



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Chevron's Lobbyist's Contributions to New Mexico Politicians Dwarfs All Others**

While New Mexicans continue to struggle economically due to the COVID-19 pandemic, lobbyists in the past five months have contributed about \$2 million to politicians in the state. And more than 40 percent of that came from a single lobbyist for the California-based Chevron corporation.

This is according to a recent analysis by New Mexico Ethics Watch of available lobbyist reports filed with the Office of the Secretary of State. The reporting period runs from May 5 through October 5, 2020.

The latest batch of reports shows that Chevron, through its New Mexico lobbyist Patrick Killen, contributed \$772,500 to politicians and political action committees in this state. That's more than 80 percent of the total contributions made by all oil and gas lobbyists in the state in the last five months.

Chevron long has been a major player in New Mexico politics. According to a report by New Mexico Ethics Watch and Common Cause New Mexico in March 2020, Chevron was the major oil and gas contributor from 2017 through 2019. During that period, the company, its lobbyists and its PACs made more than \$2.5 million in political contributions. (That report can be found at [http://nmethicswatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Oil-and-Gas-Report\\_05012020.pdf](http://nmethicswatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Oil-and-Gas-Report_05012020.pdf))

"It's concerning but not surprising that one out-of-state corporation could become such a dominant force in financing the campaigns of many New Mexico candidates," said Kathleen Sabo, executive director of New Mexico Ethics Watch.

Among New Mexico Ethics Watch's findings are the following data points:

- \* Lobbyists for oil and gas related companies spent more than \$950,000 on contributions and expenditures during the past five months. That's around half of all lobbyist spending listed in the recent reports.
- \* More than 94 percent of contributions from oil and gas lobbyists come from out of state
- \* Republicans received about 60 percent of the money contributed by oil and gas lobbyists.
- \* The top candidate recipients of oil and gas lobbyist money in the recent reporting period were: House Speaker Brian Egolf, D-Santa Fe (\$38,000); House Republican Leader James Townsend, R-Artesia (\$13,250); Senate Republican Leader Stuart Ingle, R-Portales (\$12,750); Senate Republican Whip Craig Brandt, R-Rio Rancho (\$11,750); Candace Gould, R-Albuquerque (\$11,250); Rep. Patricia Lundstrom, D-Gallup (\$11,250); Sen. Daniel Ivey Soto, D-Albuquerque (\$11,000) and House Republican Whip Rod Montoya, R-Farmington (\$10,000).

\* Besides Chevron, the largest oil and gas related lobbyist contributions came from Occidental Petroleum (\$80,000); ConocoPhillips (\$49,000); New Mexico Gas Company (\$17,000) and the Marathon Petroleum Corporation Employee PAC (\$14,500).

\* Chevron lobbyist Killen's report includes \$350,000 made in May to a PAC called New Mexico Strong, much of which was spent for mailers and digital ads for five incumbent conservative Democratic state senators seeking re-election. Four of those five were defeated by challengers in June's Democratic primary. Chevron provided the lion's share of the PAC's money. In the 2018 general election, Chevron gave New Mexico Strong \$2.35 million. Despite its name, New Mexico Strong is headquartered in Texas.

\* Besides New Mexico Strong, Chevron's lobbyist also contributed \$25,000 each to all four legislative leadership committees (The Brian Egolf Speaker Fund, which helps House Democrats; House Republicans; Senate Democrats; and PAC 22, the Senate Republican PAC.) Killen also gave \$5,000 to the Senate Majority Leader PAC, which is run by Majority Leader Peter Wirth, D-Santa Fe.

\* Chevron's lobbyist gave Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's campaign \$10,000 as well as \$5,000 to the governor's MLG PAC.

\* Other PACs receiving Chevron lobbying money were the New Mexico Oil & Gas Association PAC and the New Mexico Association of Commerce & Industry's JOBS PAC. Each organization received \$5,000, according to Killen's report.

As with last month's campaign finance reports, New Mexico Ethics Watch faced challenges compiling numbers from a website of the Office of the Secretary of State. The initial database downloaded the day after the reports were due was missing about half of all lobbyist transactions. Most, but not all of these were added to the database by the weekend, although even as late as Monday, October 12, several reports from lobbyists were still being added.

New Mexico Ethics Watch will continue to analyze general election campaign finance reports as they become available, crunching the numbers on oil and gas and other industry contributions.--

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**New Mexico Ethics Watch is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization and a principal leader in ethics reform in New Mexico. Our values are that ethics is for everyone; that good government leads to improved schools, healthier communities, and better business, and attention to ethics in public life leads to more equitable opportunities for all.**

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