

WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

A LOOK AT AFT SPENDING IN THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR



AMERICANS FOR FAIR TREATMENT

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) collected \$186 million in member dues in 2019-2020. That's 4% more than AFT brought in the year before, thanks to a 2% increase in dues. Members of AFT-affiliated unions who worked full-time paid \$234.96 in dues during the 2019-2020 school year.

AFT member dues fund a number of political causes and progressive policy organizations, including large donations to help Democrats win majorities in the U.S. House and Senate and efforts to sway state and local elections.

Based on the union's own financial reporting, AFT spent only 30% of total disbursements on representational activities, the category of spending most directly related to labor representation, such as collective bargaining negotiations, handling grievances, and arbitration proceedings.

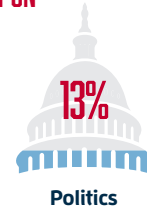
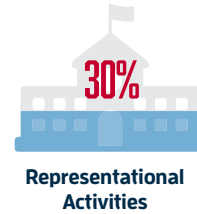
Another 13% of members' dues was spent on politics, according to the same financial reporting documents. The union spent additional money on political advocacy but listed it in the "Contributions, Gifts, and Grants" category.

Meanwhile, AFT President Randi Weingarten received \$453,000 in salary and disbursements in 2019-2020, on top of an unspecified amount for retirement and health care benefits. AFT Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson received a salary and other disbursements of \$324,000.

Other 2019-2020 expenditures included \$3.6 million on hotels and \$2.5 million on transportation.

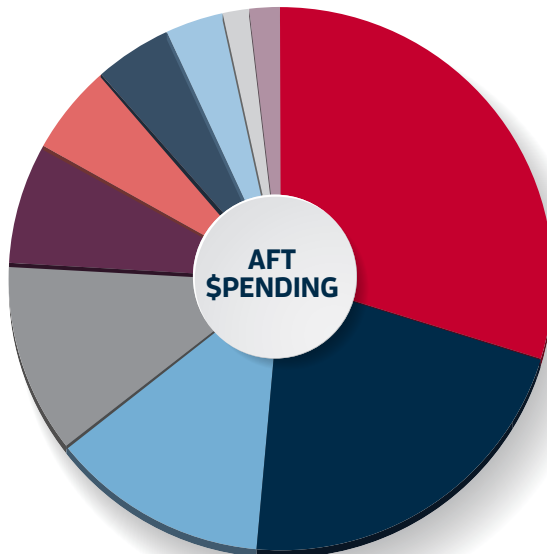


DUES SPENT ON



THE BIG PICTURE

AFT dues money pays for politics.



- 30% REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES
- 22% OTHER
- 13% POLITICAL ACTIVITIES & LOBBYING
- 11% GENERAL OVERHEAD
- 7% BENEFITS
- 5% UNION ADMINISTRATION
- 5% PER CAPITA TAX
- 4% CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, & GRANTS
- 2% PURCHASE OF INVESTMENTS & FIXED ASSETS
- 2% DIRECT TAXES

In its yearly financial statement, AFT reported spending 13% of member dues, a whopping \$45.9 million, on political, legislative, and advocacy work in 2019-2020. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Labor's "LM-2" financial report shows \$31.3 million in spending on political activities and lobbying, with additional political spending falling under the "Contributions, Gifts, and Grants" category.

The Janus v. AFSCME Supreme Court decision relieves nonmembers from the obligation to pay any fees to the union as a condition of public employment. However, for employees who remain AFT members, Janus changes NOTHING about how union dues are spent, meaning they can still be used for political purposes.

According to federal law, member dues can be used for a variety of political activities, such as get-out-the-vote drives, election mailers, lobbying, and public marketing campaigns. This spending must be itemized and reported annually on the "LM-2" financial report.

So, how were AFT dues spent on politics? Here are just some of their recent political donations:



RECENT POLITICAL DONATIONS

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| \$5.3M | Committee on Political Education (COPE) grants, including \$4.3 million to the NYSUT Advocacy Fund, AFT's political arm used to contribute to ballot issues. |
| \$3.4M | Senate Majority PAC, which backs Democratic U.S. Senate candidates. |
| \$3.25M | House Majority PAC, which helps Democrats keep a majority of U.S. House seats. |
| \$3.1M | NYSUT Holding Account, which funds the AFT COPE fund. |
| \$1M | For Our Future PAC, which funds voter outreach on behalf of Democratic candidates, including the Biden/Harris campaign, in swing states. |
| \$1M | Priorities USA, founded to support former-Pres. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. |
| \$325K | Opportunity to Learn Action Fund, an anti-education reform organization. |
| \$250K | Emily's List/Women Vote!, affiliated PACs dedicated to electing pro-choice women. |
| \$241K | PEF (New York) State Affiliate Solidarity Fund, that engages in state-specific political battles. |
| \$223K | AFT Connecticut Solidarity Fund. |
| \$200K | State Innovation Exchange (SIX), which brings together progressive state lawmakers and liberal interest groups. |
| \$200K | Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee, helping Democrats win at the state level. |
| \$189K | AFT Pennsylvania Solidarity Fund. |
| \$187K | America Votes, a "coordination hub" for progressive candidates and causes at the state and national level. |
| \$150K | Progressive Caucus Action Fund, which advocates for issues like DC statehood and an end to the filibuster. |
| \$150K | Capital & Main LA, a progressive news publication. |
| \$117K | New York State Democratic Campaign Assembly Committee. |
| \$116K | National Action Network, a civil rights organization founded by Al Sharpton. |
| \$100K | Fair Fight, a PAC started by Stacey Abrams focused on changing voting laws. |
| \$100K | American Bridge to the 21st Century, an opposition research hub for the Democratic Party. |
| \$100K | National Democratic Redistricting Committee, an organization that focuses on redistricting reform. |
| \$100K | UNITE HERE, a private-sector labor union. |
| \$100K | When We All Vote, a nonprofit created by Michelle Obama to encourage progressive voter participation. |
| \$75K | Commonwealth Victory Fund, the primary fundraising arm of the Virginia General Assembly's Democratic Caucus. |

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| \$72K | Public Employee Federation (New York) Political Action Fund. |
| \$50K | Alliance for a Just Society, a progressive organization that advocates for government-run healthcare. |
| \$50K | Just Strategy, a progressive issue campaign organization. |
| \$50K | Fair Elections Center, a progressive organization focused on voter outreach in swing states. |
| \$50K | Blue Green Alliance, an organization that unites labor and environmental groups. |
| \$50K | MoveOn Civic Action, an organization that grows the progressive grassroots movement. |
| \$50K | Independent Media Institute, a progressive news organization. |
| \$50K | American Prospect, a progressive news magazine focused on public policy. |
| \$35K | Sixteen Thirty Fund, a super PAC that helped fund the fight against Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's nomination. |
| \$30K | Resist Inc., a fundraising funnel for radical left-wing organizations. |
| \$25K | Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University, that advocates for college student political engagement. |
| \$18K | Nesbitt & Parrinello Inc, an opposition research firm for progressive candidates. |
| \$12K | Mannion for State Senate, in support of a former AFT local union president who ran for the New York State Senate. |
| \$10K | Run for Something PAC, supporting young progressive candidates. |
| \$10K | Democratic Municipal Officials |
| \$5K | Progressive Change Campaign Committee, a PAC that supported Sen. Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign. |



ABC-3455-EFG-235



\$45.9M

spent on **political, legislative, and advocacy** work in 2019-2020