

Obama Meets With CEOs While Policy Bans Lobbyists

Last month, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the American League of Lobbyists (ALL) [urged the White House](#) to rewrite a restrictive [new rule](#) on registered lobbyists seeking Recovery Act bailout funds, saying it would [not achieve the transparency and accountability the administration seeks](#). The Obama administration's new rule restricts the ability of only registered lobbyists to influence decisions related to stimulus funds, but the influence game is played [by more than lobbyists—it is played by CEOs and other executives](#) within companies.

While CREW applauds the President's [efforts to improve transparency](#), we see this new rule as little more than window dressing. A stronger option, endorsed by CREW, the ACLU and ALL, would be to require disclosure of all communications—by non-lobbyists and lobbyists alike. This would more effectively target the backroom deals about which Americans are legitimately concerned. Only full transparency will allow the public to decide who is unduly influencing our country's policy and root-out corruption.

A recent example of a White House meeting is a case in point. On April 23rd, President Obama [met with credit card industry representatives](#) “to discuss the impact of the current crisis on consumers.”

CREW examined the 2008 election cycle political giving of the executives who attended the meeting to illustrate the influence these industry representatives wield in government. The 14 attendees – only one of whom is a registered lobbyist – personally donated roughly \$50,000 to federal candidates, employees of their companies contributed \$14.5 million, and their companies' political action committees contributed \$8.6 million. In addition, during the first quarter of 2009 alone, these companies spent almost \$15.5 million trying to influence legislators.

Personal Contributions

Name	Company	Personal Contributions ('08 Cycle)	Personal Contributions Excluding Donations to Company's PAC ('08 Cycle)	Personal Contributions to Dems ('08 Cycle)	Personal Contributions to GOP ('08 Cycle)
David Bohne	USAA	\$7,600	\$7,600	\$1,000	\$6,600
Patrick Burke	HSBC Card and Retail Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Paul Galant	Citi	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$2,100	\$6,900
Pamela Joseph	US Bancorp	\$250	\$250	\$0	\$250
Christopher McWilton	MasterCard Worldwide	\$7,318	\$0	\$0	\$0
David Nelms	Discover Financial Services	\$12,408	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000
Kevin Rhein	Wells Fargo and Company	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$0
Ryan Schneider	Capital One Financial Corporation	\$7,248	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
Lawrence Sharnak	American Express	\$7,500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
William Sheedy	VISA U.S.A., Inc.	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gordon Smith	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
Richard Struthers	Bank of America	\$11,600	\$11,600	\$4,600	\$7,000
Lloyd Wirshba	Barclaycard US	\$6,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
Edward L. Yingling	American Bankers Association	\$7,300	\$7,300	\$7,300	\$0
Totals		\$89,974	\$49,500	\$21,750	\$27,750

Personal Contributions Excluding Donations to Company's PAC ('08 Cycle)

This amount includes contributions made by the White House meeting attendee for the 2008 election cycle. It includes all donations made to campaign committees, leadership PACs, political parties and non-partisan PACs such as trade organizations. It does not include donations the attendees made to their employers' PACs.

Personal Contributions by Party ('08 Cycle)

This amount includes contributions made by the White House meeting attendee to campaign committees, leadership PACs and political parties for the 2008 election year cycle.

Employee Contributions

Company	Total Given by Company Employees ('08 Cycle)	Total Given by Company Employees to Dems ('08 Cycle)	Total Given by Company Employees to GOP ('08 Cycle)	Total Given by Company Employees to Obama ('08 Cycle)
USAA	\$147,847	\$65,508	\$70,074	\$9,249
HSBC Card and Retail Services	\$156,220	\$81,313	\$38,186	\$38,743
Citi	\$5,174,943	\$2,652,839	\$1,716,259	\$611,032
US Bancorp	\$30,784	\$12,184	\$18,600	\$2,384
MasterCard Worldwide	\$256,472	\$37,550	\$19,575	\$17,300
Discover Financial Services	\$51,366	\$20,550	\$7,500	\$8,700
Wells Fargo and Company	\$1,633,903	\$794,114	\$758,592	\$196,579
Capital One Financial Corporation	\$327,608	\$116,635	\$15,717	\$30,185
American Express	\$805,175	\$327,550	\$90,351	\$95,775
VISA U.S.A., Inc.	\$300,832	\$117,263	\$53,019	\$30,700
JPMorgan Chase & Co.	\$4,910,205	\$2,699,886	\$1,723,380	\$613,658
Bank of America	\$2,470,353	\$1,318,570	\$1,019,960	\$257,517
Barclaycard US	\$903,986	\$477,774	\$281,840	\$121,705
American Bankers Association	\$41,158	\$15,800	\$14,168	\$500
	\$17,210,852	\$8,737,536	\$5,827,221	\$2,033,527

Total Given by Company Employees ('08 Cycle)

This amount includes all federal contributions made by employees of the company, including contributions to campaign committees, leadership PACs, party organizations, company PACs, and other non-partisan PACs such as trade organizations.

Total Given by Company Employees by Party ('08 Cycle)

This amount includes contributions made by employees of the company to campaign committees, leadership PACs, and party organizations.

Total Given by Company Employees to Obama ('08 Cycle)

This amount includes contributions made by company employees to President Obama's election effort.

Company PAC Contributions and Total Spent on Lobbying

Company	Company PAC Contributions ('08 Cycle)	Company PAC to Dems ('08 Cycle)	Company PAC to GOP ('08 Cycle)	Total Spent on Lobbying in '09
USAA	\$531,553	\$196,905	\$334,648	\$2,710,244
HSBC Card and Retail Services	\$520,500	\$259,500	\$261,000	\$1,146,573
Citi	\$688,100	\$365,000	\$323,100	\$1,790,000
US Bancorp	\$219,750	\$102,500	\$117,250	\$85,000
MasterCard Worldwide	\$227,500	\$118,500	\$108,000	\$1,080,000
Discover Financial Services	\$38,000	\$17,000	\$21,000	\$257,500
Wells Fargo and Company	\$767,250	\$360,700	\$406,550	\$810,000
Capital One Financial Corporation	\$381,100	\$207,100	\$175,000	\$469,000
American Express	\$471,000	\$273,500	\$197,500	\$875,000
VISA U.S.A., Inc.	\$149,900	\$65,400	\$84,500	\$2,023,333
JPMorgan Chase & Co.	\$800,977	\$381,272	\$419,705	\$25,000
Bank of America	\$1,044,321	\$554,821	\$489,500	\$750,000
Barclaycard US	\$100,000	\$53,000	\$47,000	\$1,255,916
American Bankers Association	\$2,738,550	\$1,137,350	\$1,601,200	\$2,280,000
	\$8,678,501	\$4,092,548	\$4,585,953	\$15,557,566

Company PAC Contributions

This amount includes contributions made by a company PAC to federal candidates.

Lobbying

This amount includes money spent by a company on lobbying services and internal lobbying expenditures as reported to the Senate Office of Public Records.

** Note: Contributions made to Independent candidates are not included in the Republican and Democratic Party totals.*

** Sources: Center for Responsive Politics, www.opensecrets.org; Senate Office of Public Records, <http://soprweb.senate.gov/index.cfm?event=choosefields>*