

Rex Sinquefeld:

Power of the Purse



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Missouri Citizen Education Fund

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Purpose:

This report examines the political contributions of millionaire Rex Sinquefield to members of the Missouri House of Representatives. As of March 31, 2008, Sinquefield has contributed \$1,246,600 for the 2008 election cycle to candidates and special interest groups¹. The report will examine the relationship between Sinquefield's contributions and how legislators voted on two pieces of critical public policy: private school vouchers and campaign contribution limits.

Rex Sinquefield:

Rex Sinquefield is a millionaire resident of St. Louis and a retired investment banker². He is an outspoken supporter of private school vouchers and currently serves as the President of the Board of Directors of the Show-Me Institute, a conservative free market think tank based in St. Louis, Missouri³.

Rex Sinquefield created 100 new political action committees (PACs) in September 2007⁴. The formation of these PACs allows him to legally contribute 100 times the legal limit to the candidates or officials of his choice. "Sinquefield, who opposes income taxes and favors changes in the public schools, acknowledges that he is skirting Missouri's campaign donation limits by setting up 100 political action committees so each can donate the maximum to favored candidates⁵."

Test: To measure Rex Sinquefield's influence, we will measure his contributions against two of his legislative priorities, repealing limits and private school vouchers.

a. Campaign Contribution Limits

The most recent contribution legislation in Jefferson City was Senate Bill 1038 (SB 1038), sponsored by Senator Charlie Shields (R), which ended limitations on financial contributions made to state electoral candidates⁶.

In 1994, the constituents of Missouri voted to impose limits on campaign finance by a 3-1 margin⁷. Contribution limits were most recently repealed in January of 2006, but the Supreme Court reinstated the limits in July of the same year⁸. Contributions made over the limit while the caps were lifted were required to be returned. Sinquefield filed a legal argument with the Supreme Court to allow candidates to keep contributions that exceeded the limits⁹.

b. Private School Vouchers

Attempts to pass legislation to institute private school vouchers in Missouri have failed multiple times in the past. Multiple bills related to private school vouchers were filed this year in Jefferson City. The House Committee Substitute for House Bill 2040 and 2430 included provisions to implement private

¹ Missouri Ethics Commission- <http://www.mec.mo.gov/>

² Show Me Institute- "Board of Directors"-http://showmeintitute.org/scholar/board_of_directors.asp

³ Show Me Institute- "Board of Directors"-http://showmeintitute.org/scholar/board_of_directors.asp

⁴ Missouri Ethics Commission- <http://www.mec.mo.gov/>

⁵ "Democrats in vicious battle for attorney general," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 18, 2007.

⁶ Missouri State Senate- <http://www.senate.mo.gov/>

⁷ Missouri Secretary of State – <http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/>

⁸ "Mo. Senate votes to repeal contribution limits." <http://www.examiner.com>, February 20, 2008

⁹ "Rex Sinquefield: Putting a Price on Politics"- Missouri Citizen Education Fund

<http://www.missouriprovote.org/MCEF.asp>

school vouchers. House Amendment 12 would have removed the voucher provisions from the larger education bill.

Results:

a. Campaign Contribution Limits

On the last day of Missouri’s 2008 legislative session, SB 1038 was passed by the Missouri’s House of Representatives by an 83 to 72 vote¹⁰. There are 43 Representatives who have received money directly or indirectly from Sinquefield this cycle. Thirty-six out of 42 members (1 voted present) voted to repeal contribution limits (85.7%). On August 28, 2008 the new law will become effective, allowing unlimited amounts of money to be contributed to state candidates in Missouri¹¹.

b. Private School Vouchers

House Amendment 12 passed the Missouri House of Representatives on April 9, 2008 by a vote of 83-56¹². Votes in favor of this amendment removed language to implement private school vouchers, and effectively ending any voucher legislation in the House¹³. Thirty out of 38 (5 were absent) voted against removing vouchers (78.9%).

**Voucher Votes of “Yes” removes private school vouchers from legislation.

**Contribution Limit Votes of “Yes” removes caps on donation amounts.

Representatives	Rex \$ (2007 -present)	Contribution Limit Vote	Voucher Vote
Rep. Walt Bivens (R)	\$1,250	Y	A
Rep. Ellen Brandom (R)	\$5,200	Y	N
Rep. Jason Brown (R)	\$325	N	Y
Rep. Stanley Cox (R)	\$325	Y	N
Rep. Jane Cunningham (R)	\$14,100	Y	N
Rep. Cynthia Davis (R)	\$325	Y	N
Rep. Bob Dixon (R)	\$1,300	Y	N
Rep. Talibdin El-Amin (D)	\$40,000	Y	N
Rep. Edgar Emery (R)	\$2,175	Y	N
Rep. Doug Ervin (R)	\$650	N	N
Rep. Sally Faith (R)	\$1,250	Y	N
Rep. Ward Franz (R)	\$325	Y	N
Rep. Doug Funderburk (R)	\$325	Y	N
Rep. Jason Grill (D)	\$675	N	Y
Rep. Steve Hobbs (R)	\$650	Y	Y
Rep. Theodore Hoskins (D)	\$20,150	Y	N
Rep. Rodney Hubbard (D)	\$38,025	Y	N
Rep. Leonard Hughes (D)	\$20,000	N	N
Rep. Allen Icet (R)	\$350	Present	N
Rep. Rod Jetton (R)	\$25,500	Y	N

¹⁰ Missouri House of Representatives- <http://www.house.mo.gov/>

¹¹ Missouri House of Representatives-<http://www.house.mo.gov/>

¹² Missouri House of Representatives- <http://www.house.mo.gov/>

¹³ Missouri House of Representatives- <http://www.house.mo.gov/>

Rep. Kenneth Jones (R)	\$4,875	Y	N
Rep. Timothy Jones (R)	\$5,700	Y	N
Rep. Gayle Kingery (R)	\$325	Y	Y
Rep. Jim Lembke (R)	\$9,750	Y	A
Rep. Michael McGhee (R)	\$4,125	Y	N
Rep. Bob Nance (R)	\$325	Y	A
Rep. Brian Nieves (R)	\$1,250	Y	N
Rep. Jerry Nolte (R)	\$25,025	N	N
Rep. Mark Parkinson (R)	\$7,475	Y	N
Rep. David Pearce (R)	\$500	Y	Y
Rep. Bryan Pratt (R)	\$25,025	Y	N
Rep. Edward Robb (R)	\$2,500	Y	N
Rep. Marilyn Ruestman (R)	\$1,000	Y	N
Rep. Dwight Scharnhorst (R)	\$7,150	Y	N
Rep. Charles Schlottach (R)	\$325	Y	A
Rep. Shane Schoeller (R)	\$6,000	Y	N
Rep. Ryan Silvey (R)	\$26,025	Y	N
Rep. Jason Smith (R)	\$975	Y	Y
Rep. Bryan Stevenson (R)	\$7,500	Y	N
Rep. Rick Stream (R)	\$325	Y	N
Rep. Mike Talboy (D)	\$500	N	Y
Rep. Larry Wilson (R)	\$325	Y	Y
Rep. Billy Wright (R)	\$325	Y	A
TOTAL	\$296,725	85.7% To Repeal Limits	78.9% For Vouchers

Conclusion:

This report examines the political contributions of Rex Sinquefield and is a guide for Missourians who care about public education and clean elections. Sinquefield has already spent \$1,246,600 to influence the 2008 elections and legislation. Missourians deserve to know whom their legislators are representing: the voters or the private interests of Rex Sinquefield.

All of the information in this report is publicly available, but complex to assemble and interpret. This report is necessary because the public has a right to understand the financial dynamics of Missouri state government in relation to candidates, private school vouchers and unlimited campaign contributions.