

PROGRESS MICHIGAN PRESENTS A SPECIAL REPORT:

Michigan
Republican Party
ADMINISTRATIVE
ACCOUNT

Known Expenditures on Ballot Initiatives
Over the Past Decade



Recently, Michigan Republicans [launched a ballot initiative](#) that would restrict voting rights in Michigan. The petition drive, which could circumvent Governor Whitmer's inevitable veto of the GOP anti-voter bills currently making their way through the state legislature, is officially the work of a ballot committee called Secure MI Vote, but has full support from Michigan Republicans.

When it was originally formed in December of 2020, Secure MI Vote's treasurer was listed as the chief of staff for Michigan Republican Party Chairman Ron Weiser. Weiser has previously [stated his intentions](#) to use party funds to support the petition. The Michigan Republican Party maintains multiple accounts associated with their federal, state, and administrative expenses. Legally, those accounts are only allowed to be used for the expenses implied by their name—the federal account for federal elections, the state account for state elections, and the administrative account for administrative expenses. And while the federal and state accounts are subject to public disclosure under federal and state laws, the administrative account is not required to disclose either contributions or expenditures to the public.

The administrative account is intended to be used for non-election activities such as party meetings, but the lack of disclosure makes this difficult to track. FEC audits have uncovered a long history of the Republican Party misusing this fund, including multiple instances of improper spending.

Last week, the Michigan Department of State determined in a preliminary ruling that the Michigan GOP cannot use its administrative account to back the anti-voting ballot initiative. However, Chairman Weiser has already shown a willingness to use the administrative account in an improper manner. In fact, Weiser has recently [come under investigation](#) by the Secretary of State's Office after former Michigan Republican Party Chairwoman Laura Cox filed a complaint alleging misuse of Party funds. Cox alleged that in 2018, Weiser paid Stan Grot \$200,000 of Party funds to drop out of the race for secretary of state.

A review of campaign finance disclosures also shows that the Michigan Republican Party has previously used their administrative account to funnel undisclosed donations into ballot initiative battles. While the administrative account is not required to disclose its donors or expenditures, some evidence of its expenditures over the years can be uncovered by looking at who recorded receiving money from the administrative account.

These administrative account expenditures can be tracked using two methods. First, a contribution can be labeled as specifically from the Michigan Republican Party administrative account. Second, a group may report receiving a contribution from the Michigan Republican Party but choose not to label the specific account. If subsequent examinations of Party state and federal disclosures cannot identify matching Party expenditures, one can reasonably assume these ambiguously labeled contributions came from the administrative account.

Progress Michigan's examination of Michigan campaign finance records indicates millions of dollars have been funneled through the administrative account to ultimately be used for electoral purposes. While these contributions involve multiple transactions, they can be grouped into three efforts.

- 1) A 2012 effort to oppose Ballot Proposal 2, which would have made collective bargaining a right in Michigan.
- 2) A 2018 effort to oppose Ballot Proposal 2, which created our independent citizens redistricting commission and put an end to partisan gerrymandering in Michigan.
- 3) A 2018 effort to oppose Gretchen Whitmer for Governor.

1) In 2012, the Michigan Republican Party spent \$4 million from its administrative account to oppose Ballot Proposal 2 and collective bargaining rights for workers.

In 2012, the Michigan Republican Party joined forces with the Michigan Chamber of Commerce—a conservative group that spends millions of dollars on Republican causes and elections—to oppose Ballot Proposal 2 and prevent collective bargaining from becoming a constitutional right for Michigan workers.

On August 13th, 2012, the Michigan Chamber of Commerce PAC II, received a \$2.5 million contribution from the Michigan Republican Party administrative account. The Chamber then funneled that money to two other groups, Citizens Protecting MI Constitution and Protecting MI Taxpayers.

Criteria used for the search:

- ☒ Specific Committee: 513425 - MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II
- ☒ Date of Contribution is On or After: 08/13/2012 And On or Before: 08/13/2012

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-1 of 1

Receiving Committee Name Committee ID-Type	Schedule Type Description	Received From Address Occupation-Employer	City State Zip	Date	Amount	Cumul
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	MI REPUBLICAN PARTY ADMIN.ACCT 520 SEYMOUR AVENUE	LANSING MI 48933-0000	08/13/12	\$2,500,000.00	\$2,500,000.00

Matches 1-1 of 1

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE EXPENDITURE SEARCH RESULTS

Criteria used for the search:

- ☒ Specific Committee: **513425 - MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II**
- ☒ Date of Expenditure is After: **08/13/2012** And/Or Before: **01/01/2013**

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-15 of 15

Committee Making Expenditure Committee ID-Type	Sched Type	Payee Name Address City, State Zip Exp Type-Purpose	Exp Date	Exp Amt or Value	Support/Oppose Candidate or BQ Office Sought
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	PROTECTING MI TAXPAYERS 40 MONROE CENTER SUITE 201 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	08/21/12	\$1,500,000.00	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	PROTECTING MI TAXPAYERS 40 MONROE CENTER SUITE 201 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	08/14/12	\$913,324.98	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	CITIZENS PROTECTING MI CONSTITUTION 600 S. WALNUT STREET LANSING, MI 48933-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	08/25/12	\$400,000.00	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	PROTECTING MI TAXPAYERS 40 MONROE CENTER SUITE 201 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	10/18/12	\$300,000.00	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	CITIZENS PROTECTING MI CONSTITUTION 600 S. WALNUT STREET LANSING, MI 48933-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	08/31/12	\$270,000.00	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	PROTECTING MI TAXPAYERS 40 MONROE CENTER SUITE 201 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	11/08/12	\$100,000.00	
MICHIGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAC II 513425-BAL	DIRECT	CITIZENS PROTECTING MI CONSTITUTION 600 S. WALNUT STREET LANSING, MI 48933-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	08/18/12	\$100,000.00	

Citizens Protecting MI Constitution, another group connected to the Chamber, not only received money from the Chamber of Commerce PAC II, but also received a direct contribution from the Michigan Republican Party administrative account. On the same day in August of 2012 that the administrative account contributed \$2.5 million to the Chamber of Commerce PAC II, Citizens Protecting MI Constitution, received a \$1.5 million contribution from the Michigan Republican Party's administrative account.

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE CONTRIBUTION SEARCH RESULTS

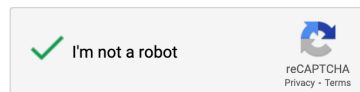
Criteria used for the search:

- ☒ Specific Committee: **514208 - CITIZENS PROTECTING MI CONSTITUTION**
- ☒ Campaign Statement Year: **2012**

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-100 of 111 [Next 11>>](#)



[Help me with "I'm not a robot"](#)

Receiving Committee Name Committee ID-Type	Schedule Type Description	Received From Address Occupation-Employer	City State Zip	Date	Amount	Cumul
CITIZENS PROTECTING MI CONSTITUTION 514208-BAL	DIRECT	MI REPUBLICAN PARTY ADMIN.ACC 520 SEYMOUR STREET	LANSING MI 48933-0000	08/13/12	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000.00

Citizens Protecting MI Constitution spent more than \$4 million opposing Ballot Proposal 2. Protecting MI Taxpayers, a group connected to the DeVos family, spent more than \$22 million opposing Ballot Proposal 2. The Michigan Republican Party never registered a ballot question committee or reported the donors to the administrative account.

2) In 2018, the Michigan Republican Party spent \$130,000 to oppose Ballot Proposal 2 and keep the current partisan gerrymandering system in place.

In November of 2018, while Weiser was also Chairman of the Michigan Republican Party, Protect My Vote, a ballot question committee opposed to Proposal 2, reported receiving two donations totaling \$130,000 from the Michigan Republican Party. While these donations are not labeled as coming from the administrative account, neither state nor federal campaign finance records show the Party spending this money through its federal or state accounts, implying that it came from the administrative account. Protect My Vote, largely funded by the DeVos-backed MI Freedom Fund, was formed to oppose Ballot Proposal 2, which established our Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission and put an end to partisan gerrymandering in Michigan.

Michigan Campaign Statement Contributions								
<div> <div>Committee Name: PROTECT MY VOTE</div> <div>Statement Type: POST-GENERAL CS</div> <div>Statement Year: 2018</div> <div>Schedule: ALL</div> </div>								
Matches 1 – 18 of 18								
Receiving Committee	Committee ID-Type	Schedule Type	Description	Received From	City State Zip	Date	Amount	Cumul
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		MICHIGAN FREEDOM FUND PO BOX 14162	LANSING MI 48901-4162	10/25/2018	\$1,600,000.00	\$3,059,110.39
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		MICHIGAN FREEDOM FUND PO BOX 14162	LANSING MI 48901-4162	10/22/2018	\$1,200,000.00	\$1,459,110.39
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		MICHIGAN REPUBLICAN PARTY 520 SEYMOUR	LANSING MI 48933	11/01/2018	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		MICHIGAN CHAMBER PAC II 600 SWALNUT	LANSING MI 48933	10/25/2018	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		BUSINESS LEADERS FOR MICHIGAN 600 RENAISSANCE CENTER	DETROIT MI 48243	10/25/2018	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
PROTECT MY VOTE	519073-BAL	DIRECT		MICHIGAN REPUBLICAN PARTY 520 SEYMOUR	LANSING MI 48933	11/02/2018	\$20,000.00	\$130,000.00

3) In 2018, the Michigan Republican Party administrative account spent \$175,000 to oppose Gretchen Whitmer for governor.

In October of 2018, while Weiser was Chair of the party, Hardworking Americans Committee Federal SuperPAC received \$175,000 from the administrative account.

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE CONTRIBUTION SEARCH RESULTS

Criteria used for the search:

☒ Specific Committee: 517134 - HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-21 of 21

Receiving Committee Name Committee ID-Type	Schedule Type Description	Received From Address Occupation-Employer	City State Zip	Date	Amount	Cumul
HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL 517134-POL	DIRECT	REPUBLICAN STATE LEADERSHIP CO 1201 F STREET NW SUITE 675	WASHINGTON DC 20004-0000	10/21/14	\$225,000.00	\$225,000.00
HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL 517134-POL	DIRECT	REPUBLICAN STATE LEADERSHIP CO 1201 F STREET NW SUITE 675	WASHINGTON DC 20004-0000	10/29/14	\$190,000.00	\$415,000.00
HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL 517134-POL	DIRECT	MI REPUBLICAN PARTY ADMIN. ACT 520 SEYMOUR	LANSING MI 48933-0000	10/17/18	\$175,000.00	\$175,000.00

Hardworking Americans Committee, registered with Randall Thompson, who is long-associated with the Michigan Republican Party, only has one expenditure listed for 2018. Two days after receiving the money from the Party administrative account, Hardworking Americans Committee contributed \$175,000 to the MI Prosperity SuperPAC, which is the only direct contribution MI Prosperity lists in 2018.

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE EXPENDITURE SEARCH RESULTS

Criteria used for the search:

☒ Specific Committee: 517134 - HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL
☒ Date of Expenditure is After: 10/01/2018 And/Or Before: 01/01/2019

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: date and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-1 of 1

Committee Making Expenditure Committee ID-Type	Sched Type	Payee Name Address City, State Zip Exp Type-Purpose	Exp Date	Exp Amt or Value	Support/Oppose Candidate or BQ Office Sought
HARDWORKING AMERICANS COMM FEDERAL 517134-POL	DIRECT	MI PROSPERITY SUPER PAC 1401 FAIR OAKS COURT EAST LANSING, MI 48823-0000 DI-CONTRIBUTION	10/19/18	\$175,000.00	

MI Prosperity spent \$85,000 directly opposing Whitmer for governor and donated \$82,000 to another group, MI People for Progress. People for Progress then spent that money on a mailer [that made headlines](#). The mailer used Bernie Sanders' image to falsely claim he wanted progressives to vote for Jennifer Kurland, a Green Party candidate for governor, despite the fact that Sanders had endorsed Whitmer.

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE EXPENDITURE SEARCH RESULTS

Criteria used for the search:

- Specific Committee: 519098 - MICHIGAN PROSPERITY (SUPERPAC)
- Date of Expenditure is After: 10/01/2018 And/Or Before: 01/01/2019

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-4 of 4

Committee Making Expenditure Committee ID-Type	Sched Type	Payee Name Address City, State Zip Exp Type-Purpose	Exp Date	Exp Amt or Value	Support/Oppose Candidate or BQ Office Sought
MICHIGAN PROSPERITY (SUPERPAC) 519098-POL	INDEPE	RIGHT STRATEGIES 2594 HORSTMAYER RD. LANSING, MI 48911-0000 MA-MAILING SERVICE	10/23/18	\$85,000.00	Oppose GRETCHEN WHITMER for GOVERNOR STATE
MICHIGAN PROSPERITY (SUPERPAC) 519098-POL	DIRECT	MICHIGAN PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS 2843 E. GRAND RIVER 216 EAST LANSING, MI 48823-0000 DI-DIRECT CONTRIBUTION	10/27/18	\$82,000.00	
MICHIGAN PROSPERITY (SUPERPAC) 519098-POL	DIRECT	HEATHER CERONE 801 S. GARFIELD TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49686-0000 CN-POLITICAL CONSULTING- NO VENDORS	10/23/18	\$5,000.00	
MICHIGAN PROSPERITY (SUPERPAC) 519098-POL	DIRECT	KORDENBROCK AND ASSOC PC 4647 MERIDIAN RD. WILLIAMSTON, MI 48895-0000 IC-BOOK KEEPING-NO VENDORS	10/31/18	\$1,000.00	

MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE EXPENDITURE SEARCH RESULTS

Criteria used for the search:

- Specific Committee: 519146 - MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC)

Supplemental itemizations have not been included.

Results are sorted by: committee name and then by: amount-descending

Matches 1-8 of 8

Committee Making Expenditure Committee ID-Type	Sched Type	Payee Name Address City, State Zip Exp Type-Purpose	Exp Date	Exp Amt or Value	Support/Oppose Candidate or BQ Office Sought
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	INDEPE	RIGHT STRATEGIES 2594 HORSTMAYER RD. LANSING, MI 48911-0000 MA-MAILING	10/29/18	\$70,000.00	Support JENNIFER KURLAND for GOVERNOR STATE
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	INDEPE	ACCUFORM 7231 SOUTHFIELD DR. DETROIT, MI 48228-0000 PA-PRINTING	10/29/18	\$4,500.00	Support JENNIFER KURLAND for GOVERNOR STATE
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	DIRECT	RIFFAAT HACHAL 3319 GREENFIELD 453 DEARBORN, MI 48120-0000 CN-POLITICAL CONSULTING- NO VENDORS	10/29/18	\$4,000.00	
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	DIRECT	MI PROSPERITY PROJECT 222 W. GENESEE LANSING, MI 48933-0000 CC-CONTRIBUTION	07/01/19	\$1,095.00	
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	DIRECT	KORDENBROCK AND ASSOC 4647 MERIDIAN RD WILLIAMSTON, MI 48823-0000 IC-BOOK KEEPING-NO VENDORS	12/17/18	\$1,000.00	
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	INDEPE	TCD MEDIA 431 SYLVAN DEARBORN, MI 48124-0000 PA-ONLINE ADS	10/29/18	\$875.00	Support JENNIFER KURLAND for GOVERNOR STATE
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	DIRECT	KORDENBROCK AND ASSOC 4647 MERIDIAN RD. WILLIAMSTON, MI 48823-0000 IC-BOOK KEEPING-NO VENDORS	07/02/19	\$250.00	
MI PEOPLE FOR PROGRESS (SUPERPAC) 519146-POL	DIRECT	KORDENBROCK AND ASSOC 4647 MERIDIAN RD. WILLIAMSTON, MI 48823-0000 IC-BOOK KEEPING-NO VENDORS	04/26/19	\$250.00	

Conclusion

These transactions, likely the tip of the iceberg, show a repeated misuse of the administrative fund. The Michigan Republican Party and Chairman Weiser in particular, have turned this fund into yet another funnel for injecting party money into Michigan politics, using covert donations to stand in the way of Michiganders' rights.

Secure MI Vote, like all ballot question committees, will be subject to public disclosure laws. But by funneling money through the Michigan Republican Party administrative account, Weiser and the Party have found a loophole to avoid transparency. The Secretary of State's office must not allow this to happen again.

Otherwise, our right to transparency will be in jeopardy. Whether the administrative account donates directly to Secure MI Vote, or funnels the money through multiple groups in an effort to hide it as they did in the transactions we outlined above, the result is the same: corporations and interest groups who support this anti-voter proposal will be able to support the Michigan Republican Party in silencing our voices without us ever knowing who they are.

Michigan Republican Party Administrative Account
Known Expenditures on Ballot Initiatives Over the Past Decade

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