

## **Look No Further Than DuPage County For Why Illinois Needs Campaign Contribution Limits**

Illinois has the illustrious reputation for being the “Wild West of campaign finance.” We have garnered this reputation because Illinois has absolutely no restrictions on whom or how much an individual can contribute to a single political campaign. Illinois’ failure to implement campaign contribution limits has directly impacted political scandals, rocketing campaign costs, and the stifling of citizen participation in the political process. Additionally, the free flow of money into campaign coffers gives the impression that democracy is for sale and taints the capacity of public officials to be politically independent.

The Daily Herald recently reported that DuPage County Board Chairman Bob Schillerstrom has, through donations and loans, cumulatively given \$90,000 to a single County Board candidate. The Chairman has also donated \$12,500 to two other County Board candidates, \$8,000 to a fourth County Board candidate, and \$5,000 to a fifth candidate. In most states, donations of more than \$10,000 by a single contributor are banned. While a study by the Center has shown that Chairman Schillerstrom has donated to County Board candidates in the past, his recent donations of more than \$125,000 is reflective of the current trend in political races to serve the public— be it at the local level, state level, and races for the appellate and circuit courts.

Adopting campaign contribution limits is an essential element to reforming our failing democracy and to restoring integrity of the political process – one that not only affects what happens in Springfield, but in our own backyard.