



Amazon and Google fund anti-abortion lawmakers through complex shell game

Blue-chip companies gave to Republican group funneling money to lawmakers who overturned abortion-ban veto in North Carolina

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As North Carolina's 12-week abortion ban is due to come into effect on 1 July, an analysis from the non-profit Center for Political Accountability (CPA) shows several major corporations donated large sums to a Republican political organization which in turn funded groups working to elect anti-abortion state legislators.

The Republican State Leadership Committee (RSLC) received donations of tens of thousands of dollars each from corporations including Comcast, Intuit, Wells Fargo, Amazon, [Bank of America](#) and Google last year, the CPA's analysis of IRS filings shows. The contributions were made in the months after Politico published a leaked supreme court decision indicating that the court would end the right to nationwide abortion access.

Google contributed \$45,000 to the RSLC after the leak of the draft decision, according to the CPA's review of the tax filings. Others contributed even more in the months after the leak, including Amazon (\$50,000), Intuit (\$100,000) and [Comcast](#) (\$147,000).

Google, Amazon, Comcast, [Wells Fargo](#) and Bank of America did not respond to requests for comment. An Intuit spokesperson pointed out that the company also donates to Democratic political organizations, and that "our financial support does not indicate a full endorsement of every position taken by an individual policymaker or organization.

“Intuit is non-partisan and works with policymakers and leaders from both sides of the aisle to advocate for our customers,” an Intuit spokesperson said in a statement. “We believe engagement with policymakers is essential to a robust democracy and political giving is just one of the many ways Intuit engages on behalf of its customers, employees, and the communities it serves.”

A Bank of America spokesperson pointed to the company’s policy that donations to so-called 527 organizations such as the RSLC come with the caveat that they only be used for operational and administrative purposes, not to support any candidates or ballot initiatives. The CPA, meanwhile, argues that since the RSLC’s operations are explicitly designed to support candidates and ballot initiatives, such a policy is a distinction without a difference.

Although these companies did not directly give these vast sums to North Carolina’s anti-abortion lawmakers, the CPA’s analysis is a case study in how corporate contributions to organizations such as the RSLC can end up being funneled into anti-abortion causes. When Republican state legislators successfully overturned a veto from the Democratic governor last month to pass the upcoming abortion ban, nine of lawmakers voting to overturn the veto had received campaign contributions from a group with links to the RSLC.

The RSLC, which works to elect Republican lawmakers and promote rightwing policies at the state level, is at the top of a chain of spending and donations which eventually connected to rightwing candidates in North Carolina. This type of spending, which relies on channeling money through various third-party groups from larger organizations, is a common part of modern political campaign financing.

Companies need to know where their money is ending up
Bruce Freed of the Center for Political Accountability

In this case, the RSLC gave \$5m to the Good Government Coalition political organization between June and November last year, which in turn gave \$6.45m to the rightwing political group Citizens for a Better North Carolina. Finally, that organization gave \$1m in independent expenditures to support nine anti-abortion state lawmakers who later voted to overturn the governor’s veto of the abortion bill.

These donations are evidence that corporations are proving to be complicit in the broader movement to limit abortion rights, the CPA non-profit argues, even as many of these companies publicly tout women’s empowerment and employee access to healthcare.

“Companies need to know where their money is ending up,” said Bruce Freed, the president of the CPA. “This should be a lesson – a lesson that they should have taken a while ago but that frankly is driven home right now with what has been happening in North Carolina.”

Several of the companies, including Intuit and Bank of America, [made statements](#) last year offering to cover healthcare costs for employees who needed to travel out of state for medical procedures, in some cases explicitly mentioning abortion as an example. Google sent an email to employees acknowledging that Roe v Wade had been overturned and informed them about options for relocating to Google offices in different states. “Equity is extraordinarily important to us as a company, and we share concerns about the impact this ruling will have on people’s health, lives and careers,” the email stated.

The companies which donated to the RSLC are also large donors to Democratic political groups, and tech giants such as Google and [Amazon](#) tend to spend millions each year more broadly on lobbying efforts. The RSLC, whose board members include former lawmakers, governors and White House advisers such as Karl Rove, boasts on its website that it spent more than \$45m on supporting Republican candidates during the 2021 and 2022 election cycle.

In addition to North Carolina’s abortion ban, South Carolina also passed a bill last week that would criminalize most abortions at six weeks into a pregnancy – generally a period before people know they are pregnant. A state judge issued a temporary halt on the ban within hours of Governor Henry McMaster signing it into law, and it will now [be reviewed](#) by the state supreme court. North Carolina’s 12-week abortion ban is scheduled to go into effect on 1 July, drastically curtailing abortion access as many other southern states have passed near total bans.

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