

# Larry Craig

## Idaho Rests On His Shoulders

PS - 3330R50  
Brian L. Hansen

Larry Craig was born July 20, 1945, in Midvale, Idaho. The son of Elvin and Dorothy Craig, Larry worked on the family ranch until he went to the University of Idaho where he became student body president. This was his introduction into politics. He pursued graduate studies before returning to the family ranching business in 1971. Just a short three years later he was elected to the Idaho State Senate in 1974 where he served three terms. Then in 1980 he was voted to the U.S. House for the first of five terms. Representing the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District. In 1990 Larry ran for the U.S. Senate seat. He won and has been there ever since. Today he serves in the leadership of the United States Senate as the Republican Policy Chairman.

This is chart describing the committees upon which he sits.

### **Republican Policy Committee, *Chairman***

#### **Committee on Appropriations**

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education

Subcommittee on Military Construction

Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies

#### **Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**

Subcommittee on Energy

Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, *Ranking Member*

Subcommittee on Water and Power

#### **Committee on Veterans' Affairs**

#### **Special Committee on Aging, *Ranking Member***

Next, I would like to discuss Senator Larry Craig's financial records and examine in more detail some of the specific ways his money was raised as well as from whom. Craig's concerns have been domestic except where foreign policy becomes a direct Idaho concern, mainly on economic fronts. The following graph describes the overall picture of his last two campaign bids.

1997-2002 Total Receipts: \$3,316,649

1997-2002 Total Spent: \$3,075,059

Cash on Hand: \$247,016

Date of last report: October 16, 2002

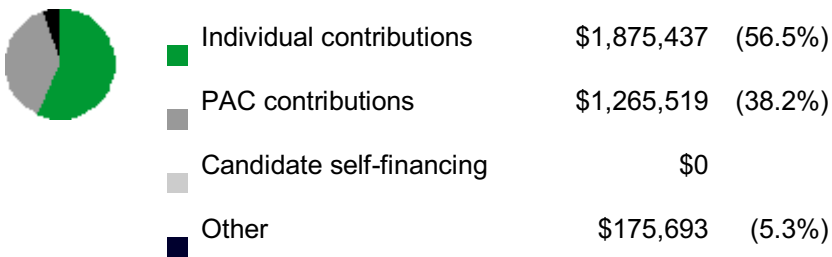
**Fundraising by Cycle:**

2002:  \$2,859,881

2000:  \$103,072

1998:  \$353,696

**Source of Funds:**



2

As you can see from the above graph, 94.7% of his funding came from either Political Action Committees (PACs) or individual contributions. This becomes very interesting when we study more in depth who these organizations are and who they represent and how Senator Craig has been voting and running his committees.

First, there are too many PACs and individual contributors for me to mention everyone. What I will do is highlight the ones that interested me the most. For example, Senator Craig sits on the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education as well as the Special Committee on Aging. Senator Craig received \$10,000 from AFLAC, which is a leading provider of insurance sold in the United States. The grand total he received during his last reelection bid from insurance companies was \$50,250.<sup>3</sup> As a member of this committee he devotes time to health, education, and workplace issues. This committee generates proposals to change the health care system, the minimum wage, working conditions and compensation, and welfare and labor laws. The committee is also responsible for how the Food and Drug Administration operates, including the process for approving drugs and medical devices. So, I was not surprised to see he received contributions from insurance companies as well as other health sector entities. Part of his past voting record on health related issues is as follows:

- Voted NO on allowing patients to sue HMOs and collect punitive damages. (Jun 2001)
- Voted YES on funding GOP version of Medicare prescription drug benefit. (Apr 2001)
- Voted NO on including prescription drugs under Medicare. (Jun 2000)
- Voted YES on limiting self-employment health deduction. (Jul 1999)
- Voted NO on increasing funds for Medicare prescriptions. (Mar 1999)
- Voted NO on increasing tobacco restrictions. (Jun 1998)
- Voted YES on banning human cloning. (Feb 1998)<sup>4</sup>
- Voted YES on Medicare means testing. (Jun 1997)
- Voted NO on medical savings accounts. (Apr 1996)

Another bill he is currently sponsoring is S.RES.269. This bill expresses the sense of the Senate that legislation should be passed to improve the Medicare system for users by ensuring comprehensive benefits for current and future retirees. This will also include access to a Medicare prescription drug benefit. There is also S.2199, which will amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to permit additional States to enter into long-term care partnerships under the Medicaid Program in order to promote the use of long-term care insurance.

He also is a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee (SAC). This committee is one of the most prestigious as well as powerful committees because every government agency depends on the SAC for annual funding. This means that all industries regulated by these agencies care about committee members' actions. A broad range of special interests ranging from defense contractors to bankers to oil and gas companies lobby the committee for government contracts and federally supported programs. They often also use appropriations bills as vehicles to block an agency from carrying out rules they oppose.

Senator Craig is a member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, where he is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management. During the 2002 run for reelection he received nearly \$50,000 from different PACs representing the forest and timber companies. Senator Craig has become a vocal spokesman for the Northwest timber industry in its frequent quarrels with Canada over timber imports and exports. Especially since March 2001, when the Canadian Softwood Lumber Agreement expired. Once that agreement ran out, Canada dumped lumber relentlessly into the American market, even though the value was already low, thus

further depressing U.S. timber prices. Senator Craig along with Sen. Mark Dayton (D - MN) proposed an amendment that was passed by a majority of votes. Their amendment addressed this problem by allowing, but not requiring Congress to debate parts of trade agreements that threaten the ability of U.S. industries and workers to seek remedy for unfair trade. The rest of the trade agreement would remain intact as negotiated by the president. This is found in H.R.3005<sup>5</sup>, which became Public Law 107-210 on August 6, 2002.

During the research for this paper I found a lot of PACs representing Contractors and other Construction oriented business also donated money to Senator Craig's campaign. Not all of these PACs had anything really to do with Idaho. Construction PACs accounted for another \$40,000 into his coffers. The Associated General Contractors (AGC) is the nation's largest and oldest construction trade association. They donated \$11,000 specifically to his last campaign. Some of the AGCs primary concerns are more money for infrastructure, less regulation and lower taxes so their members can preserve capital to grow their business. One big reason they want Senator Craig behind them is their stand on restoring highway funding. This years current allocation is 27% less than before and they are drastically looking for cosponsors and advocates to restore this lost money. They will continue to pressure Congress, including Senator Craig, to appropriate the highest level of funding possible.<sup>6</sup>

But one thing I found out perplexes me. He also received numerous donations from other congressional candidates, out of state committees, and even international groups. Senator Craig, for example, received \$6,000 from the Florida Power and Light Company. He received \$1,000 from the Senator Mack Mattingly for Senate Committee. I still can't

understand that one. He even was given \$8,00 from the Free Cuba PAC Inc. This group is the political arm of the Cuban American National Foundation, which was the major institution to pressure for legislation to be passed to make young Elian Gonzalez a U.S. citizen back in 2000.

Remarkably though, not everyone supported Larry Craig with his last reelection. Mirant Corporation, which is an energy company, based out of Atlanta, Georgia, posted \$2,000 against his campaign. Planned Parenthood Action Fund Inc. even got involved in going against him by donating a massive \$2.00. Despite this opposition, he was still able to receive 65.2% of the vote.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee since 1997, he has retained, first and foremost, his commitment to fiscal responsibility, balanced budgets, and limited government. Within those limitations, and working with the whole Idaho Congressional Delegation, he has fought within the Appropriations Committee for Idaho priorities. With all these PACs supporting him and his position on the Appropriation Committee he will most likely be around for a while.



- 
- <sup>1</sup> [http://craig.senate.gov/fp\\_cuts4.htm](http://craig.senate.gov/fp_cuts4.htm)
  - <sup>2</sup> <http://www.opensecrets.org/politicians/summary.asp?CID=N00002091&Cycle=2002>
  - <sup>3</sup> <http://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/memberprofile.asp?cid=N00002091&cycle=2002&remove=E08>
  - <sup>4</sup> [http://www.issues2000.org/Senate/Larry\\_Craig.htm](http://www.issues2000.org/Senate/Larry_Craig.htm)
  - <sup>5</sup> <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?c107:4:./temp/~c107f8vNrd:e945:>
  - <sup>6</sup> [http://www.agc.org/content/public/PDF/Legislative/Legislative\\_Bulletin/04-12-02f.pdf](http://www.agc.org/content/public/PDF/Legislative/Legislative_Bulletin/04-12-02f.pdf)

### **Links:**

<http://www.opensecrets.org>

<http://www.larrycraig.com>

<http://www.senate.gov/>

<http://www.senate.gov/~rpc/>

<http://www.fec.gov/>

<http://www.vote-smart.org>

<http://www.commoncause.org/>

<http://www.cq.com/home/home.jsp>

<http://www.issues2000.org/>

<http://scorecard.aclu.org>