

Fracking-Related Campaign Contributions in Southern Tier Elections

Analysis finds pro-fracking interests donated nearly \$400,000 in 10 races

NEW YORK -- In the 2012 election cycle, pro-fracking interests contributed a combined total of nearly **\$400,000** to candidates for state legislature and county executive in New York's Southern Tier.

Although incumbents uniformly prevailed, the natural gas industry and its boosters have attempted to frame these results as a "mandate" in support of fracking.¹ The more likely analysis is that the trappings of entrenched incumbency, such as name recognition and an established fundraising apparatus, determined the outcome.² However, in some cases pro-fracking contributions made up over 20% of the candidate's total fundraising.

It's unclear exactly what role fracking played in the minds of Southern Tier voters. But, by examining campaign finance records, this analysis reveals the role of the fracking industry and its boosters in relation to their preferred candidates.

Common Cause/NY's analysis uses a broad definition of "fracking money" which includes the entire spectrum of industry interests and boosters rather than only the natural gas production sector, such as: engineering firms, construction industry organizations, unions, law firms with oil and gas practices, freight rail and trucking interests, and other member companies and entities of pro-fracking organizations like Clean Growth Now or Unshackle Upstate. All of the interests included in this dataset are either directly involved in the business of fracking and gas field development, or on the record in support of expanding natural gas production.

¹ Mary Esch. "New York Anti-Fracking Candidates Fared Poorly at Polls." The Associated Press. November 8, 2012.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/08/new-york-anti-fracking-candidates_n_2091302.html

² Catherine Wagner and Peter Kahn. "Guest Viewpoint: Incumbents won big in election, not fracking." The Ithaca Journal. December 13, 2012.
<http://www.theithacajournal.com/article/20121213/VIEWPOINTS02/312130107/Guest-Viewpoint-Incumbents-won-big-election-not-fracking>

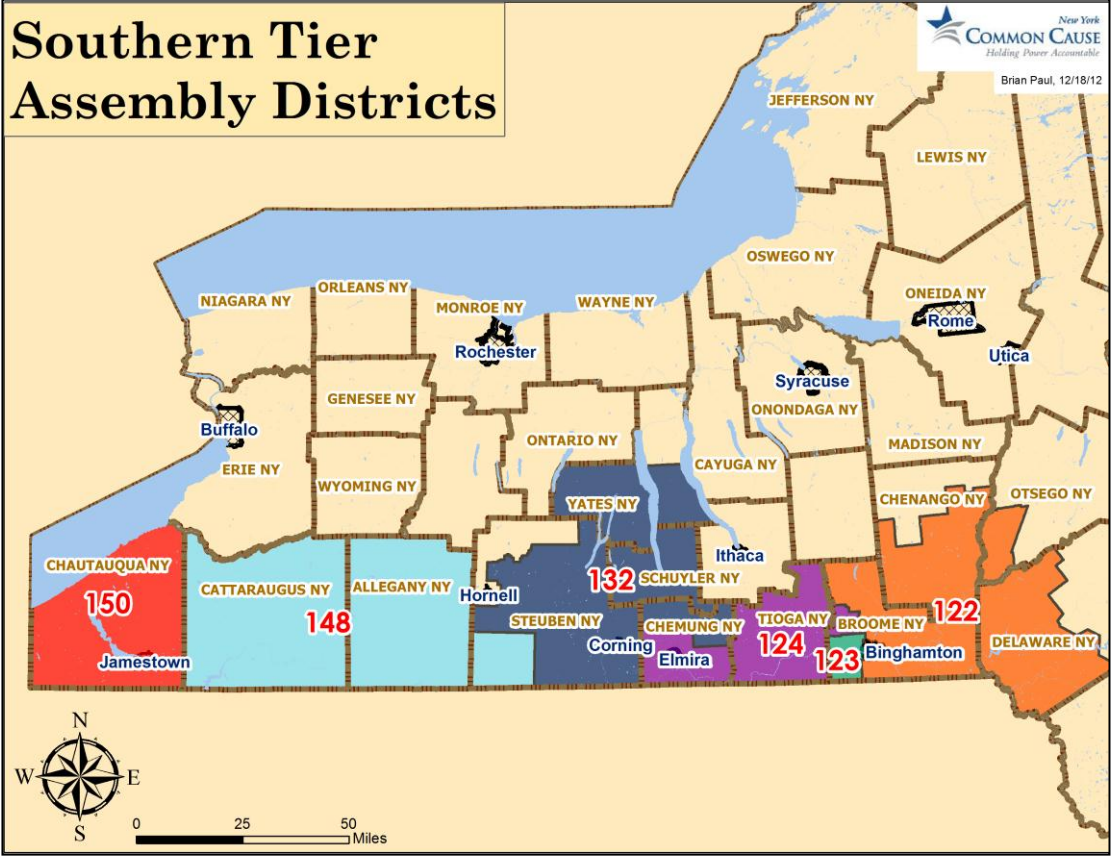
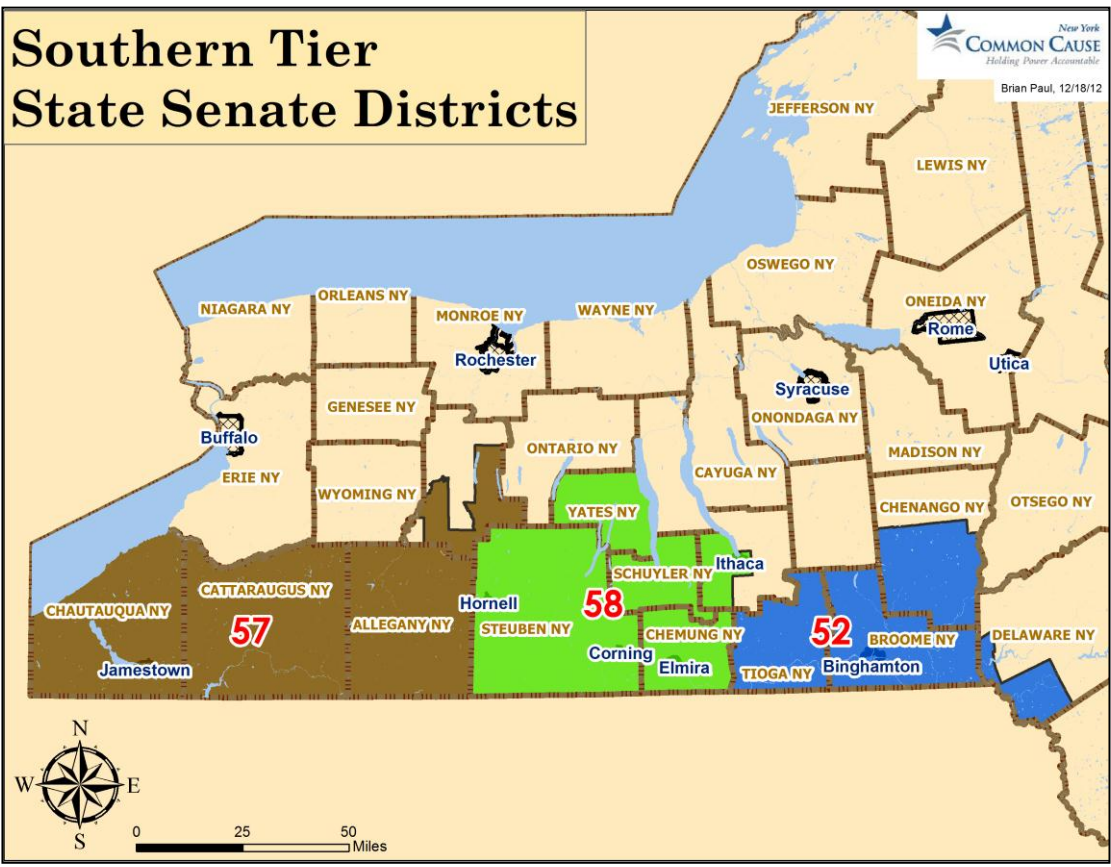
KEY FINDINGS

- Fracking interests and boosters strongly supported incumbent lawmakers over challengers, regardless of party affiliation. All incumbents easily won re-election by 20 points or more.
 - Broome County Executive Debbie Preston (R) (\$82,428 or 22% of total) and State Senator Thomas Libous (R) (\$190,700, 15% of total) received the most money from fracking-related sources, with contributions from a wide array of interests including gas industry PACs, drillers, engineers, construction unions, and asphalt and gravel companies.
 - Preston's opponent Tarik Abdelazim (D) ran an explicitly anti-fracking campaign, and Libous' opponent John Orzel (D) was less supportive and more cautious on the issue than the incumbent. Both candidates predictably received very little support from fracking interests and boosters.
 - Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D) (\$16,631 or 15% of total) received significant contributions from fracking boosters including construction unions, oil & gas law firms, and the commercial trucking lobby, despite her cautious stance that neither firmly opposes or supports fracking.
 - Lupardo's opponent, Julie Lewis (R) received almost no support from fracking interests and boosters despite a strongly pro-fracking position.³
 - With the exception of Assemblyman Christopher Friend (R) who largely abstains from fundraising, the other incumbents in the Southern Tier state legislature all received a significant portion of their campaign contributions (between 9% and 14% of all funds raised) from fracking-related sources.

Full dataset of fracking-related campaign contributions in the 2012 Southern Tier state legislative and county executive races available by visiting www.commoncause.org/ny/SouthernTierFracking or by contacting Research and Policy Coordinator Brian Paul at bpaul@commoncause.org

³ Jennifer Micale. "Lupardo and Lewis: Similar issues, different views." *Press Connects*. October 20, 2012. <http://www.pressconnects.com/article/20121020/NEWS01/310200049/Lupardo-Lewis-Similar-issues-different-views>

Race / Candidate	Election Result	Total Money Raised	Fracking-Related Contributions	% Fracking Related
<u>BROOME COUNTY EXECUTIVE</u>				
Debbie Preston (R) (Incumbent)	Won, 63%	\$373,858.12	\$82,428.00	22.0%
Tarik Abdelazim (D)	Lost, 37%	\$112,834.37	\$4,390.00	3.9%
<u>STATE SENATE</u>				
SD 52 -- Thomas Libous (R) (Inc.)	Won, 64%	\$1,301,430.82	\$190,700.00	14.7%
SD 52 -- John Orzel (D)	Lost, 33%	\$12,500.57	\$90.00	0.7%
SD 57 -- Cathy Young (R) (Inc.)	Unopposed	\$484,596.93	\$47,970.00	9.9%
SD 58 -- Thomas O'Mara (R) (Inc.)	Unopposed	\$220,950.00	\$28,525.00	12.9%
<u>STATE ASSEMBLY</u>				
AD 122 -- Cliff Crouch (R) (Incumbent)	Unopposed	\$80,299.88	\$10,986.00	13.7%
AD 123 -- Donna Lupardo (D) (Inc.)	Won, 62%	\$112,914.00	\$16,631.00	14.7%
AD 123 -- Julie Lewis (R)	Lost, 38%	\$48,772.00	\$500.00	1.0%
AD 124 -- Philip Palmesano (R) (Inc.)	Unopposed	\$61,349.00	\$7,000.00	11.4%
AD 132 -- Chris Friend (R) (Inc.)	Unopposed	\$9,150.00	\$100.00	1.1%
AD 148 -- Joseph Giglio (R) (Inc.)	Won, 65%	\$32,050.00	\$3,500.00	10.9%
AD 148 -- Dan Brown (D)	Lost, 35%	\$6,980.13	\$0.00	0.0%
AD 150 -- Andy Goodell (R) (Inc.)	Won, 61%	\$62,994.06	\$5,900.00	9.4%
AD 150 -- Rudy Mueller (D)	Lost, 39%	\$39,191.00	\$600.00	1.5%



\$2,000+ Fracking-Related Southern Tier Campaign Contributors

Contributor	Total Contributions
Hinman Howard & Kattell, LLP	\$25,459.00
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$21,046.00
Vestal Asphalt	\$18,215.00
LeChase Construction	\$15,850.00
NYS Pipe Trades	\$13,850.00
New York Truck PAC	\$11,700.00
New York Construction Materials PAC	\$11,350.00
Delta Engineers	\$10,392.00
National Fuel (NFG NYPAC)	\$10,050.00
Associated General Contractors of NYS	\$9,950.00
Broome Bituminous Products Inc.	\$8,700.00
Shumaker Consulting & Engineering	\$7,808.00
Tri-City Highway Products	\$7,750.00
International Union of Operating Engineers	\$7,600.00
Owego & Harford Railway Inc.	\$7,000.00
Bond, Schoeneck, & King PLLC	\$6,800.00
FAHS Construction Group	\$6,770.00
Empire State Council of Carpenters	\$6,550.00
Independent Oil & Gas Association (IOGA)	\$6,425.00
Levene Gouldin & Thompson LLP	\$6,350.00
Kinley Corporation	\$6,300.00
Hiscock & Barclay LLP	\$6,250.00
Otis Eastern Service, Inc.	\$6,250.00
National Pipe & Plastics	\$6,080.00
GHD Consultant Engineers (Lighthouse PAC)	\$5,850.00
Mirabito Energy Products	\$5,408.00
LADA -- Liquid Asphalt Distributors Association	\$5,350.00
Independent Power Producers of NY (IPPNY)	\$5,100.00
ACEC -- American Council of Engineering	\$5,000.00
Business Council of NYS	\$4,850.00
NYSEG / RG&E	\$4,839.00
Friends of Natural Gas PAC	\$4,600.00
Business-Industry PAC of Central NY Inc.	\$4,350.00
Crosshair Consultants of NY	\$4,225.00

Gorick Construction	\$4,129.00
Chesapeake Appalachia	\$4,100.00
Contributor	Total Contributions
Lafarge North America	\$3,800.00
Hunt Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors	\$3,750.00
Empire State ABC -- Assoc. Builders & Contractors	\$3,600.00
Independent Insurance Agents	\$3,500.00
O'Brien & Gere	\$3,315.00
Jennings Environmental	\$2,969.00
Greater Binghamton Association of Realtors	\$2,959.00
Woidt Engineering & Consulting	\$2,800.00
Farm NY Pac (NY Farm Bureau)	\$2,750.00
Keyser, Maloney, & Winner LLP	\$2,750.00
Dresser Rand Corp	\$2,500.00
DTE Energy	\$2,500.00
Keystone Associates LLC	\$2,500.00
ConEd	\$2,000.00
CSX Transportation	\$2,000.00
Dominion	\$2,000.00
Exxon Mobil	\$2,000.00
Great American Industries	\$2,000.00
Hartz Energy Capital LLC	\$2,000.00
Suit-Kote	\$2,000.00
ZMK Construction	\$2,000.00

For detailed spreadsheet including documented descriptions for all 113 contributors included in this analysis, visit www.commoncause.org/ny/SouthernTierFracking or contact Research and Policy Coordinator Brian Paul at bpaul@commoncause.org