promises and Fossil Fuel Bailout reports, available at [priceofoil.org/reports](http://priceofoil.org/reports)

<sup>6</sup> Return on investment calculation: [priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-industry-influence-in-the-u-s](http://priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-industry-influence-in-the-u-s)

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