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# Donors behind anti-Caldwell PAC revealed

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By Rick Daysog, Reporter

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Until now, the money and the people behind an anti-Kirk Caldwell political action committee has been kept secret.

But a filing on Monday with the state Campaign Spending Commission shows that engineering firm Mitsunaga & Associates' officers, employees and their friends contributed \$230,000 to a PAC called Safe Our City LLC.

Company head Dennis Mitsunaga, a longtime friend of former Gov. Ben Cayetano, personally contributed \$170,000.

Caldwell said it's unfair that the PAC doesn't have to disclose its donors until a week before the election.

"It's pretty shadowy. Now, I don't like that at all. I think that it's inappropriate and we need to get more disclosure, more transparency," said Caldwell.

Caldwell campaign chair Lex Smith believes that the state should look at tightening campaign reporting laws.

"I think the disclosure deadline should be looked at so that somebody can't come in the month before the campaign and do this kind of blitzkrieg where nobody knows where the money is coming from," Smith said.

In a statement, Mitsunaga said he advised a friend to set up the PAC so it could match the spending power of Caldwell and his labor supporters.

"I told her that unions supporting Caldwell would pump in large amounts of money to flood the airways with Caldwell propoganda, like how they smeared Ben Cayetano in 2012," said Mitsunaga.

"I convinced her to file the PAC ... so I could be contributing whatever I could without worrying about the \$4,000 per person restriction."

Djou -- who also got thousands from Mitsunaga directly -- denounced the PAC's ads.

"I denounce all of these third-party ads. They are a distraction from all of the underlying issues here in this mayor's campaign," he said.

Filings with the Campaign Spending Commission show Djou trailing Caldwell in the money race.

Djou raised \$263,000 but spent \$339,000 since the August primary. Caldwell, meanwhile, raised \$565,000 and spent nearly \$1 million.

"This is a David versus Goliath fight ... I'm confident we're going to prevail here. While I don't have the rich and powerful, I do have the people," Djou said.

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