

Big money: Kate Brown, Ellen Rosenblum each collect 6-figure campaign checks



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Gov. Kate Brown, running this year for the right to finish Gov. John Kitzhaber's fourth term, **reported the largest campaign contribution** of her career: \$100,000 from a politically prominent union that represents hundreds of state employees.

The donation from the international office of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, reported Saturday, tops an \$87,000 contribution from the state Democratic Party late in Brown's 2012 race for secretary of state. The Democratic governor's haul since last year has risen to \$1.3 million.

The union's Oregon political director, Joe Baessler, said members appreciated Brown's handling of contract negotiations and her transition to power amid Kitzhaber's resignation last fall.

"She's shown some real leadership, and we're excited about the next few years," Baessler said.

They also see her as an ally on progressive economic issues — including debates over revenue and a minimum-wage increase expected to rage during next month's legislative session and then again during the fall campaign.

"We think for sure she's the gubernatorial candidate who's going to be a leader on revenue and minimum wage," Baessler said.

But Brown's donation still isn't the biggest of this year's campaign.

Late last month, **Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum** accepted a \$150,000 check from the Democratic Attorney Generals Association — matching a gift she received from the group in 2012. Rosenblum collected the donation despite being alone in the race, although the deadline to file isn't until March.

Similarly, when the group gave Rosenblum its check in 2012, it waited until August — well after she'd won the Democratic primary and in the middle of a general election race against a write-in Republican candidate.

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This gift also adds to a pattern for Rosenblum. Of the \$300,000 she's reported raising since last year, only a little more than \$50,000 came from donors in Oregon.

Brown's likely Republican rival next fall, Salem oncologist Bud Pierce, has largely self-funded his campaign. As The Oregonian/OregonLive reported last week, Pierce and his wife **poured in an additional \$200,000** from their personal funds — bringing their total investment to nearly \$600,000.

— Denis C. Theriault

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