



Welcome to Popular Information, a newsletter dedicated to accountability journalism.

These 50 companies have donated over \$23 million to election deniers since January 6, 2021

[These 50 companies have donated over \\$23 million to election deniers since January 6, 2021 \(popular.info\)](#)

[REBECCA CROSBY](#) AND [JUDD LEGUM](#)

MAR 28, 2024

Donald Trump lost the 2020 election.

Then, according to the [report](#) of the bipartisan January 6 Commission, Trump engaged in a "multi-part conspiracy to overturn the lawful results of the 2020 Presidential election."

Trump did not do this alone. He was supported by members of Congress who endorsed his lies and voted against certifying the election results, state attorneys general who filed briefs in support of Trump's baseless legal claims, and local officials who helped Trump create slates of fake electors. This all culminated in the violence of January 6, 2021, by a mob that was incited and encouraged by Trump, both before and during the attack.

Ultimately, Trump's efforts to cling to power came up short and Joe Biden, the rightful winner, was inaugurated. But in the intervening three years, the threat to democracy has not ebbed — it has intensified.

Trump won the Republican presidential primary and will be on the ballot again in November 2024. He has not abandoned his lies about 2020. Instead, he has made them central to his reelection campaign.

At rallies, Trump refers to the rioters who were sentenced in connection with the violent attack on the United States Capitol as "[January 6th hostages](#)." Before each campaign rally, he plays a version of the national anthem performed by people who participated in the mob violence. He is promising to pardon all of them if he wins the presidency again.

In other words, Trump has recast the violent attack of January 6, 2021, as an expression of patriotism. It sends a clear message to Trump supporters as America barrels toward what promises to be another close election.

Should he lose again, Trump warned ominously of "[bedlam in the country](#)" and "the opening of a Pandora's box" after a January court appearance. Asked by a reporter if he would rule out more violence by his supporters, Trump simply walked away. (At a campaign event earlier this month, Trump said there would be a "[bloodbath for the country](#)" if Biden wins, but insists he was only talking about the domestic electric vehicle industry.)

Despite all of this, Trump has the near-unanimous support of the Republican Party. And many Republican election officials are not simply endorsing Trump — they are endorsing his lies about the 2020 election. The group States United Action has identified [170 federal and statewide officials and candidates](#) who are election deniers, including 136 members of Congress, 22 statewide officials, and 12 candidates on the ballot for statewide office.

A new investigation by Popular Information, using state and federal campaign finance databases, found that 50 prominent corporations have donated \$23,273,400 to the campaigns and political committees of these election deniers since January 6, 2021. Some of the largest contributors to election deniers are also some of the country's leading companies, including AT&T, Comcast, Walmart, and Microsoft.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. On January 4, a large group of business leaders signed onto a [statement](#) arguing that the planned objections to vote were destructive.

"Congress should certify the electoral vote on Wednesday, January 6," the business leaders wrote. "Attempts to thwart or delay this process run counter to the essential tenets of our democracy." The Chamber of Commerce, which represents nearly every major corporation in America, released a [similar statement](#).

As Popular Information comprehensively documented, in the aftermath of the attack on the U.S. Capitol, many of these corporations pledged to cut off support to members of Congress who voted to overturn the election.

[The January 6 corporate accountability index](#)

[JUDD LEGUM](#), [REBECCA CROSBY](#), AND [TESNIM ZEKERIA](#)

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AUGUST 17, 2021

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Since then, the election deniers in Congress and around the country have not changed.

Just last month, Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (R-NY) said that had she been in the position of former Vice President Mike Pence (R) on January 6, 2021, [she would not have certified election results](#). Stefanik said she stood by her vote against certifying the 2020 results, calling the election not "legal" and "unconstitutional." Notably, Stefanik also [refused to commit to certifying the 2024 election results](#), calling Democrats "desperate." She also accused Democrats of "trying to steal" the 2024 election.

Over the last three years, Stefanik has received \$503,500 from the 50 prominent corporations included in Popular Information's investigation through her committee and leadership PAC, including Home Depot, General Motors, FedEx, UnitedHealth, and Toyota. And Stefanik is not alone. Corporate cash is flowing to many officials who are not only defending their efforts to subvert the democratic process in 2020 but threatening to run the same playbook in 2024.

AT&T: \$1,234,100 to 120 election deniers

After January 6, 2021, AT&T released a [statement](#) saying, “Employees on our Federal PAC Board convened a call today and decided to suspend contributions to members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of Electoral College votes last week.”

AT&T resumed donating to political committees supporting Republican objectors in [February 2021](#). Those donations increased in [September 2021](#). By January 2022, AT&T fully broke their pledge and resumed donations to individual Republican objectors. AT&T [argued](#) that the “employee PAC suspended contributions to those lawmakers’ campaigns for more than a year.” But since corporate political donations are capped over a two-year cycle, AT&T didn't miss out on an opportunity to donate the maximum to any candidate.

From January 6, 2021 to the present, AT&T has donated \$1,234,100 to 109 election deniers at the federal level and 11 election deniers at the state level.

This includes \$10,000 to House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) and \$5,000 to Johnson’s leadership PAC. On January 6, 2021, hours before the insurrection, Johnson [posted](#) on X, “We MUST fight for election integrity, the Constitution, and the preservation of our republic! It will be my honor to help lead that fight in the Congress today.” Johnson voted to overturn the results of the election later that day, and reportedly [coached](#) Republican colleagues before the vote. Over a year later, Johnson [said](#) on his religious podcast “Truth Be Told” that “he and his colleagues had been right to object to the election results.” In January 2024, during an interview on CBS’ “Face The Nation,” Johnson [continued](#) to push claims that there was election interference in the 2020 election. “The Constitution was violated in the run up to the 2020 election...That’s just a fact,” Johnson said. Many courts have reviewed the claim that the conduct of the 2020 election was unconstitutional and all have rejected it.

AT&T also donated \$10,000 to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R). After the 2020 election, Paxton [filed](#) a Supreme Court lawsuit attempting to invalidate the results of the election in key battleground states. Paxton argued that the states “exploited the COVID-19 pandemic to justify ignoring federal and state election laws and unlawfully enacting last-minute changes, thus skewing the results of the 2020 General Election.” In May

2022, Paxton posted a [statement](#) on X saying he “stand[s] by this lawsuit completely.” Paxton called it a “historic challenge to the unconstitutional 2020 presidential election.”

AT&T did not respond to a request for comment.

Microsoft: \$112,500 to 29 election deniers

On February 5, 2021, Microsoft released a [statement](#) stating that it would “suspend contributions for the duration of the 2022 election cycle to all members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of electors. We will also suspend contributions for the same period for state officials and organizations who supported such objections or suggested the election should be overturned.”

Since January 6, 2021, however, Microsoft has donated \$112,500 to 27 election deniers on the federal level and two election deniers on the state level.

In a statement to Popular Information, the company said, “Microsoft maintained our commitment for the duration of the 2022 election cycle and gave no money to candidates who objected to the certification of electors. Should any candidate continue to deny the results of the 2020 U.S. presidential election in 2024, we will not contribute to their campaign.”

Microsoft’s recent donations, however, include multiple election deniers who continue to question the validity of the 2020 election results. On June 30, 2023, Microsoft donated \$3,000 to Representative Byron Donalds (R-FL). At an Axios event this month, Donalds [maintained](#) that “states did not follow election laws in 2020.” Donalds said that, if he became vice president, he would consider not certifying election results.

Microsoft also donated \$15,000 to Johnson and \$1,000 to Stefanik.

Comcast: \$787,500 to 91 election deniers

After January 6, 2021, Comcast [pledged](#) to “suspend all of our political contributions to those elected officials who voted against certification of the electoral college votes, which will give us the opportunity to review our political giving policies and practices.” Comcast condemned the insurrection in a [statement](#), saying, “The peaceful transition of

power is a foundation of America's democracy... This year, that transition will take place among some of the most challenging conditions in modern history and against the backdrop of the appalling violence we witnessed at the U.S. Capitol last week."

Since January 6, 2021, however, Comcast has donated \$787,500 to 83 election deniers on the federal level and eight election deniers on the state level.

This includes \$5,000 to Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH). The [January 6 Committee](#) found that Jordan was a "[significant player](#)" in Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election. According to the committee's report, Jordan "[participated in numerous post-election meetings](#)" where they "discussed strategies for challenging the election, chief among them claims that the election had been tainted by fraud." During his bid to become House Speaker in October 2023, Jordan was [asked](#) in a press conference if he thought the 2020 election was stolen. "I think there were all kinds of problems with the 2020 election. I've been clear about that," Jordan said.

Comcast also donated \$2,500 to Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall (R). In March 2022, Marshall "[refused](#) to call President Joe Biden the 'duly elected and lawfully serving' president of the country."

Comcast did not respond to a request for comment.

Walmart: \$384,000 to 89 election deniers

After January 6, 2021, Walmart released a [statement](#) saying, "In light of last week's attack on the U.S. Capitol, Walmart's political action committee is indefinitely suspending contributions to those members of Congress who voted against the lawful certification of state electoral college votes."

Since January 6, 2021, however, Walmart has donated \$384,000 to 82 federal election deniers and seven election deniers on the state level.

Walmart's donations include \$2,500 to Alabama Governor Kay Ivey (R). In 2022, Ivey released a campaign ad that pushed claims of election fraud. In the ad, Ivey [stated](#), "The fake news, Big Tech and blue state liberals stole the election from Donald Trump. But here in Alabama, we're making sure that never happens."

Walmart also donated \$15,000 to House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) and \$7,500 to Scalise's leadership PAC. In November 2023, Scalise "[repeatedly did not answer whether or not the 2020 election was not stolen](#)" in an interview with ABC News. "What I've told you is there are states that didn't follow their laws. That is what the ... U.S. Constitution requires," Scalise said.

In a statement to Popular Information, Walmart equated Trump's attempt to overturn the 2020 election with [symbolic votes to object by seven Democrats in 2017](#), months after Hillary Clinton conceded:

We've long believed we can more effectively advocate on behalf of our associates, customers, communities and shareholders by engaging with policymakers of both parties. However, our political contributions do not mean we support every view of an elected official. We continually examine our political giving strategy and contribute to those who are focused on issues important to our business and key stakeholders. As part of our ongoing reassessment and in line with the above approach, we resumed giving to select members of Congress who contested the 2020 presidential election, just as we've given in the most recent election cycle to some of the House Democrats who objected to electoral votes following the 2016 presidential election.

In the most recent election cycle, Walmart donated \$4,500 to three Democrats who cast a symbolic vote against certifying the 2016 election.

Corporate governance experts weigh in

Bruce Freed, the president of the Center for Political Accountability, thinks these companies are making a mistake. Freed told Popular Information that the corporations sending millions in PAC donations to election deniers are "putting themselves at risk." He thinks the companies are underestimating the economic danger of undermining "the rule of law." Instead of focusing on the preservation of "the political system that they need to be able to operate and grow," they are engaged in "very short term" thinking.

Yale University's Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, a corporate governance scholar who convened gatherings of CEOs before and after January 6, 2021, offered a qualified defense. Sonnenfeld told Popular Information that the CEOs he spoke with only committed to "a

two year moratorium through the next election cycle" and not "a permanent moratorium." But, while some companies publicly limited their pledge to two years, most left it open ended. Further, as Popular Information has documented, many major corporations resumed donating to election deniers well before the end of two years. Sonnenfeld also stressed that in the first two years, overall corporate contributions to election deniers [were lower](#).

Thomas Lyon, a corporate governance expert at the University of Michigan, was less positive. Lyon told Popular Information that corporate donors to election deniers are exposing themselves to "some scenarios in which some really ugly things happen." Lyon predicted that, if there is a repeat of violence after the 2024 election, there would be some "pretty serious blowback." He attributed the flow of millions in corporate cash to election deniers to "arm-twisting by politicians."

Other major corporate donors

Major corporate donors to election deniers since 2021

1	KOCH INDUSTRIES	\$1,371,250
2	AT&T	\$1,234,100
3	UPS	\$926,000
4	LOCKHEED MARTIN	\$870,000
5	HOME DEPOT	\$862,000
6	CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS	\$847,700
7	BOEING	\$813,500
8	COMCAST	\$787,500
9	GENERAL DYNAMICS	\$680,000
10	HONEYWELL	\$663,000
11	VALERO ENERGY	\$660,000
12	RTX CORPORATION	\$639,500
13	UBS	\$632,500
14	L3HARRIS TECHNOLOGIES	\$507,000
15	NORTHROP GRUMMAN	\$504,000
16	ALTRIA	\$457,250
17	MARATHON PETROLEUM	\$457,000
18	REGIONS FINANCIAL	\$455,500
19	FEDEX	\$452,700
20	THE WILLIAMS COMPANIES	\$446,000
21	PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS	\$432,500
22	UNITEDHEALTH	\$402,000
23	UNION PACIFIC	\$392,500
24	GENERAL ATOMICS	\$388,000
25	WALMART	\$384,000
26	ELEVANCE HEALTH	\$378,300
27	DELOITTE	\$375,000
28	DELTA AIR LINES	\$366,500
29	COX ENTERPRISES	\$357,500
30	TOYOTA	\$357,500
31	GENERAL MOTORS	\$348,000
32	VERIZON	\$346,000
33	CHEVRON	\$343,000
34	LEIDOS	\$336,500
35	CIGNA	\$331,400
36	BNSF RAILWAY	\$311,550
37	AFLAC	\$304,000
38	NEXTERA ENERGY	\$284,000
39	EXXON MOBIL	\$283,750
40	WELLS FARGO	\$279,000
41	ERNST & YOUNG	\$277,000
42	PFIZER	\$276,500
43	T-MOBILE	\$254,000
44	AMERICAN AIRLINES	\$241,500
45	JOHNSON & JOHNSON	\$215,000
46	ANHEUSER-BUSCH	\$207,000
47	BLUE ORIGIN	\$166,000
48	AMAZON	\$142,400
49	INTEL	\$114,000
50	MICROSOFT	\$112,500

In a statement to Popular Information, Home Depot said that “our associate-funded PAC is bipartisan. It supports candidates and organizations on both sides of the aisle who champion pro-business, pro-retail positions that create jobs and economic growth.”

General Motors sent Popular Information the following statement: “The General Motors employee-funded PAC supports the election of U.S. federal and state candidates from both sides of the aisle who foster sound business policies, support American workers and understand the importance of a robust domestic auto industry as we pursue an all-electric vehicle future.”

Union Pacific told Popular Information, “Union Pacific donates to candidates on both sides of the aisle in compliance with national and state rules. We review our giving annually to every candidate as part of a comprehensive oversight process that ensures all political contributions are made in a legal and ethical manner.”

UBS and Wells Fargo declined to comment. The rest of the companies did not respond to a request for comment.