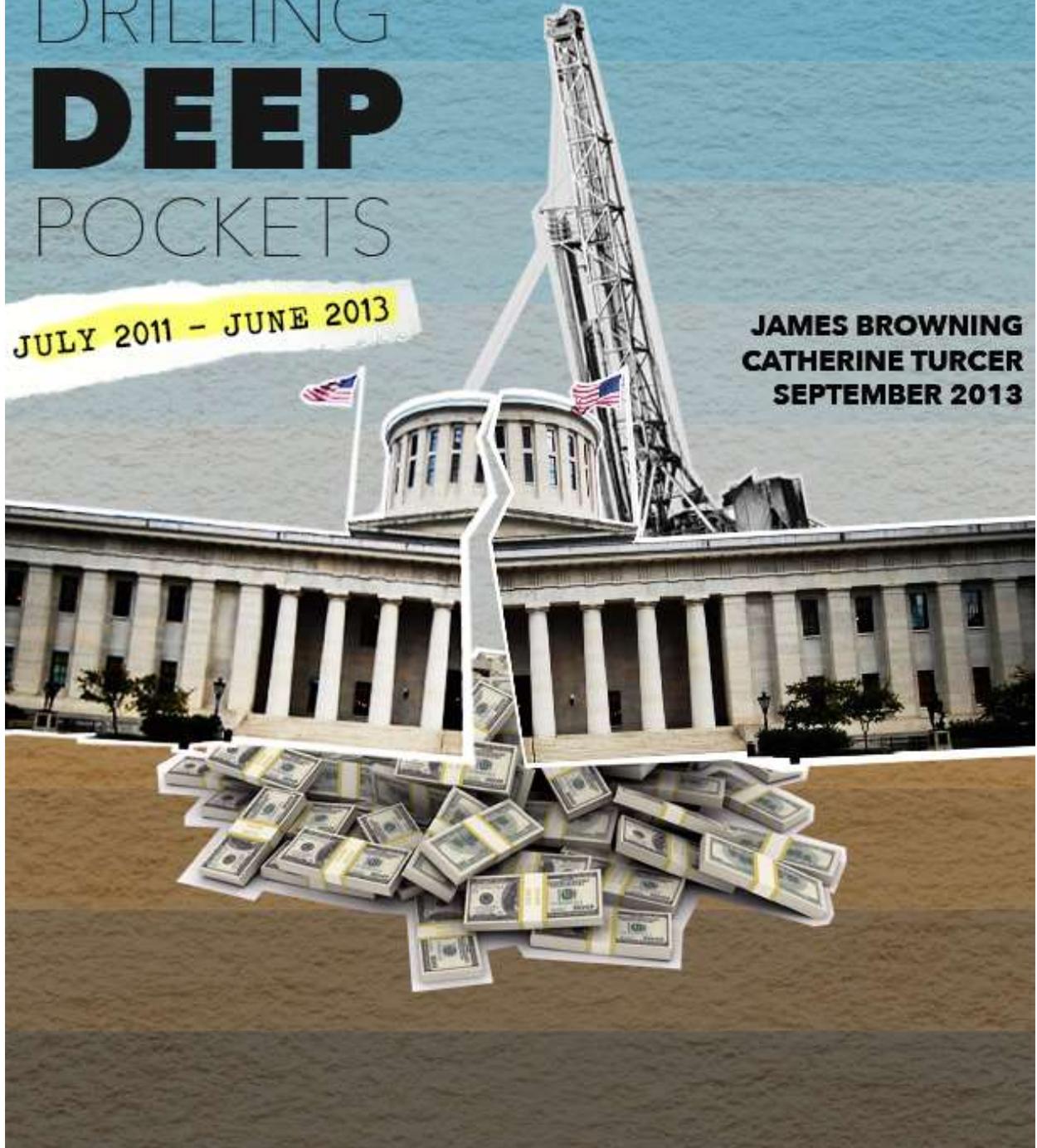


DEEP DRILLING DEEP POCKETS

JULY 2011 - JUNE 2013

 **COMMON CAUSE**
Holding Power Accountable

**JAMES BROWNING
CATHERINE TURCER
SEPTEMBER 2013**



Executive Summary

The rapid spread of hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” in Ohio has been accompanied by a surge in political expenditures by the natural gas industry. From July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013, the natural gas industry and companies engaged in fracking gave more than \$1.8 million to Ohio elected officials, candidates, and political parties.

The industry’s lobbyists also reported \$43,000 in expenditures in Ohio for 2011-2012. Ohio requires lobbyists to report money spent on gifts, meals, and travel for legislators, but does not require them to report how much compensation they receive from each of their clients.

As discussed in the **Lobbying** section of this report, the bulk of lobbying expenditures by fracking interests in Ohio are therefore not being reported at a time when the legislature is making decisions about fracking whose impact will be felt for decades. In Pennsylvania, by comparison, the lobbying expenditures reported by fracking interests were \$12.7 million for this same period, or nearly 300 times as much.ⁱ

Extraordinary Access and Influence: The Political Expenditures of the Natural Gas Industry in Ohio

Long before there was fracking in Ohio, the natural gas industry was spending millions to convince Ohio's elected officials to minimize or ignore the potential dangers fracking poses to human health and the environment. As documented in Common Cause Ohio's November 2011 "Deep Drilling, Deep Pockets" report, companies engaged in fracking gave \$2.8 million to the state's elected officials, candidates, and political parties between 2001 and June 2011.ⁱⁱ

Note on Methodology: Several new donors have been included in this September 2013 report who were not included in the November 2011 report. Among the Top 20 donors cited on pages 3 and 4, these new donors are Ariel Corporation, NiSource, Spectra Energy, Vectren, Exelon, Lake Region Oil, and Markwest Energy Partners.

A January 2012 Quinnipiac University poll captured a major split in Ohioans' attitudes about fracking, with 64% of respondents supporting drilling because of the potential economic benefits, 29% opposing drilling because of the potential environmental impact, and 72% supporting a moratorium on fracking until its impacts can be further studied.ⁱⁱⁱ And while public opinion may be split on whether to frack now, frack later, or whether to frack at all, the fracking industry, backed by its political expenditures, has been remarkably successful in promoting its legislative agenda.

In 2011, the industry successfully pushed to open state-owned lands to fracking. In 2012, facing questions about the safety of the dozens of chemicals used in fracking, the industry proposed and passed its own standard for disclosure of these chemicals as part of SB 315—a standard which lets companies avoid disclosing chemicals they deem to be proprietary information. Drillers can also wait up to 60 days after drilling starts at a given site before disclosing exactly which chemicals are being used. As discussed under **Lobbying**, SB 315 was the single-most lobbied-upon bill of 2012, according to the Ohio Joint Legislative Ethics Committee.^{iv}

SB 315 also limited the amount of information available to doctors, nurses, first responders, and anyone else dealing with a case of exposure or potential exposure to fracking chemicals. Medical personnel are allowed access to these lists of proprietary chemicals in the event of "an incident related to the production operations of a well," but must obtain them from the company in question; there is no state registry.^v

The natural gas industry has also repeatedly defeated a proposed increase to the state's severance tax for natural gas extraction, the revenues from which could be used to fund well inspections, mitigate environmental damage, and public education about the rights of people leasing their land or considering leasing their land for fracking.

In a rare setback for the industry, tougher regulations for injection wells were passed in 2012 after one of the most alarming developments in the fracking debate in any state—the finding that fracking was responsible for more than 150 earthquakes in and around Youngstown, Ohio in 2011, the strongest of which registered 3.9 on the Richter Scale.^{vi} These earthquakes received national attention and raised new questions about the safety of fracking in other states with fracking-related seismic activity, such as Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Figure A: Top 20 Organizational Donors to Candidates and Party Committees

Note: Contributions include those from owners, employees and PACs associated with each company or organization.

Rank	Donor	Type	Total Contributions
1	Ariel Corporation	Manufacturer of “compressors used to extract, process, transport, store, and distribute natural gas from the wellhead to the end-user.” ^{vii}	\$246,810
2	Ohio Oil & Gas Association	Trade association with members involved in the exploration and production of oil and natural gas. ^{viii}	\$244,187
3	Chesapeake Energy	Nation’s second largest producer of natural gas and the top driller in Ohio. ^{ix}	\$196,550
4	Dominion	Dominion Transmission Company operates 7,800 miles of pipeline in six states — Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York — which overlie the Marcellus Shale gas region. ^x	\$177,123
5	NiSource	With Hilcorp, NiSource (parent company of Columbia Gas) is building about 50 miles of pipeline and a gas processing plant in Ohio. ^{xi}	\$166,793
6	Interstate Gas Supply	Ohio’s largest independent retail natural gas supplier. ^{xii}	\$109,761
7	Marathon Oil	Crude oil from the Utica Shale in Eastern Ohio is being purchased by Marathon and is refined at its Canton, Ohio refinery. ^{xiii}	\$101,212
8	Artex/Arloma	Second largest natural gas and oil producer in the Ohio. ^{xiv}	\$84,964

Figure A Continued: Top 20 Organizational Donors to Candidates and Party Committees

Note: Contributions include those from owners, employees and PACs associated with each company or organization.

Rank	Donor	Type	Total Contributions
9	Ken Miller Supply	Drilling supply company. ^{xv}	\$53,465
10	British Petroleum (BP)	International oil and gas company with permits for fracking in Ohio. ^{xvi}	\$53,315
11	Oxford Oil Co (now Eclipse Resources-Ohio)	Leases approximately 184,000 net acres in Ohio and has permits with the state for fracking. ^{xvii}	\$42,070
12	Knox Energy	Specializes in natural gas production and provides services for exploration and production. ^{xviii}	\$33,700
13	Spectra Energy	Gas transmission company, has proposed a more than 73-mile "Ohio Pipeline Energy Network." ^{xix}	\$33,500
14	AW Tipka Oil	Independent oil & gas producer. ^{xx}	\$27,970
15	Vectren	Gas utility with infrastructure services — underground pipeline construction and repair. ^{xxi}	\$27,845
16	American Petroleum Institute	National trade association of the oil and natural gas industry. ^{xxii}	\$25,609
17	Exelon	Natural gas supplier. ^{xxiii}	\$21,550
18	Lake Region Oil	Independent oil & gas producer. ^{xxiv}	\$20,775
19	Markwest Energy Partners	Natural gas and oil processor and transporter; expanding their facility in Noble County to support increased drilling. ^{xxv}	\$18,685
20	ExxonMobil	International oil and gas company. Exxon Mobile's subsidiary XTO engages in fracking in Ohio. ^{xxvi}	\$17,500

Figure B: Top Individual Donors to Candidates and Party Committees

Rank	Donor	Company	Amount
1	Karen Wright	Ariel Corporation	\$188,034
2	Thomas Rastin	Ariel Corporation	\$54,255
3	Scott White	Interstate Gas Supply (IGS)	\$48,405
4	Michelle White	Interstate Gas Supply (IGS)	\$43,355
5	John Straker, Jr.	Oxford Oil Company (now Eclipse Resources-Ohio)	\$41,500
6	Jerry James	Artex Oil	\$37,912
7	Rhonda James	Artex Oil	\$35,152
8	Jack Miller	Ken Miller Supply	\$34,550
9	Thomas Stewart	Ohio Oil and Gas Association	\$23,576
10	Jerry Jordan	Knox Energy	\$22,750
11	Howard Wenger	Lake Region Oil	\$20,500
12	Sarah Tipka	AW Tipka Oil and Gas	\$17,145
13	Douglas Austin	Interstate Gas Supply (IGS)	\$17,000
14	David Hill	David R. Hill, Inc.	\$13,112
15	Brian Jonard	Ohio Oil Gathering (Subsidiary of Crosstex Energy)	\$10,843
16	Alan Tipka	AW Tipka Oil and Gas	\$9,500
17	Eugene Huck	Artex Oil	\$9,300
18	Terry Fleming	American Petroleum Institute	\$7,819
19	Jim Aslanides	MFC Drilling	\$7,500
20	Deborah Miller	Ken Miller Supply	\$7,290

**Figure C: Top 20 Recipients of Campaign Contributions from Fracking Interests,
July 2011 to June 2013**

Rank	Recipient	Total Contributions
1	Rep. Dave Hall (R-Millersburg)	\$164,665
2	Speaker Bill Batchelder (R-Medina)	\$137,893
3	Governor John Kasich (R)	\$101,065
4	Senate President Keith Faber (R-Celina)	\$72,743
5	Rep. Andy Thompson (R- Marietta)	\$72,267
6	Rep. and Chair of the House Finance & Appropriations Committee Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster)	\$53,055
7	Senator Troy Balderson (R-Zanesville)	\$52,093
8	Rep. Allen Landis (R-Dover)	\$37,823
9	House Majority Whip Cheryl Grossman (R-Grove City)	\$36,950
10	Senator Cliff Hites (R-Findlay)	\$31,765
11	Senator Chris Widener (R-Springfield)	\$30,050
12	Auditor Dave Yost (R)	\$29,493
13	Rep. Peter Stautberg (R-Anderson Township)	\$29,450
14	Secretary of State Jon Husted (R)	\$28,975
15	Former Senate President Tom Niehaus (R-New Richmond)	\$28,386
16	Treasurer Josh Mandel (R)	\$27,217
17	Senator Tom Patton (R-Strongsville)	\$24,000
18	Rep. Brian Hill (R-Zanesville)	\$21,562
19	Rep. Kristina Daley Roegner (R-Hudson)	\$21,450
20	Rep. Matt Huffman (R-Lima)	\$20,750

**Total for Josh Mandel does not include contributions to his Federal Senatorial Campaign Committee in 2011-2012.*

Note: Contribution totals include those from owner/operators, employees, and PACs of natural gas companies and companies associated with fracking.

Top Democratic and Republican Party Committee Recipients

As shown by Figure D, State and County Republican Party committees received 13 times more from the natural gas industry and those associated with fracking (\$284,374) than Democratic Party committees (\$21,500).

Figure D: Contributions to State and Local Party Committees

Rank	Democratic Party Committees	Total Received	Republican Party Committees	Total Received
1	Mahoning County Democratic Party (Restricted Funds)	\$7,500	Ohio Republican State Central & Executive Committee	\$81,050
2	Ohio Democratic Party State Building Fund	\$5,000	Ohio House Republican Organizing Committee (Ohio House Caucus)	\$75,770
3	Ohio Democratic Party State Candidate Fund	\$5,000	Ohio Republican State Central & Executive Committee State Candidate Fund	\$50,000
4	Cuyahoga County Democratic Party (Restricted Funds)	\$4,000	Ohio Republican State Central & Executive Committee Restricted Fund	\$30,009

Lobbying

Ohio's lobbying law only captures a small percentage of money being spent on lobbying. Among states where the fracking boom is underway, Ohio's lobbying law is among the weakest when it comes to tracking lobbyists' expenditures and providing reasonable checks and balances on lobbyists' power in its state legislature.

Ohio requires lobbyists to report expenditures on gifts, meals, and travel for elected officials. But as noted by Ohio Citizen Action's then-Director of the Money in Politics Project, Catherine Turcer in 2011, "Food and gifts aren't the coin of the realm. It all comes down to fundraisers."^{xxvii}

From July 2011 through June of 2013, lobbyists associated with fracking interests contributed \$336,000 to statewide and legislative public officials and candidates—an amount which is in addition to the \$1.86 million contributed by companies engaged in fracking. During the first six months of 2013, Common Cause Ohio found 151 fundraisers held by state legislators in Columbus. And during this period lobbyists representing the gas industry and fracking contributed more than \$106,000.

Lobbyists’ registrations and expenditures are available to the public on line and are searchable on the Ohio Legislative Inspector’s and the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee’s website. In 2012, Ohio’s approximately 1,500 registered lobbyists reported spending \$436,000.^{xxviii} In Pennsylvania, where a much stronger lobbying law requires disclosure of lobbyist compensation and several, additional types of expenses, the state’s approximately 1,300 registered lobbyists reported spending \$170 million during this same period, or 390 times as much.^{xxixxxx} In 2012, the Center for Public Integrity gave Ohio an F for Lobbying Disclosure, as part of an overall grade of D for various measures of government integrity.^{xxxi}

The public will likely never know exactly how much was spent by industry lobbyists during the beginning of Ohio’s fracking boom. Nor does Ohio require lobbyists to report whether they support or oppose a bill—a blind spot which further prevents the public from understanding exactly which interests are trying to influence the fracking debate in Ohio.

As shown by Figure E, which contrasts expenditures reported by four companies engaged in fracking in both states, by all fracking lobbyists, and by all lobbyists, the figures being reported in Ohio are miniscule compared to those in Pennsylvania. While Pennsylvania’s lobbying law has its strengths, it should be noted that Ohio law requires lobbyists to report the bills that they are working on, but Pennsylvania does not.

Figure E: Reported Lobbyist Expenditures in Ohio vs. Pennsylvania, 2011-2012

Lobbyist	Ohio	Pennsylvania
American Petroleum Institute	\$4,075	\$1,045,310
Anadarko	\$104	\$170,662
Chesapeake	\$2,031	\$772,556
Dominion	\$1,842	\$45,556
All Fracking Lobbyists	\$43,274	\$12,682,443
All Lobbyists	\$1,014,189	\$336,735,616

“A near bullet-proof operation,” is how Jack Shaner, Deputy Director for the Ohio Environmental Council, described the oil and gas industry’s lobbying in an August 1, 2013 article in the *Columbus Dispatch*. “Governors and lawmakers of all stripes have taken their best shot, including our current governor,” he said. “It seems like the law only changes when this industry allows the law to be changed.”^{xxxii}

Ohio’s lobbying law dramatically understates the influence of deep-pocketed interests in the state capitol. Take a multibillion dollar company like Chesapeake, which has made \$196,550 in

campaign contributions to candidates and party committees in Ohio since 2001 and has drilled more than 250 wells in Ohio. For all its generosity to candidates and success in getting leases and drilling permits, the company reported spending just \$2,031 on lobbying in 2011-12, mostly on meals. This very low number perversely suggests that fracking lobbyists in Ohio are enjoying considerable success while spending, in some cases, just a few thousand dollars to make their case.

Term Limits and the Revolving Door

Ohio's lobbying law is also notable for its failure to impose a waiting period before former legislators can return as lobbyists. Ohio had such a law until 2010, when it was struck down by the U.S. District Court for Southern Ohio on the grounds that it was "over-inclusive" and prohibited former legislators from doing volunteer lobbying.

Among the 38 former legislators now working as lobbyists in the state legislature, at least three work for oil and gas interests: Louis Blessing, a registered lobbyist for Ohio Gas Suppliers; Larry Price, a registered lobbyist for Resource International, Inc.; Michael W. Wise, a registered lobbyist for McDonald Hopkins, a law firm which handles regulatory matters related to fracking.

In addition, recently retired Senate President Tom Niehaus joined the law firm of Vorys Sater Seymour and Pease LLP in March 2013. According to its website, "Vorys has represented key players in the ongoing exploration of the Utica and Marcellus, including producers, pipeline companies, and drilling and services companies. Our attorneys are also leaders in the field; case in point, five of our partners have served as chair of the Ohio State Bar Association's Natural Resources Law Committee.^{xxxiii} Tom Niehaus still has an active campaign committee and reported spending campaign cash for a meal with "caucus staff" as recently as February of this year.

The president of the Ohio Gas Association is former State Rep. Jimmy Stewart, and the chair of the government affairs committee of the influential Ohio Oil and Gas Association is former State Rep. Jim Aslanides, who now works for MFC Drilling.

Figure F shows how Ohio compares to other states which have term limits for state legislators, but no revolving-door law to regulate when they can return as paid lobbyists. Ohio is one of only four states with term limits but no revolving-door law, and no disclosure of lobbyist compensation.

Figure F: Term Limits & State Regulation of Legislators-turned-Lobbyists^{xxxiv}

State With Term Limits	House Limit In Years	Senate Limit In Years	Revolving-Door Law	Disclosure of Lobbyist Compensation
Arizona	8	8	Yes	No
Arkansas	6	8	No	No
California	12	12	Yes	Yes
Colorado	8	8	Yes	Yes
Florida	8	8	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	12	12	Yes	No
Maine	8	8	No	Yes
Michigan	6	8	No*	Yes
Missouri	8	8	No	No
Montana	8	8	Yes	Yes
Nebraska	N/A	8	No	Yes
Nevada	12	12	No	No
Ohio	8	8	No	No
Oklahoma	12	12	Yes	No
South Dakota	8	8	Yes	No

**In Michigan, legislators leaving office before their terms have expired cannot become lobbyists until the expiration of that term.*

The combination of these three things—**term limits, the absence of a revolving-door law, and weak disclosure of lobbyists’ expenditures**—makes Ohio a state where there is an unusually large supply of former legislators available to become paid lobbyists, but no way for the public to learn just how much money these legislators-turned-lobbyists are making by marketing their relationships and legislative expertise to their new employers.

American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and Fracking

The fracking industry has also gained considerable access and influence through the American Legislative Exchange Council, or ALEC. ALEC is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) organization that drafts and promotes model legislation on dozens of subjects, including fracking, natural gas

production and consumption, and state standards for renewable energy, but does not register under state lobbying laws and has repeatedly claimed that it is not engaged in lobbying.

In Ohio and many other fracking states, the natural gas industry has wielded enormous influence through ALEC. **At least 33 of the 45 Ohio legislators who co-sponsored SB 315 in 2012 were ALEC members,** and portions of the language in SB 315 are similar to ALEC's "Disclosure of Hydraulic Fracturing Fluid Composition Act."^{xxxv}

Each year, about 1,000 pieces of ALEC-backed legislation are introduced in statehouses across America. ALEC regularly communicates with legislators through emails, "issue alerts," press releases, "talking points" and other materials to express its views and help ALEC-member legislators argue on behalf of ALEC's legislation and/or in opposition to bills outside ALEC's portfolio. ALEC's by-laws declare that its mission is to "formulate legislative action programs" and to "disseminate model legislation and promote the introduction of companion bills in Congress and state legislatures."

In May 2012, Common Cause and the Center for Media and Democracy sent a letter to Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, asking him to review ALEC's 990 form and investigate its activities to ensure that they are in compliance with state tax and lobbying laws.^{xxxvi}

ALEC's environmental agenda also includes rolling back standards for renewable energy—a campaign which aims to make it easier for states to include a higher percentage of natural gas and other fossil fuels in their energy portfolios. In 2011, ALEC Board Member and Ohio State Sen. Bill Seitz (R) introduced SB 216, a bill to eliminate Ohio's renewable energy standards, and compared these standards to "Joseph Stalin's Five-year Plan."^{xxxvii}

Transparency and the Future of Fracking

One of the most important issues cited by environmental groups and people in communities where fracking is happening is that of transparency. Does the public have sufficient information about the potential for fracking to damage human health and the environment? When problems occur, is the process for determining what caused them and who is to blame open and trustworthy?

These same questions apply to the industry's political expenditures and their impact on elections and public policy. In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Citizens United*, threw out a century-old ban on corporate spending around elections and empowered corporations to exert even more influence over the political process. Now money spent on campaign contributions, lobbying, and through other avenues of influence such as ALEC can be backed by millions spent on electioneering.

Methodology

This September 2013 edition of “Deep Drilling, Deep Pockets” is a follow-up study to Common Cause Ohio’s study of the same name released in November 2011. This update examines contributions to Ohio statewide and legislative candidates and to Ohio political party committees from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013 (the most recent campaign finance filing). Campaign contributions are available online from the Ohio Secretary of State at www.sos.state.oh.us. Contribution totals includes both monetary contributions and in-kind. Because the Ohio Secretary of State has not had an opportunity to audit recent campaign finance filings, questionable contribution information was confirmed using expenditure information, also available on the Ohio Secretary of State’s site.

Campaign contributions were standardized and coded using the method laid out in Larry Makinson’s “Follow the Money Handbook.” Economic affiliation information does not indicate direct corporate contributions. It instead includes contributions from owner/operators, employees and the political action committees or PACs associated with employers, companies or associations. It should be noted that spouses identified as homemakers, unemployed or retired are given the same economic affiliation as their spouse.

Fracking interests were identified by examining drilling permits publicly available at <http://oilandgas.ohiodnr.gov/shale>. Researchers also used <http://www.fractracker.org> and reviewed material on company websites, media accounts, and information from the Ohio Oil and Gas Association and the Ohio Gas Association websites.

This study also examines the influence of the natural gas and fracking lobby in Ohio. The Legislative Inspector General and the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee make lobbyists’ registrations and expenditures available on line at www.jlec-olig.state.oh.us. The office of the Legislative Inspector General provided a spreadsheet of 2011-2012 lobbyist activities.

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About Common Cause

Common Cause is a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy organization founded in 1970 by John Gardner as a vehicle for citizens to make their voices heard in the political process and to hold their elected leaders accountable to the public interest. Today, Common Cause is one of the most active, effective, and respected nonprofit organizations working for political change in America. Common Cause strives to strengthen our democracy by empowering our members, supporters, and the general public to take action on critical policy issues.

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