Political Advocacy: Updates & How to Get Involved

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Presenters are speaking for themselves as private individuals



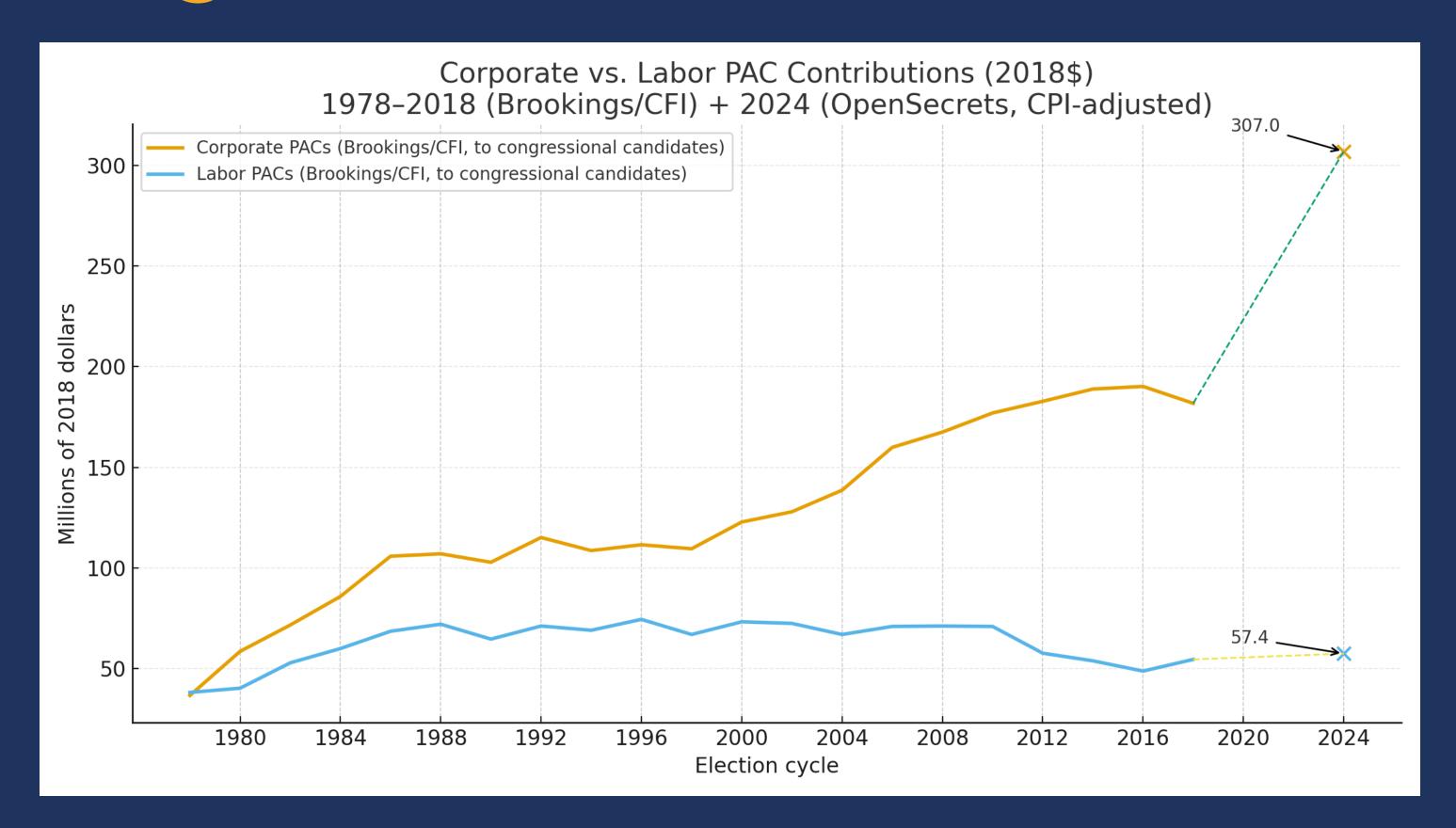
AGENDA

- Committee on Political Education
- Endorsements/upcoming elections
- Getting involved remotely & in person
- Sign up!

COPE

- Political Action arm of Texas AFT (national has one too)
- Facilitate member-to-member communications about political issues and elections
- Endorse political candidates
- Make contributions to candidate campaigns
- Local Unions can have COPE committee as well
- COPE committees are tied to a legal Political Action Committee

Why does COPE matter?



Why does COPE matter?

TEXAS GOVERNOR'S RACE

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS AS OF OCT. 26

INCUMBENT

GREG

ABBOTT

\$141.5 R

MILLION





BETO
O'ROURKE

\$47.2 MILLION

What does COPE pay for?



How do we raise \$?

- One on One conversations
- Ten MinuteMeetings
- Email
- Text Message
- New Member
 Organizing



How do we endorse?

Texas AFT Endorsement Process

Questionnaire

- Candidate completes Texas AFT candidate questionnaire.
- Confirms positions consistent with the Educators' Bill of Rights.
- Provides contact, district, and balloteligibility details.

Committee Meeting | Vote on Endorsement | Issue Endorsements

- · Screening interview and structured Q&A with committee.
- Review voting record, public statements, and endorsements.
- Local chapter context and stakeholder feedback are incorporated.

- COPE/committee deliberates against published criteria.
- Members vote per bylaws; conflicts of interest are disclosed.
- · Decision, notes, and any conditions are recorded.

- · Notify candidates and members; publish the endorsed slate.
- Share pledge language and rationale for transparency.
- Coordinate timing and messaging with local AFL-CIO/CLC.

GOTV Plan

- · Set targets, timelines, and legal disclaimers for activity.
- Organize phones, texts, canvass, digital, and poll greeting.
- Deploy with K-12 locals and higher-ed chapters where appropriate.

Questionnaire → Committee Meeting → Vote → Issue Endorsements → GOTV Plan

How to get involved?

Fun Ways to Get Involved in GOTV

Voter Registration Drives

- Host or volunteer at nonpartisan registration events.
- Set up a table with forms, QR codes, and clear signage.



Candidate Forums

- Organize neutral, ground-ruled forums so voters compare positions.
- Invite all candidates; publish rules in advance.



Meetings with Electeds

- Monthly/quarterly check-ins with sitting officials (with K-12 locals).
- Share educator priorities and follow up on commitments.



Op-Eds & Letters

- Pitch op-eds or write letters to the editor to lift educator voices.
- Tie to local issues and provide concrete solutions.



Block-Walking

- Knock doors for educator-endorsed candidates to boost turnout.
- Use walk lists; track contacts and commitments.



COPE Fundraising Drives

- Grow small-dollar sustainers to fuel the field program.
- Add QR codes and short testimonials to convert sign-ups.



Pick one to start—then bring a colleague!

Getting Involved Remotely

- Sign up at www.aftvotes.org
- Get active in your <u>AAUP Campus Chapter</u>, or help form one if there isn't one.
- Look for opportunities for advocacy on <u>Texas</u> <u>AFT Mobilize</u> such as phone banking, email campaigns, and local office visits.

Join Texas AFT COPE



Thank you.