Characteristics of Federal Political Contributions of Radiologists Across the United States

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Purpose:

- As federal legislation increasingly influences healthcare delivery, the impact of election funding has grown.
- Through their professional societies, radiologists have increasingly sought to engage legislators.
- We thus aimed to characterize US radiologist federal political contributions over recent years.
Methods:

- After obtaining 2003-2016 publicly available finance data from the Federal Election Commission (FEC), we extracted contribution data for all self-identified radiologists.
- Contributions were classified by recipient group and FEC-designated political party, and then analyzed in aggregate, as well as temporally, geographically, and by individual radiologist.
Results:

- Between 2003 and 2016, the FEC reported a total of 35,408,584 political contributions.
- Of these, 36,474 (totaling $16,255,099) were from 7,515 unique self-identified radiologists.
- Total annual radiologist contributions ranged from $480,565 in 2005 to $1,867,120 in 2012.
- On average, 1,697 radiologists made political contributions each year (ranging from 933 in 2005 to 2,496 in 2016).
Total annual federal political contributions in US dollars by radiologists, by category, 2003-2016
Results:

- On average, contributing radiologists gave $2,163 ± $4,053 (range $10 to $121,836) to federal elections between 2003-2016.
- Those amounts varied considerably by state:
  - Ranging from $865 in Utah
  - To $4,325 in Arkansas
Average federal election dollars per contributing radiologist,
From 2003 through 2016, by state
Percentage of each state’s radiologists contributing to federal elections from 2003 through 2016
Results:

- Of all radiologist federal election dollars
  - 76.3% were non-partisan
  - 14.8% were to Republicans
  - 8.5% were to Democrats
  - 0.4% were to others

- Most radiologist dollars went to political action committees (PACs) rather than individual candidates (74.6% vs. 25.4%)
Results:

- Radiologists’ PAC contributions were overwhelmingly (92.5%) directed to RADPAC
- RADPAC saw contributions from self-identified radiologists grow dramatically
  - From $351,251 in 2003
  - From $1,113,966 in 2016
Conclusions:

- Radiologist federal political contributions have increased over 3-fold in recent years.
- That growth overwhelmingly represents contributions to RADPAC.
- Despite national political polarization, the overwhelming majority of radiologist federal political contributions are specialty-focused and not party-affiliated.