

# WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

## A LOOK AT AFT SPENDING IN 2022-2023



AMERICANS FOR  
FAIR TREATMENT

The **American Federation of Teachers (AFT)** represents over 1.7 million teachers throughout the country. Under the leadership of President Randi Weingarten, **AFT has taken on an increasingly prominent role in political and cultural debates throughout the country.**

As a labor union that represents both public and private sector employees, AFT files a Form LM-2 financial disclosure with the United States Department of Labor. **An examination of the union's finances can help explain its political priorities.**

The latest financial disclosure, covering July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, reveals that **only 27.4 percent of AFT's spending went towards representational activities**, down from 34 percent over the prior reporting period. 'Representational activities' is the category most closely related to labor representation, the primary job of a labor union. Approximately 20% of expenses went towards running the union, covering union employee salaries and benefits, general overhead, and administration costs. **Union employee retirement, vacation, and severance obligations make up 48 percent of the union's total liabilities.**

Though spending on representation decreased, **AFT spent \$46.9 million of members' dues on politics last year**, an increase from the \$35.7 million spent during the prior reporting period. Most of this spending went towards left-wing political causes. The union spent an additional \$7.2 million on "Contributions, Gifts, and Grants," with much of this money going to political organizations. **In total, political spending accounted for 13.8 percent of AFT's spending in 2022-2023.**

AFT's revenue reached \$283 million during 2022-23, an increase of \$17.9 million when compared to 2021-22. **The union collected \$189 million of this revenue from membership dues**, down from the \$211 million it collected last year. Though AFT collected less in dues, it saw an increase in total membership, gaining approximately 30,000 new members. Most of the new members were retiree members that do not pay dues and part-time members that pay a reduced rate.

AFT spent \$339.7 million in 2022-23, almost \$90 million more than it spent in 2021-22. The purchase of investments and fixed assets was a major spending category, accounting for 21.5 percent of total expenditures. As such, the value of AFT's investments increased by \$26 million during the reporting period. Transfers to other unions made up 14 percent of all expenditures, with AFT paying \$9.7 million in per capita tax, and transmitting \$38 million to its affiliates after collecting that money on their behalf.

Union employee salaries make up a significant part of union administration costs. **AFT President Randi Weingarten made \$498,781 during the reporting period, more than 8.5 times the average teacher's salary of \$57,543.** Weingarten's salary has increased by over \$45,000 since 2020. Other top earners include Secretary-Treasurer Frederick Ingram (\$415,988) and Executive Vice President Evelyn DeJesus (\$316,976).

Overall, AFT is in a solid financial position. The union holds over \$139 million in assets and \$93 million in liabilities. Despite the overall solid financial position, AFT's net assets decreased by \$14.4 million during this period. The union also spent \$56.5 million more than it took in over the latest reporting period.



AFT president paid  
**8.5X**  
more than average  
teacher salary

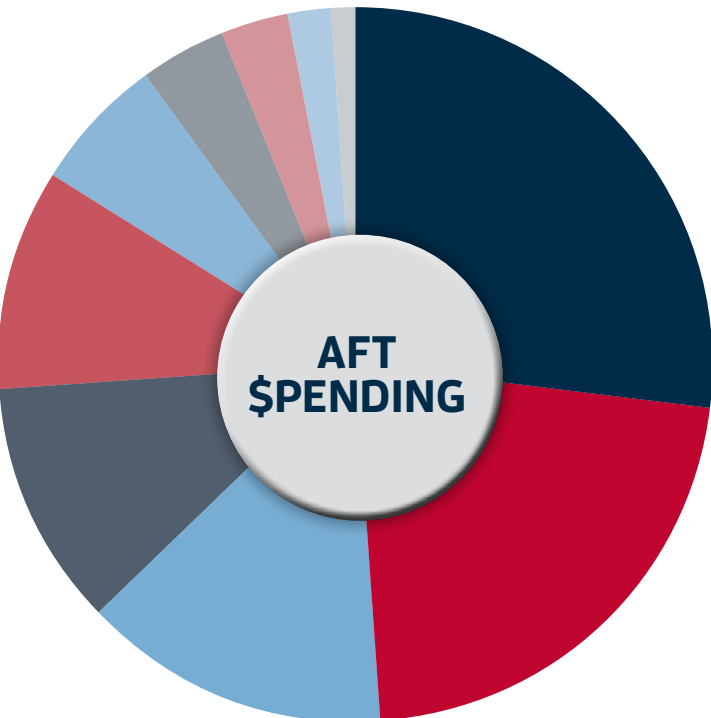


**\$46.9M**  
spent on politics in  
2022-2023

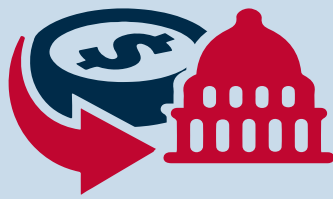


only  
**27%**  
spent on  
representational  
activities

## WHO IS GETTING YOUR AFT DUES MONEY?



- 27% REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES
- 22% PURCHASE OF INVESTMENTS AND FIXES ASSETS
- 14% POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND LOBBYING
- 11% TO AFFILIATES OF FUNDS COLLECTED ON THEIR BEHALF
- 10% GENERAL OVERHEAD
- 6% BENEFITS
- 4% UNION ADMINISTRATION
- 3% PER CAPITA TAX
- 2% CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, GRANTS
- 1% DIRECT TAXES



## HOW WERE AFT DUES SPENT ON POLITICS?

According to federal law, member dues can be used for a variety of political activities, such as issue advocacy, get-out-the-vote drives, election mailers, lobbying, and public marketing campaigns. The *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court decision relieves nonmembers from the obligation to pay any dues or fees to the union as a condition of public employment. However, for teachers who remain AFT members, *Janus* changes nothing about how union dues are spent: **they are still routinely used for political purposes**. During the latest reporting period, AFT gave:

**\$21.9M** to affiliated unions in support of their political activities and lobbying efforts.

**\$4.5M** to AFT employees and officers as compensation for their political and lobbying activities.

**\$1.5M** to For Our Future, a Democratic SuperPAC supported by billionaire activist and failed presidential candidate Tom Steyer.

**\$816K** to WorkersVote, an independent expenditure committee that spent nearly \$5 million supporting Democratic candidates during the 2022 election.

**\$600K** to the Democratic Governors' Association, a political organization dedicated to electing and re-electing Democratic governors.

**\$520K** to Red Wine and Blue, an organization that organizes suburban women to support progressive causes.

**\$500K** to House Majority PAC, an organization dedicated to building and maintaining a Democratic majority in the United States House of Representatives.

**\$500K** to Progress NYS, a progressive organization in New York state.

**\$500K** to Charlie Crist, the Democratic candidate in Florida's 2022 gubernatorial election.

**\$500K** to A Better Wisconsin Together, a left-wing research and communications firm based in Wisconsin that is a project of national liberal advocacy group ProgressNow.

**\$450K** to the Michigan Democratic State Central Committee, the political action committee of Michigan's Democratic party.

**\$400K** to the Latino Victory Fund, an organization that seeks to elect liberal Latinos to public office.

**\$375K** to Save America Fund, which spent heavily on behalf of Ohio Democrat Tim Ryan in his 2022 Senate race.

**\$350K** to Florida Watch, a left-wing research and communications firm based in Florida.

**\$300K** to Fighting Together for Philadelphia, a SuperPAC organized to support far-left Philadelphia mayoral candidate Helen Gym.

**\$275K** to Kansas Values Institute, a progressive advocacy organization in Kansas.

**\$250K** to Senate Majority PAC, an organization dedicated to building and maintaining a Democratic majority in the United States Senate.

**\$250K** to the State Engagement Fund, a strategy center committed to elevating progressive policy at the state level.

**\$250K** to Priorities USA Action, an organization that aims to advance progressive causes.

**\$250K** to Democracy21, a far-left dark money organization that aims to combat the influence of money in politics.

**\$250K** to A Stronger New Mexico, a pro-abortion group that spent to oppose Republican Mark Ronchetti's candidacy in the 2022 New Mexico gubernatorial race.

**\$250K** to Put Michigan First, an organization dedicated to reelecting Michigan's Democratic governor Gretchen Whitmer.

**\$250K** to State Democracy Defenders Action, a liberal advocacy organization that seeks to "defend democracy" in state legislatures.

**\$180K** to Ballot Initiative Strategy Center, a 501c(4) dedicated to advancing progressive causes through ballot initiatives.

**\$150K** to the Sixteen Thirty Fund, a super PAC that spends money to boost Democratic candidates and causes and is part of the larger progressive Arabella Network.

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