

Fossil Fuel Front Groups on the Front Page



**Media analysis of fossil fuel-funded
organizations in major publications**

Checks & Balances Project
www.checksandbalancesproject.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Corporations and foundations increasingly want project-oriented proposals.”

- Heartland Institute internal fundraising documents, January 2012

“Our company and its stakeholders derive significant benefits from our involvement with these organizations...”

- Pfizer email on its relationship with Heartland Institute, May 2012



Dozens of self-identified “free market” organizations have their work, staff and associates mentioned on a near-daily basis on a range of policy issues by important mainstream media outlets. These organizations are usually described in neutral, nondescript terms, such as “think tank,” “institute” or “policy group,” that give readers no insight into their motivations. Occasionally, the groups’ ideological leanings are referenced with terms such as “free market” or “libertarian.” But is this consistently neutral positioning accurate?

Recently publicized internal documents from the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the American Tradition Institute (ATI) and the Heartland Institute suggest that these types of organizations have a more transactional relationship with corporate lobbying interests that donate to them – but their relationship is almost never revealed to readers in news coverage.¹

Internal fundraising documents from the Heartland Institute illustrates the nature of these relationships:

“Contributions will be pursued for this work, especially from corporations whose interests are threatened by climate [change] policies.”²



An in-depth analysis by the Checks and Balances Project indicates that a transactional relationship of contributions in exchange for national media traction is playing out and paying off for corporations and foundations that donate to these groups.

The omission of financial ties to corporate donors is important, given the amount of media coverage generated by these organizations. Despite positioning themselves as ideologically-focused on smaller government, dozens of these “think tanks” and “institutes” aggressively denounce policy investments in clean energy as market-distorting and unnecessary, while remaining silent on the far-larger, decades-long stream of taxpayer dollars going to oil, gas and coal interests.

Over the years, government support for fossil fuels has come from a variety of sources - tax deductions, tax credits, direct subsidies, cheap access to public property, pollution remediation, research and development and entire government agencies devoted to helping promote and assist fossil fuel industry growth. By all credible measurements, fossil fuel subsidies are massive and extremely unpopular, and are flowing to some of the most highly profitable industries on Earth.

Yet, fossil fuel subsidies go largely unmentioned by these “free market” groups, such as the Heartland Institute, despite their avowed opposition to wasteful government spending.³

In this analysis, the Checks and Balances Project, a pro-clean energy watchdog group, produced the first-ever qualitative measurement of media traction by 10 fossil fuel-funded organizations on energy issues in 60 major national publications. Our findings suggest that these “think tanks” have evolved from their ideological origins to become pay-to-play operations that use their “neutral” appearance to generate media attention and influence the public for their client-donors. It’s what one corporate donor described as “significant benefits”⁴ provided by one of the groups.

This work stemmed from our successful True Ties campaign⁵, which asked The New York Times to set the standard for op-ed disclosure. This campaign successfully persuaded the Times’ Public Editor to recommend that the paper set new disclosure standards on describing an op-ed author’s financial ties to interests that could benefit from the author’s piece.⁶

In the research detailed below, The Checks & Balances Project looks at 10 fossil fuel-funded think tanks that are prominent in their criticism of clean energy policy support. We found that these groups were mentioned over 1,010 times on energy issues in 60 mainstream print outlets, including major daily newspapers, the Associated Press and Politico from 2007-2011. These organizations’ ties to fossil fuel interests are mentioned only 6% of the time in the five-year period studied despite receiving at least \$16 million from fossil fuel lobbying interests – both directly from companies and from fossil fuel-connected foundations.

In order to improve public understanding of those individuals and organizations mentioned in the news media, we think that organizations (and their fellows, staff and associates), funded fossil fuel interests or other industries, should be more accurately described in articles and op-eds to show their financial ties. The public should be informed about these organizations’ financial ties to fossil fuels when representatives of these organizations are cited, quoted or bylined in media outlets. At the very least, they ought to answer the basic question, “Do you receive money – directly or indirectly – from any interests that might benefit from what you are saying?”⁷

METHODOLOGY

The Checks and Balances Project identified 10 think tanks⁸ that consistently do any or all of the following: promote fossil fuels, attack clean energy policy support, or undermine the seriousness of global climate disruption.

We then took the following steps:

- Researched their respective funding through several databases, including GuideStar⁹ and SourceWatch¹⁰, to uncover their ties to fossil fuel lobbying interests.
- Tracked the number of energy-related mentions that these 10 groups received from 2007 to 2011 in 58 major daily newspapers, as well as in the Associated Press and the online publication, Politico. Table A in the appendix provides a full list of publications we included in our research.
- Reviewed approximately 1,000 pieces in which these organizations were quoted, cited or had a piece bylined and categorized each article by content and by how the respective organization was described.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Our research found that:

- Between 2006 and 2010, fossil fuel interests spent \$16.5 million on these 10 organizations.
- The following 10 organizations attacked clean energy, solutions to climate change and other environmental issues while advocating for fossil fuels:

1. American Enterprise Institute
2. Cato Institute
3. Competitive Enterprise Institute
4. Heartland Institute
5. Heritage Foundation
6. Hudson Institute
7. Institute for Energy Research
8. Marshall Institute
9. Manhattan Institute
10. Mercatus Center



- These 10 organizations have garnered 1,010 mentions on energy issues in 58 mainstream newspapers, as well as the Associated Press and Politico, receiving coverage every other day on average between 2007-2011.
- Ties to fossil fuel donors were not included in most mentions.
 - If these organizations were described, it was usually by the self-professed function of the organizations (e.g., “think tank”) or their location (e.g., “Washington, DC-based”).
 - Almost all descriptions that alluded to the groups’ motivations referenced the groups’ self-identified ideology (i.e., “conservative,” “free market” or “libertarian”), not their financial ties to the fossil fuel lobby.
- Financial ties between the mentioned organizations and fossil fuel interests were noted only 6% of the time in articles or editorial pieces in which the organizations appeared.
- These organizations disproportionately received coverage in influential newspapers that help shape the national agenda, including Politico, The Washington Post, USA Today and The New York Times.
- Despite being labeled as “free market” or “libertarian,” these organizations focused their criticism almost exclusively on the costs of clean energy policies, with little to no references to the far-larger amounts of government money that underwrites fossil fuel use.

In short, these 10 advocacy organizations were able to provide pro-fossil fuel points of view to tens of millions of Americans with practically no mention of their financial relationship to the fossil fuel lobby.



Table 1 illustrates the funding relationship to these 10 advocacy organizations, which echo pro-funder points of views in mainstream media news stories.

Table 1: From Fossil Fuel Interests to News Coverage

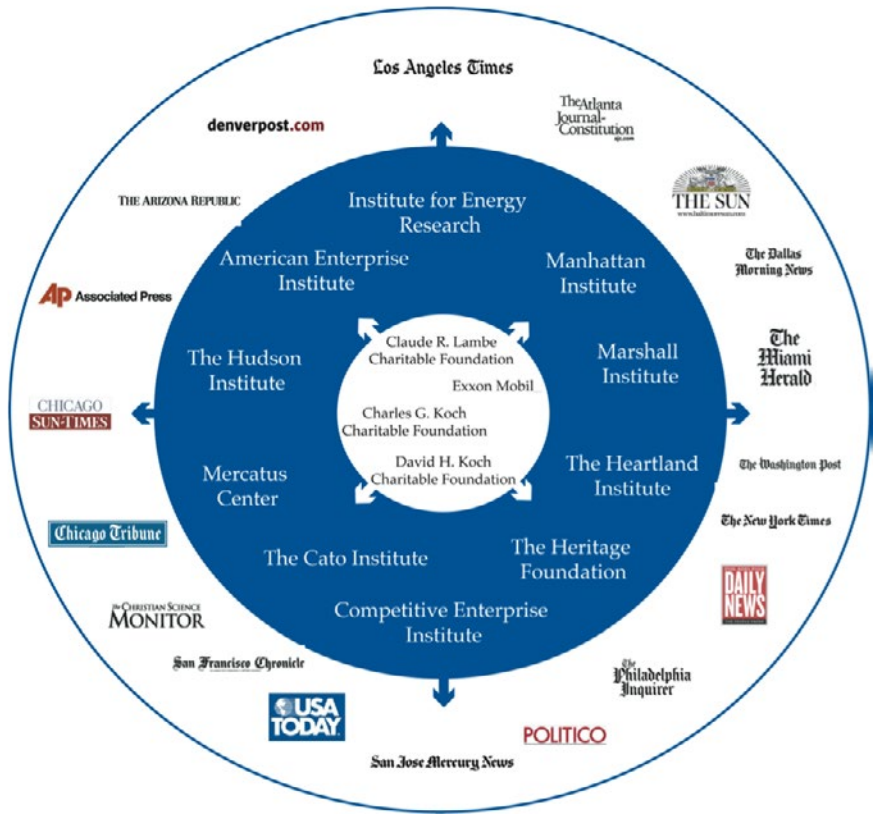
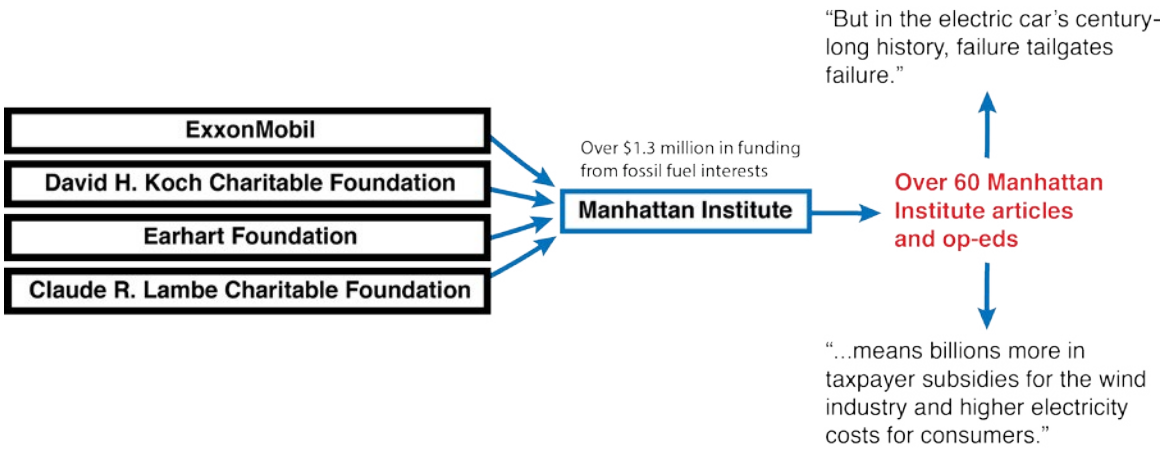


Table 2 depicts how the relationship between fossil fuel funders and these organizations work. Funders with fossil fuel interests provide funding to self-positioned, “free market” or “libertarian” think tanks. Pundits for these groups then provide commentary in influential media outlets that align with their fossil-fuel funders’ interests. Newspapers and online news outlets carry the fossil fuel lobby’s point of view but rarely mention the financial ties between those mentioned and their funders. This process played out at least 1,010 times during a five-year period in just 60 media outlets.

Table 2: From Funder to Organization to Media Mentions



FINDING 1: Fossil fuel interests have provided at least \$16.5 million to 10 organizations from 2006-2010.

In a five-year period, four organizations with direct ties to fossil fuel lobbying interests have provided more than \$16 million to 10 organizations that position themselves as “think tanks,” “policy organizations” or “institutes.” These organizations routinely conveyed messages that were pro-fossil fuel, anti-clean energy, anti-environmental protection and denied the existence of climate change.

Table 3 shows a list of total donations from fossil fuel interests to these 10 organizations. Table 4 shows how much money each organization received, respectively.

Table 3: Donations From Fossil Fuel-Tied Organizations

Organization	Total Investment (2007-2011)	Description
Charles G. Koch Foundation	\$7,774,979	Controlled by the Koch family, owners of Koch Industries, a major fossil fuel conglomerate
Claude R. Lambe Foundation	\$4,740,121	Controlled by the Koch family, owners of Koch Industries, a major fossil fuel conglomerate
Earhart Foundation	\$1,443,688	Founded with profits from the White Star Oil Company
ExxonMobil	\$2,330,000	Largest oil refiner in the world, multi-billion dollar oil company

Table 4: Organizational Recipients of Funding

	Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation	Charles G. Koch Foundation	Earhart Foundation	ExxonMobil	Total
American Enterprise Institute	-	\$100,000	\$370,000	\$1,205,000	\$1,675,000
Competitive Enterprise Institute	\$19,200	\$24,079	\$45,000	-	\$88,279
Cato Institute	\$1,017,350	\$18,400	\$330,225	\$20,000	\$1,385,975
George C. Marshall Institute	\$280,000	-	\$195,000	\$200,000	\$675,000
Heartland Institute	-	-	-	\$115,000	\$115,000
Heritage Foundation	\$2,273,571	-	\$30,000	\$220,000	\$2,523,571
Hudson Institute	-	-	\$75,000	-	\$75,000
Institute for Energy Research	\$150,000	-	-	\$160,000	\$310,000
Manhattan Institute	\$1,000,000	-	\$170,000	\$210,000	\$1,380,000
Mercatus Center	-	\$7,632,500	\$228,463	\$200,000	\$8,060,963
Total	\$4,740,121	\$7,774,121	\$1,443,688	\$2,330,000	\$16,288,788

It is important to note that our list of funding sources is only a partial picture of corporate donations. For instance, while ExxonMobil makes its contributions public, corporations are not required to report these donations.¹¹ Often fossil fuel interests channel their advocacy dollars through foundations and other groups that then direct the money to others groups, such as those listed above, that then perform the actual advocacy work. This greatly obscures the path of advocacy money from source to implementing organization.

Corporate Grants received (click on the grantmaker's name for a list of all grants)

Total Grants (by Year)
 1998: \$125,000
 1995: \$17,000
 1994: \$27,000

Grantmaker	Amount	Year
Exxon Mobil	\$85,000	1998
Cigna	\$25,000	1998
Chevron	\$15,000	1998
Chevron	\$17,000	1995
Chevron	\$17,000	1994
Exxon Mobil	\$10,000	1994

For example, the Competitive Enterprise Institute's (CEI) contributions in the late 1990s show substantial funding from fossil fuel-connected foundations and companies. In 1998, CEI received at least \$185,000 from fossil fuel interests, more than double the amount reported in the period 2007-2011 via companies and foundations connected to fossil fuel companies, including ExxonMobil.¹² It is almost certain that fossil fuel lobbying interests continue to spend money on think tanks and advocacy groups to advance their bottom line but are not compelled to report these expenditures. These records are only available because of the landmark tobacco lawsuit (*State of Minnesota vs. Philip Morris*) that required disclosure of internal documents, including funding of front groups used to defend the tobacco industry.

A recent 200-page investigative report by Dr. John Mashey¹³ exposes DonorsTrust, a “bundler” group used to anonymize funding, from fossil fuel interests and other donors, and move funds to “think tanks” and fossil fuel advocacy groups such as American Enterprise Institute and Cato Institute. The Mashey report details over \$300 million given to groups from 2002-2010, none of which is included in this report.

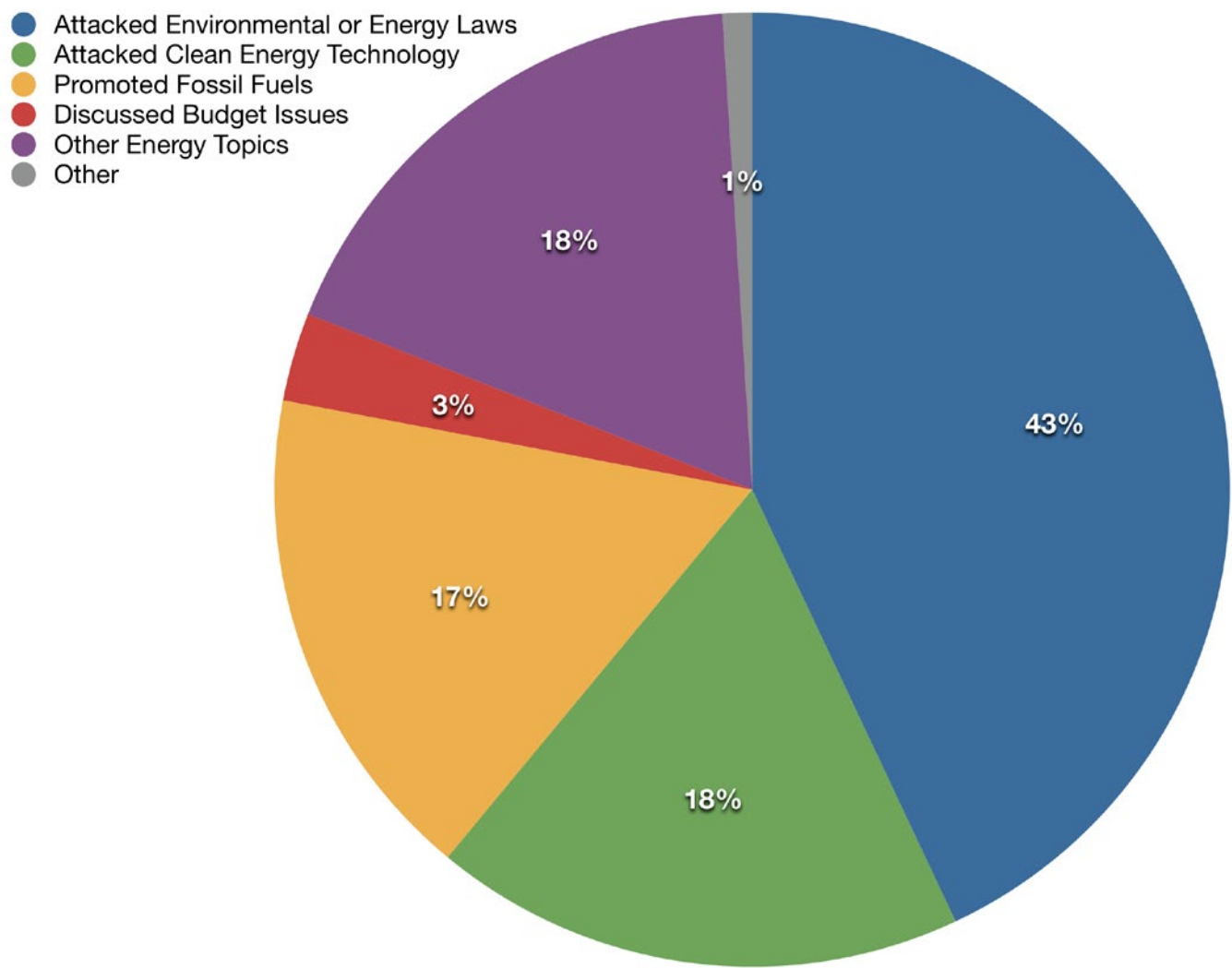
FINDING 2: Fossil fuel-funded organizations use targeted, focused messaging to support fossil energy sources and attack clean energy.

Our review of articles in major media sources found that in nearly two-thirds of the articles in which they were mentioned, these groups attacked clean energy, climate change science, policies that promoted clean energy or government action designed to tackle global warming pollutants. Another fifth of these mentions promoted greater use of fossil fuels.

Specifically, we found:

- 18% of the groups’ stated positions attacked clean energy technologies.
- 17% of stated positions promoted fossil fuels.
- 43% of stated positions attacked environmental or energy regulations.
- 3% of stated positions discussed various budget issues.
- 18% of stated positions articulated various neutral stances on energy, ranging from the “BP oil spills” and “gas prices,” to views on members of Congress.

Table 5: Media Mentions by Topic



Our analysis of these organizations' mentioned points of view shows that they used similar messaging to discuss their anti-clean energy stances. Table 6 provides select examples of the groups' typical messaging.

Table 6: Representative Quotes from Fossil Fuel-Funded Advocacy Groups

Point of View	Illustrative Quote
Attacks Clean Energy Technology (18%)	<p>"The Institute for Energy Research, a free-market research group, panned the administration's tax credit plan. Institute President Thomas Pyle said the administration was throwing more money at unproven wind and solar technology that has to be sustained by government investments because it 'is not economically viable in the marketplace.'</p> <p>'If the president really wants to create an environment that will foster economic growth and job creation, he need not look any further than the domestic oil, gas and coal industries,' Pyle said."</p> <p>Houston Chronicle, 1/9/10</p>
Promotes Fossil Fuels (17%)	<p>"Nothing can compete with [oil] in terms of price, ubiquity, and ease of use on such massive a scale. 'If oil didn't exist, we'd have to invent it,' says Robert Bryce, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and author of 'Power Hungry: The Myths of 'Green' Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future'."</p> <p>The Christian Science Monitor, 6/12/10</p>
Attacks Environment or Energy Legislation or Regulation (43%)	<p>"But Myron Ebell, director of energy and global warming policy with the Competitive Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank that advocates limited government and free-market solutions to public policy issues...</p> <p>'Global warming or cooling may impose some costs on California (as well as provide some benefits), but the projections of trillions of dollars of damages from global warming are based on fantasy rather than facts,' [Ebell] said."</p> <p>San Jose Mercury, 10/13/08</p>

FINDING 3: Within a five-year period, these groups and their personnel have been mentioned on energy issues at least 1,010 times in major daily newspapers, averaging four mentions a week – or more than once every other day.

The frequency of placement varied for each of the 10 organizations. Larger organizations, such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute were mentioned more frequently. But even the smaller institutions appeared at least once a month in the 60 publications studied. Table 7 shows total number of placements for each organization between 2007-2011 in 60 major publications.

- The Heritage Foundation’s positions were mentioned once a week, on average.
- The American Enterprise Institute, the Cato Foundation and the Competitive Enterprise Institute each had their positions mentioned two to three times a month.
- The Institute for Energy Research had its positions mentioned one to two times a month.
- The Heartland Institute and the Manhattan Institute had their positions mentioned at least once a month.

Some organizations do more mainstream media work than others. Mercatus Center, based at George Mason University, and the Hudson Institute, which produces reports and research, seem to be more focused on moving supportive analysis and research to other like-minded, pro-fossil fuel groups.

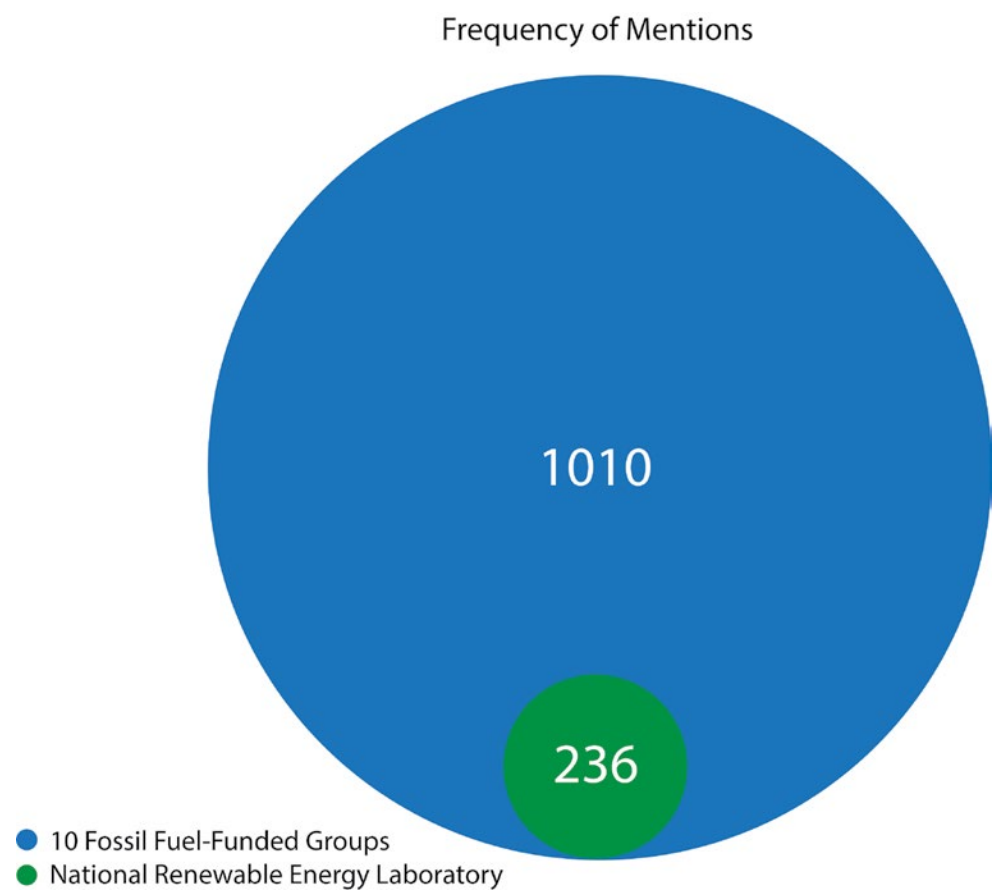
Table 7: Number of Energy Issue Placements for Each Organization: 2007-2011

Organization	Total Mentions
Heritage Foundation	277
Competitive Enterprise Institute	162
American Enterprise Institute	159
Cato Institute	146
Institute for Energy Research	98
Heartland Institute	70
Manhattan Institute	65
Marshall Institute	20
Hudson Institute	8
Mercatus Center	5
Total	1010

To put the frequency of these mentions in context, we compared them to the number of times the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) was mentioned by these same publications on energy.

NREL is a highly credible, decades-old, federally-funded research laboratory that develops and advances renewable and energy efficiency technologies. It has actual, credentialed experts, with an organizational mission to transfer knowledge on energy to the public and other parts of the government.¹⁴ However, we found that the fossil fuel-funded advocacy groups generated more than four times the media mentions on energy issues than NREL over the same five-year period. NREL was mentioned 236 times in the same publications that mentioned the 10 fossil-fuel-funded organizations more than 1,000 times over the same time period. Table 8 compares the number of mentions of NREL and the 10 fossil fuel-funded groups in this analysis.

Table 8: NREL vs. Fossil Fuel-Funded Organizations



Furthermore, these 1,010 mentions in newspapers represent just a small portion of these 10 fossil fuel-funded groups’ media impact. For example, The Wall Street Journal was not included in our analysis because the paper does not make its archives available to LexisNexis. A separate search of The Wall Street Journal’s 2011 archives using Factiva (a third-party search engine for news and business information) found a total of 17 mentions for a one-year period for the 10 organizations we tracked.

Outside of print media, these organizations’ pundits are frequently featured on the Sunday talk show circuit, mainstream television networks, cable television, national magazines, online publications, and as guest speakers. All of these placements increase their ability to penetrate the media and expand the mindshare claimed by their viewpoint.

For example, Media Matters chronicled the media appearances of Manhattan Institute’s energy fellow Robert Bryce between January 2011 and October 2011 in media outlets ranging from mainstream newspapers to television to major internet platforms. Media Matters found that Mr. Bryce alone received 39 media mentions during that nine-month period.¹⁵ Table 9 shows the media mentions of Mr. Bryce for a nine-month period in 2011.

Table 9: Media Mentions for Manhattan Institute’s Robert Bryce: Jan 2011-Oct 2011

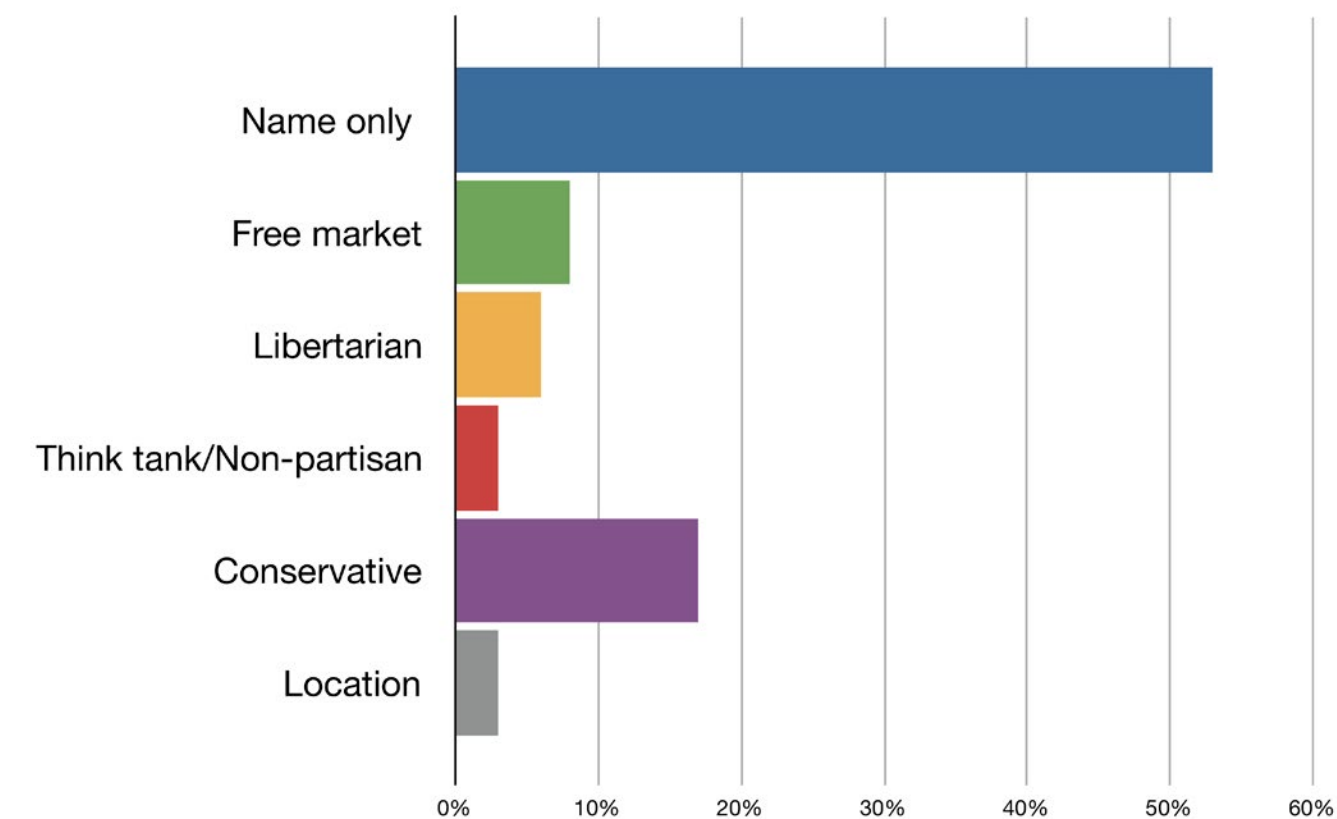
Media Outlet Type	Appearances
Mainstream and Cable Television	12
Major Newspapers	11
National Magazines	10
Major News Websites	6

FINDING 4: Media descriptions of these organizations (beyond their name) were not included in a majority of mentions. If described, descriptions typically focused the organizations’ function (e.g., “think tank”) or location (e.g., “DC-based”), not their motivation. Almost all of the rare descriptions of motivation used self-identified ideology (i.e., “conservative,” “free market” or “libertarian”), not their financial ties to fossil fuel interests.

Many of these outlets used neutral descriptors to describe the organizations. These descriptions included just their name (53%), location (3%) or function (e.g. “think tank” or “non-partisan” group) (3%).

These organizations’ motivations were occasionally described by ideology, including the terms “conservative” (17%), “libertarian” (6%) or “free market” (8%). These results are represented in Table 10.

Table 10: How Organizations Are Described



FINDING 5: Media outlets routinely omitted any mention of the financial ties between the 10 organizations and the fossil fuel interests provided funding. The link between fossil fuel funders and organizations were described only 6% of the time.

In our review of news coverage, most mainstream media reports omitted any mention of the relationship between the organizations we identified in this analysis and their financial ties to fossil fuel interests. In fact, our review showed that the media described the link to fossil fuel interests only six percent (6%) of the time. Several outlets mentioned these organizations repeatedly during the five-year period, yet never communicated to readers the groups' financial ties to fossil fuels. Of the 60 publications surveyed, the Houston Chronicle had the highest percentage (15%) of descriptions informing its readers of the financial ties between the 10 organizations and their fossil fuel funders.

Table 11: Total Number and Percentage That Select Outlets Described Ties Between 10 Organizations and Fossil Fuel Interests

Newspaper	Described Financial Ties?			Percentage		
	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Associated Press	24	1	25	96%	4%	100%
Denver Post	30	3	33	91%	9%	100%
Houston Chronicle	28	5	33	85%	15%	100%
Los Angeles Times	35	3	38	92%	8%	100%
New York Times	37	4	41	90%	10%	100%
Politico	71	4	75	95%	5%	100%
USA Today	41	1	42	98%	2%	100%
Washington Post	74	10	84	88%	12%	100%
All outlets in the analysis	952	57	1010	94%	6%	100%

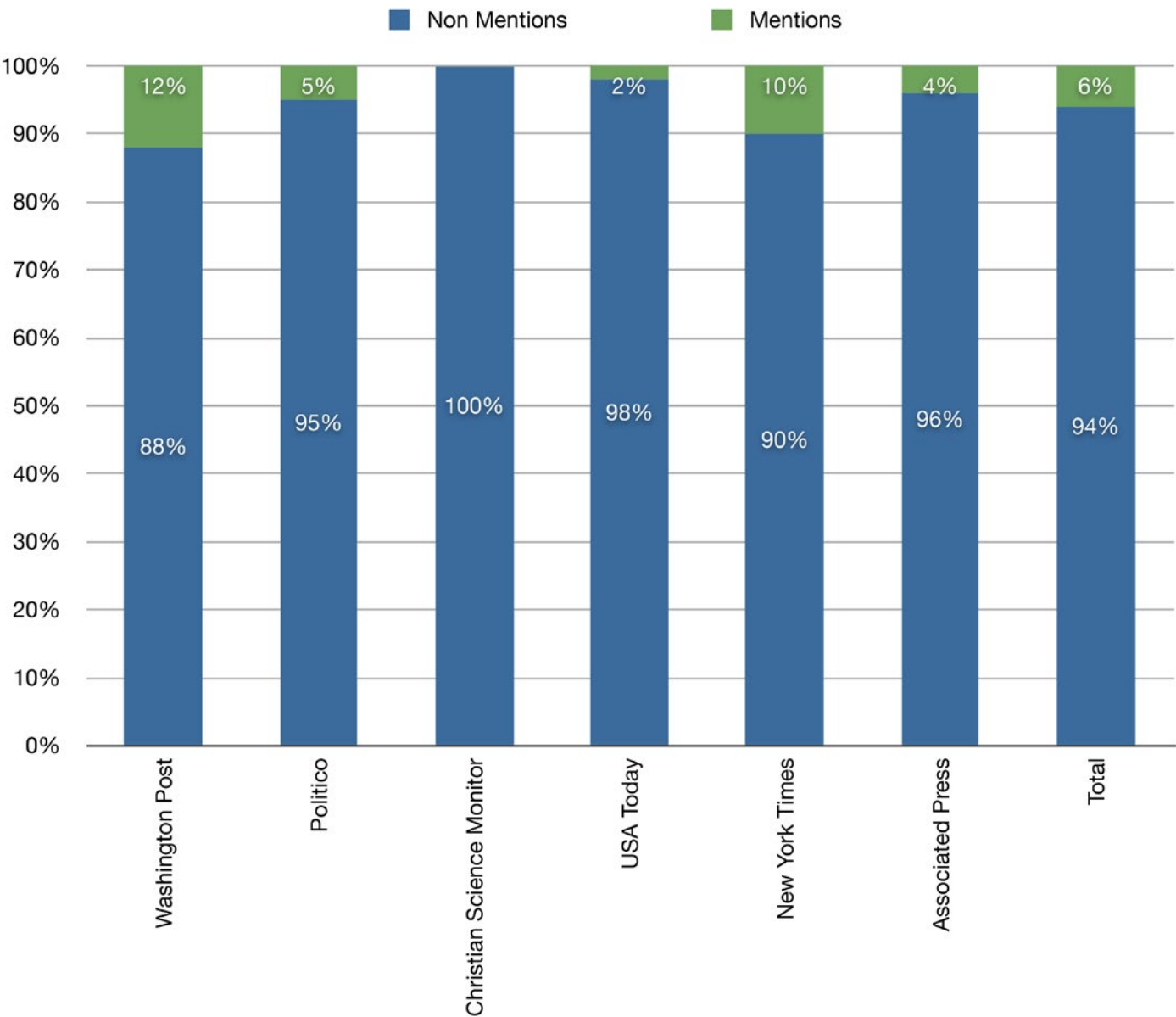
Table 12: Major Metropolitan Dailies with No Mentions of Fossil Ties

Outlet	Total Stories During Five-Year Period	Times Fossil Fuels \$ Ties Mentioned
Arizona Republic	10	0
San Jose Mercury News	10	0
Dallas Morning News	11	0
Miami Herald	12	0
San Diego Union Tribune	12	0
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel	14	0
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	15	0
Fort Worth Star Telegram	17	0
The Oklahoman	17	0
Chicago Sun Times	19	0
St. Petersburg Times	21	0
Detroit News	34	0
The Christian Science Monitor	42	0
Orange County Register	57	0

FINDING 6: These organizations received heavier coverage in influential newspapers that help shape the national agenda, including Politico, The Washington Post, USA Today and The New York Times.

The frequency of coverage that these organizations received is notable not only for quantity, but also for the quality of their placement. Nearly one third (31%) of the 1,010 mentions came from six national outlets: Associated Press, Politico, The New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today and Christian Science Monitor. The average rate of media coverage for the respective organizations ranged one every other month to more than once a month between 2007-2011. Table 13 shows that a large majority of appearances in major national publications included no mention of the organizations’ ties to fossil fuel interests.

Table 13: Appearances in National Newspapers: 2006-2011



FINDING 7: Despite being labeled as “free market” or “libertarian,” these organizations focus their criticism almost exclusively on clean energy policy investments. They make few – if any – references to government support for fossil fuels.

The appellations “conservative,” “libertarian” and “small government” are terms used both by these organizations themselves, as well as by media outlets, to define the organizations’ motivations. Specifically, they are used to define the organizations’ rationale for opposing policy investments for clean energy, legislation to fight climate change and anti-pollution standards.

However, a review of the 1,010 stories surveyed illustrates that these groups’ criticisms almost completely omit references to far-higher levels of taxpayer support for mature, highly profitable fossil fuel industries that least need taxpayer money.

Of 75 stories we reviewed that mentioned “subsidies” or “taxes,” more than half (51%) opposed clean energy policies, 12% opposed all subsidies, 4% opposed all energy subsidies, 5% opposed fossil fuel subsidies and 1% supported fossil fuel subsidies and clean energy subsidies.

These results stand in contrast to what is actually spent by taxpayers on different energy sources. For example, a study by the Environmental Law Institute¹⁶ found that the fossil fuel industry received six times more subsidies than clean energy. Earth Track, which has done the most comprehensive study to date, found that fossil fuels receive up to 20 times more taxpayer money than clean energy.¹⁷ Despite the large disparity in fossil fuel support versus clean energy support, these “limited-government” organizations almost exclusively raised objections to clean energy investments while staying mostly silent on fossil fuel subsidies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In our view, the issues discussed in this analysis are due significantly to the:

- Growing influence of the corporate lobbying industry.
- Declining size of the press corps available to fact check and accurately define that industry.
- Drastic cutbacks in the size and depth of the press corps, combined with the acute time pressures of blogging, iterative reporting and tweeting have led to severely time-impooverished newsrooms.
- Often-technical nature of energy and environmental issues that makes it easy to cloud the debate and crowd out honest brokers, such as NREL, with authoritative-sounding pronouncements.

In our view, these four factors have enabled the fossil fuel-funded groups to largely avoid having their ties to fossil fuel donors discussed in any meaningful way with readers and citizens.

But the national conversation about our energy future is vitally important, as is the need for the media's vigilance in informing readers on "expert" sources' possible motivations. If the media does not demand answers, these organizations certainly will not supply them.

We confirmed that firsthand when, as part of our True Ties campaign, we attempted to pin down whether Manhattan Institute's prolific pro-fossil fuel pundit, Robert Bryce, had ties to the fossil fuel lobby. When asked if he had direct or indirect ties to fossil fuel interests, Mr. Bryce repeatedly refused to answer the question.^{18 19}

The unwillingness of fossil fuel-funded advocacy groups to report their financial support from fossil fuel lobbying interests demands the media strengthen its watchdog role on the "expert" sources they mention.

Mr. Bryce and fossil fuel-funded organizations have every right to participate in the public debate. But readers have every right to know that those who are mentioned are financially tied to lobbying interests that benefit from their point of view.

We have developed the following recommendations, based on guidelines²⁰ put forth by The New York Times' Public Editor Arthur Brisbane, on how to ensure that sources are more accurately described in the future:

1. Media outlets should report that sources in news stories receive funding from industries that stand to benefit from their viewpoints.
2. Author lines for op-eds should include the writer's current paid role.
3. Media outlets should require op-ed contributors to provide a document listing all current paid positions and to publish a link to the document.
4. Media outlets should require op-ed contributors to list donations to their organizations from companies or foundations within industries that stand to benefit from their viewpoint.
5. Online editions should include links for these organizational ties so readers can investigate, if they wish.



Overall, we think that whether it's for a quote, background information, a citation or a byline, "think tank" sources should be asked a simple, step-and-repeat question: "Do you get money, directly or indirectly, for interests that stand to benefit from what you are saying?"

If implemented, the standards listed above could ensure that consumers of news more completely understand the points of view they are reading.

About Checks and Balances Project

The Checks and Balances Project was conceived as an investigative and oversight project designed to get to the bottom of how and why decisions are being made that affect taxpayers and consumers.

Our focus is on holding government officials, lobbyists and corporate management accountable for their actions related to energy, public health and the environment.

Co-Director Gabe Elsner's work is supported by Renew American Prosperity, Inc.²¹ The work of Co-Director Matt Garrington to bring accountability in the western energy and public lands debate is supported by the New Venture Fund,²² a 501(c)3 public charity that also supports innovative public interest projects in global health and development, conservation, health, education and other critical sectors.

We support and actively seek support from the clean energy sector. We are proud of and upfront about this support.

The True Ties Campaign

Last fall, the Checks and Balances project launched the "True Ties" campaign to ask media industry leaders like The New York Times to set the standard in reporting the financial backgrounds and potential conflicts of interest of their guest opinion writers.

The campaign garnered a response from Times Public Editor Arthur Brisbane. In a Sunday column on the subject, he wrote: "While I recognize that The Times has limited space in print to provide more disclosure, I believe it should do more to help readers learn about outside Op-Ed contributors."²³

Appendix

Table A: List of Media Outlets

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Arizona Republic | 32. Newsday |
| 2. Atlanta Journal Constitution | 33. Philadelphia Daily News |
| 3. Boston Herald | 34. Politico |
| 4. Chicago Sun Times | 35. San Diego Union Tribune |
| 5. Cleveland Plain Dealer | 36. Seattle Times |
| 6. Dallas Morning News | 37. South Florida Sun-Sentinel |
| 7. Detroit News | 38. The Christian Science Monitor |
| 8. Hartford Courant | 39. The Independent |
| 9. Kansas City Star | 40. USA Today |
| 10. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | 41. Associated Press |
| 11. New York Daily News | 42. Boston Globe |
| 12. Newark Star Ledger | 43. Charlotte Observer |
| 13. Orlando Sentinel | 44. Cincinnati Inquirer |
| 14. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette | 45. Courier Journal |
| 15. San Antonio Express News | 46. Detroit Free Press |
| 16. San Jose Mercury News | 47. Grand Rapids Press |
| 17. St. Petersburg Times | 48. Indianapolis Star |
| 18. Tampa Tribune | 49. Miami Herald |
| 19. The Guardian | 50. New Orleans Times-Picayune |
| 20. The Oregonian | 51. New York Times |
| 21. Arkansas Democrat Gazette | 52. Orange County Register |
| 22. Baltimore Sun | 53. Philadelphia Inquirer |
| 23. Buffalo News | 54. Sacramento Bee |
| 24. Chicago Tribune | 55. San Francisco Chronicle |
| 25. Columbus Dispatch | 56. St. Louis Post Dispatch |
| 26. Denver Post | 57. Tampa Bay Times |
| 27. Fort Worth Star Telegram | 58. The Courier-Journal |
| 28. Houston Chronicle | 59. The Oklahoman |
| 29. Los Angeles Times | 60. Washington Post |
| 30. Minneapolis Star Tribune | |
| 31. New York Post | |

End Notes and Sources

1. New York Times, “Conservative Non-Profit Acts as Stealth Business Lobbyist.” http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/us/alec-a-tax-exempt-group-mixes-legislators-and-lobbyists.html?_r=1; The Guardian, Conservative think tanks step up attacks against Obama’s clean energy strategy. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/may/08/conservative-thinktanks-obama-energy-plans?newsfeed=true>
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6. The New York Times, “The Time Gives Them Space, but Who Pays Them?” http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/30/opinion/sunday/the-times-gives-them-space-but-who-pays-them.html?_r=0
7. The Checks and Balances Project is actively seeking such funding from the clean energy sectors, and we are proud to say that.
8. There are dozens of organizations tied to fossil fuels, such as the American Legislative Exchange Council and FreedomWorks. In this analysis, we chose to focus on ‘think tanks’ participating in the public debate on energy issues, and excluded groups focused on crafting legislation or building ‘grassroots’ support for their positions.
9. GuideStar. <http://www.guidestar.org>.
10. SourceWatch. <http://sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=SourceWatch>.
11. <http://www.sec.gov/rules/other/chgive.htm> “federal securities laws do not specifically require public companies to disclose information regarding their charitable contributions. These laws also do not require public companies to give their shareholders a role in determining who should receive contributions or the amount of contributions.”
12. Capital Research Center, CRC SearchLight. “Com-petitive Enterprise Institute.” <http://web.archive.org/web/20030702031226/http://www.capitalresearch.org/search/orgdisplay.asp?Org=CEI200#grant>
13. DeSmogBlog. “Key Findings From the Mashey Report on Donors Trust.” <http://www.desmogblog.com/2012/10/25/key-findings-mashey-report-donors-trust>
14. National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Overview. <http://www.nrel.gov/overview/>
15. Media Matters for America, “Who Is Robert Bryce?” <http://mediamatters.org/research/201110070015>
16. Environmental Law Institute, “Energy Subsidies Black Not Green.” http://www.eli.org/pdf/Energy_Subsidies_Black_Not_Green.pdf
17. Earth Track, “Subsidies in the US Energy Sector: Magnitude, Causes, and Options for Reform.” http://www.earth-track.net/files/legacy_library/SubsidyReformOptions.pdf
18. Since that conversation, Mr. Bryce and the Manhattan Institute has indicated in some articles that the Institute has received “4 percent” of its funding from the “hydrocarbon sector” while omitting this disclosure from others. This small amount likely does not include support from foundations connected to fossil fuel interests, such as the numerous Koch Family Foundations controlled by Charles and David Koch of Koch Industries.
19. Checks & Balances Project, “Robert Bryce tied to the fossil fuel industry.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57zyh7sc9VA>
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21. Renew American Prosperity. <http://renewamerican-prosperity.org/>
22. New Venture Fund. <http://www.newventurefund.org/>
23. New York Times, The Public Editor. “The Times Gives Them Space, But Who Pays Them.” http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/30/opinion/sunday/the-times-gives-them-space-but-who-pays-them.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=brisan&st=Search