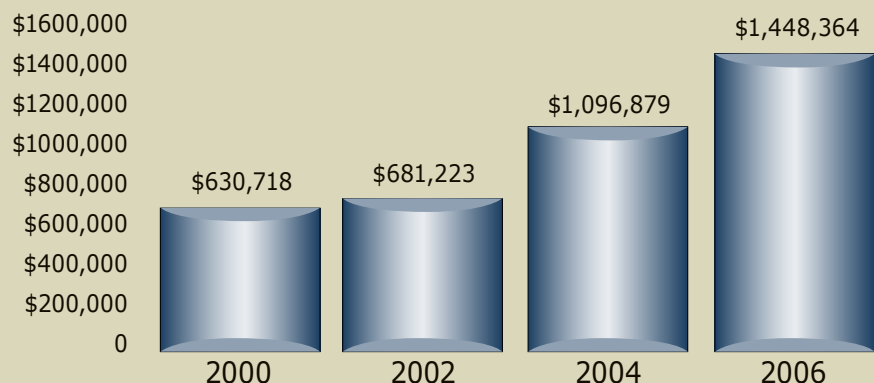


## 2006 election spending outpaces 2004 numbers

TRACKING THE TRIAL LAWYERS:  
SPECIAL UPDATE REPORT

The combined spending of the Washington trial lawyers' 10 political action committees during the 2006 elections outpaced their 2004 election cycle activity by at least \$350,000. All told, the trial lawyers cemented their political clout in Olympia with a combined 200 percent increase in political spending over the past six years.

### WA state trial lawyers' PAC spending



### Total PAC spending

The 10 regional trial lawyer political action committees (PACs) raised and spent staggering amounts of money in the 2000 election cycle, then topped that effort in 2006.

In 2000, the Liability Reform Coalition began tracking the political spending by plaintiff trial lawyers in Washington. The reports, *Tracking the Trial Lawyers*, have revealed two alarming facts: 1) political spending by the state's trial lawyers is funneled through 10—yes, 10—political action committees; and 2) over the past six years, the political clout of the Washington State Trial Lawyers Association

(WSTLA) in Olympia has grown in tandem with a 200 percent increase in plaintiff lawyer political spending, largely aimed at Democratic candidates and associated political organizations.

**Continued on page 2**

### LRC Mission:

To limit the expansion of tort liability, to reduce the cost of defending lawsuits, to speed resolution of civil actions, and to improve fairness and certainty in our civil justice system for everyone.

## Referendum 67: Trial lawyers win, consumers lose

On November 6, a referendum vote in Washington will determine if our state enacts dramatically expanded legal remedies against insurance companies, including the institution of punitive damages.

The measure, Referendum 67, allows up to triple damage awards in lawsuits against insurance companies, as well as full payment of mandatory attorney fees for plaintiff lawyers. It also leaves the state with the lowest legal standard in the nation for bringing lawsuits, an environment sure to spur more frivolous lawsuits and to raise consumer costs.

The LRC board of directors voted unanimously to join Consumers Against Higher Insurance Rates, a broad-based coalition urging voters to REJECT R-67. LRC executive director Dana Childers is serving as the REJECT R-67 spokesperson.

Regional personal injury lawyer PAC	Money raised	Money spent
Abraham Lincoln Memorial Society	\$173,154.95	\$181,322.81
Central Washington Lawyers for Working Families	\$98,315.00	\$97,170.44
City of Destiny PAC	\$150,748.75	\$155,029.17
East King County Lawyers for Justice	\$130,244.49	\$131,130.90
Inland Northwest PAC	\$90,545.00	\$94,285.14
Justice PAC	\$132,117.50	\$136,359.77
Northern Attorneys PAC	\$114,607.50	\$119,502.78
Puget Sound Citizens for Political Responsibility	\$140,528.38	\$144,699.40
Victims Advocates	\$175,659.29	\$184,719.74
Western Washington Trial Lawyers for Victims	\$195,095.38	\$204,143.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,401,016.24</b>	<b>\$1,448,363.75</b>

Source: Public Disclosure Commission, January 2005-December 2006

**The candidates funded by personal injury lawyers.** According to Public Disclosure Commission records, the following candidates each received over \$2,000 from personal-injury lawyer PACs for the 2006 election.

## Legislative candidates

Yvonne Ward	D-Auburn	\$14,000.00	Jack Burkman	D-Vancouver	\$4,200.00
Representative Tami Green	D-Lakewood	\$13,300.00	Jeffrey Possinger	R-Duvall	\$4,200.00
Senator Derek Kilmer	D-Gig Harbor	\$11,900.00	Lillian Kaufer	D-Snohomish	\$4,200.00
Representative Geoff Simpson	D-Covington	\$11,200.00	Senator Steve Hobbs	D-Lake Stevens	\$4,200.00
Senator Chris Marr	D-Spokane	\$11,200.00	Karen Willard	D-Wilkeson	\$3,500.00
Senator Rodney Tom	D-Medina	\$11,200.00	Representative Al O'Brien	D-Mountlake Terrace	\$3,500.00
Representative Bill Grant	D-Walla Walla	\$10,500.00	Senator Adam Kline	D-Seattle	\$3,500.00
Representative Chris Hurst	D-Enumclaw	\$10,500.00	Jasper Macslarrow	D-Ferndale	\$2,800.00
Representative Deb Wallace	D-Vancouver	\$10,500.00	Representative Bill Eickmeyer	D-Belfair	\$2,800.00
Representative Larry Springer	D-Kirkland	\$10,500.00	Representative Brendan Williams	D-Olympia	\$2,800.00
Representative Troy Kelley	D-Tacoma	\$10,500.00	Representative Lynn Kessler	D-Hoquiam	\$2,800.00
Senator Eric Oemig	D-Kirkland	\$10,500.00	Representative Mark Miloscia	D-Federal Way	\$2,800.00
Representative Christine Rolfes	D-Bainbridge Island	\$9,800.00	Ron Bonlender	D-Yakima	\$2,800.00
Representative Larry Seaquist	D-Gig Harbor	\$9,800.00	Senator Ed Murray	D-Seattle	\$2,800.00
Representative Deb Eddy	D-Kirkland	\$8,400.00	Senator Erik Poulsen	D-Seattle	\$2,800.00
Representative John Lovick	D-Mill Creek	\$8,400.00	Zack Hudgins	D-Tukwila	\$2,800.00
Representative Kevin Van De Wege	D-Sequim	\$8,400.00	Ed Crawford	D-Kent	\$2,100.00
Representative Pat Lantz	D-Gig Harbor	\$8,400.00	Representative Brian Blake	D-Longview	\$2,100.00
Representative Pat Sullivan	D-Covington	\$8,400.00	Representative Brian Sullivan	D-Mukilteo	\$2,100.00
Senator Karen Keiser	D-Kent	\$8,400.00	Representative Eileen Cody	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Senator Tracey Eide	D-Federal Way	\$8,400.00	Representative Frank Chopp	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Claudia Kauffman	D-Kent	\$7,700.00	Representative Helen Sommers	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Representative Hans Dunshee	D-Snohomish	\$7,700.00	Representative Jamie Pedersen	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Representative Sherry Appleton	D-Poulsbo	\$7,700.00	Representative Jim Moeller	D-Vancouver	\$2,100.00
Representative Tom Campbell	R-Spanaway	\$7,700.00	Representative Joe McDermott	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Senator Darlene Fairley	D-Lake Forest Park	\$7,700.00	Representative Kathy Haigh	R-Shelton	\$2,100.00
Representative Dawn Morrell	D-Puyallup	\$7,000.00	Representative Mary Helen Roberts	D-Edmonds	\$2,100.00
Representative John McCoy	D-Marysville	\$5,600.00	Representative Mike Sells	D-Everett	\$2,100.00
Representative Mark Ericks	D-Bothell	\$5,600.00	Representative Roger Goodman	D-Redmond	\$2,100.00
Representative Ross Hunter	D-Bellevue	\$5,600.00	Representative Sam Hunt	D-Olympia	\$2,100.00
Representative Judy Clibborn	D-Mercer Island	\$4,900.00	Representative Steve Conway	D-Tacoma	\$2,100.00
Representative Kelli Linville	D-Bellingham	\$4,900.00	Representative Steve Kirby	D-Tacoma	\$2,100.00
Representative Maureen Walsh	R-Walla Walla	\$4,900.00	Senator Ken Jacobsen	D-Seattle	\$2,100.00
Dean Takko	D-Longview	\$4,775.00			

Source: Public Disclosure Commission, January 2005-December 2006

### Continued from page 1

This increased focus on political influence is part of a national trend by trial lawyers to expand their businesses by expanding liability laws as much as possible. The 2007 legislative session

in Olympia was one of the worst for liability bills in years. The LRC and its allies battled more than 20 bills aimed at expanding liability. The worst of the bills, ESSB 5726, instituting punitive

damages, was signed by the governor. The law is stayed pending a referendum vote in November, an effort initiated by the LRC in its continuing tort reform effort here in Washington.



**LRC Board of Directors**

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*Cascade Diesel & Truck Repair*

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**Cliff Webster**  
*Carney Badley Spellman*

**Dana Childers**  
*LRC Executive Director*

Where You Can Find Us:  
**Liability Reform Coalition**  
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Seattle, WA 98121  
425-868-2698  
425-868-8427 fax  
website: [www.walrc.org](http://www.walrc.org)

**Statewide candidates**

	Office	Party	Total
Justice Susan Owens	Supreme Court	NP	\$25,200.00
Justice Tom Chambers	Supreme Court	NP	\$12,600.00
Justice Gerry Alexander	Supreme Court	NP	\$11,900.00
Judge Joel Penoyar	Court of Appeals	NP	\$11,900.00
Judge Mary Kay Becker	Court of Appeals	NP	\$4,200.00
Mike Kreidler	Insurance Commissioner	D	\$3,000.00
Christine Gregoire	Governor	D	\$1,500.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$70,300.00</b>

*Source: Public Disclosure Commission, January 2005-December 2006*

**More WSTLA money to spread around**

The trial lawyers poured more than a third of their PAC money into a successful effort to confuse voters and defeat Initiative 330, a med-mal measure on the 2006 ballot. The remainder of trial lawyer contributions largely went to Democratic Party activities.

No on I-330	Campaign to defeat liability reform	\$444,500.00
Citizens to Uphold the Constitution	Judicial political action committee (PAC)	\$67,500.00
Washington State Democrats	Democrat PAC	\$45,500.00
Victory 2006	Democrat PAC	\$37,000.00
Roosevelt Fund	Democrat PAC	\$34,000.00
Harry Truman Fund	Democrat PAC	\$27,500.00
Washington Citizen Action	Advocacy organization	\$18,000.00
The Legacy Fund	Democrat PAC	\$10,000.00
House Democratic Campaign Committee	Democrat PAC	\$7,000.00
Senate Democratic Campaign Committee	Democrat PAC	\$6,300.00
31st District Democrats	Democrat PAC	\$2,500.00
Washington NARAL PAC	Abortion rights PAC	\$2,000.00
Washington Community Action Network	Advocacy organization	\$1,500.00
Center for Women and Democracy		\$1,000.00
Women's Political Caucus		\$500.00
Eastside Democrats Dinner	Democrat function	\$300.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$705,100.00</b>

*Source: Public Disclosure Commission, January 2005-December 2006*

**Loony lawsuit in our own backyard**

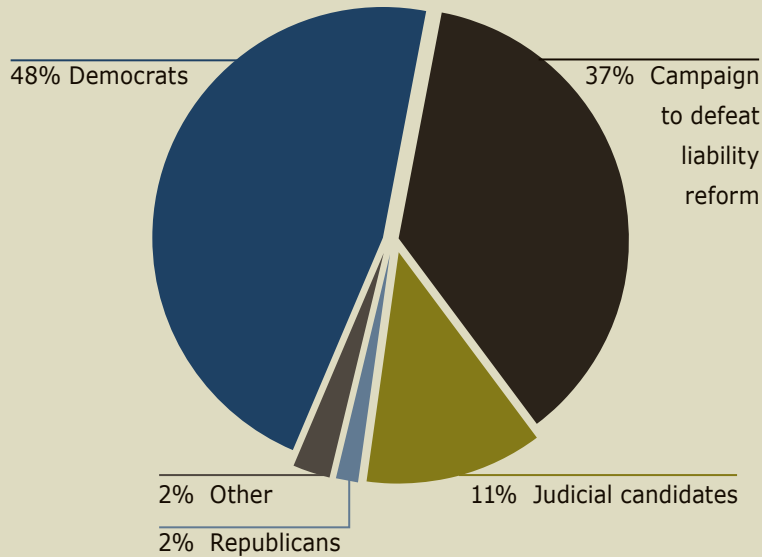
**The case:** Dr. Woo, an Auburn dentist, interrupted a regular dental procedure to play a practical joke by inserting fake boar tusks into the mouth of a sedated patient and photographing the event without the patient's knowledge or consent. Humiliated, the patient later sued Dr. Woo. His insurance company refused to defend, concluding the doctor's actions were intentional and not within the scope of the practice of dentistry. Dr. Woo settled with the patient for \$250,000,

and then sued his insurance company for denial of coverage under his professional liability policy.

**The decision:** The Washington Supreme Court upheld an award to Dr. Woo of \$1.7 million. The award included \$750,000 for emotional distress, an amount three times the award given his victim. Dr. Woo's award also included \$700,000 in attorney fees and interest.

**And to make matters worse:** If R-67 were law, Dr. Woo would have been entitled to \$3.7 million, rather than \$1.7!

# Who received trial lawyer money in 2006? WHERE THE MONEY GOES.



Source: Public Disclosure Commission, January 2005-December 2006

Personal-injury lawyers are highly successful at electing candidates. A shocking 88% of candidates supported by trial lawyers were elected in the 2006 election.

Be sure to check out the new and improved LRC web site at [www.walrc.org](http://www.walrc.org)

# THE REFORMER

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