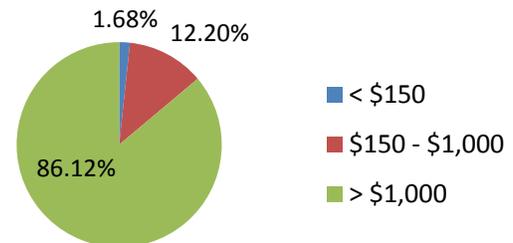


Big Money, Money from Outside Chicago, Dominates Mayoral Race

In the wake of the Supreme Court’s decisions undermining campaign finance rules, most notably *Citizens United v FEC*, our elections have become increasingly dominated by large donors at the expense of ordinary Americans. These effects have been outsized in recent Illinois elections where campaign contribution limits have been lifted in both the gubernatorial and Chicago mayoral elections. This study examines the dominance of big donors in Chicago’s mayoral race.

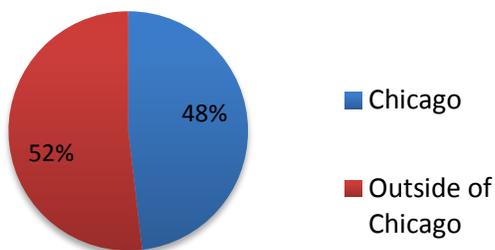
Examining quarterly reports to the state board of elections between 2011 and 2014, we found that contributions of greater than \$1,000 account for more than eighty-six percent of the money contributed to the five Chicago Mayoral candidates. By contrast, less than two percent of the money contributed came from contributions of less than \$150.

Money Contributed by Contribution Size



Just two top donors together gave more money than all small donors combined - of which there were at least 1,601.

Inside Chicago vs. Outside



The 2015 Chicago mayoral election is not only dominated by big money, it is dominated by money from outside of Chicago. A slight majority – fifty-two percent -- of all money contributed came from donors from outside of Chicago. The bigger the contribution, the more likely that it came from a donor outside of Chicago: sixty percent of the money contributed by donors giving \$25,000 or more, eighty percent of the money contributed by donors giving \$80,000 or more.

This report analyzes campaign contributions made to the campaign committees of the five Chicago mayoral candidates. We analyzed quarterly reports the committees made to the Illinois State Board of Elections between 2011 and 2014. It is important to note that the last quarterly report ended 12/31/14 and a significant amount of money has been contributed since then. We will update this report with final numbers after campaign reporting is completed.

We looked at several key data points:

1. Percentage of money contributed from small, medium, and large donors;
2. Percentage of contributions from small, medium, and large donors;
3. Number of large donors whose contributions match the contributions by small donors combined; and
4. Percentage of money coming from inside and outside of Chicago.

The most important way to look at this data is in aggregate, i.e. combining all campaigns, because this demonstrates the systemic nature of big money dominance. However, because Rahm Emanuel's campaign is the recipient of the overwhelming majority of all money contributed, we have broken down some of our analysis by candidate, and some by all candidates except Emanuel. All five candidates relied on big donors giving \$1,000 or more as their largest source of campaign funding.

Moving from Big Money Dominance to a Small Donor Democracy

For our elections to truly reflect the principle of one person, one vote, without deep-pocketed spenders able to drown out the voices of ordinary Americans, we must adopt common-sense reforms to set reasonable limits on big money, and amplify the impact of small donors.

Fortunately, there is a strong and growing movement to overturn the *Citizens United* decision and reverse the wrong-headed ruling that money is speech and corporations are people. Already 16 states -- including Illinois -- and over 600 communities have gone on the record calling for a constitutional amendment to do exactly that.

There are also successful models already in place to empower small donors to allow their voices to play a more central role in our democracy, such as providing tax credits and public matching funds for small donations. For example, in New York City's 2013 City Council campaigns, small donors were responsible for sixty-one percent of the money contributed to participating candidates, when funds from a matching program are included. In 2009, all but two of the 51 winning candidates in the City Council elections participated in the small donor program, proving that candidates are able to raise the money they need to win without relying on large-

dollar contributions. Just a few months ago, Montgomery County, Maryland, became the latest community to adopt one of these programs.

Senator Durbin introduced legislation last year – the Fair Elections Now Act – that would create a similar small donor empowerment program for U.S. Senate elections. The House version of the bill, The Government by the People Act [H.R. 20], has [142 co-sponsors](#), including nine Illinois Representatives: Bustos, D. Davis, Duckworth, Foster, Gutierrez, Kelly, Quigley, Rush, and Schakowsky.

Thanks to [Fair Elections Illinois](#), representing over a dozen local organizations, voters in Chicago have the opportunity to weigh in on whether Chicago or the state of Illinois should adopt these reforms by voting on a non-binding referendum question, which reads:

Should the City of Chicago or the State of Illinois reduce the influence of special interest money in elections by financing campaigns using small contributions from individuals and a limited amount of public money?

All five mayoral candidates have endorsed the question.

If elections remain a contest of which candidates can appeal most to a narrow set of big donors, our democracy will continue to suffer. Reforms are needed to make sure all of our voices count.

Methodology

Portions of the text of this report are adapted from a previous Illinois PIRG Education Fund report done in partnership with Demos. Our analysis is based on campaign contribution data from the Illinois State Board of Elections. We define “small donor” as those giving less than \$150, “large donor” as those giving more than \$1,000, and “medium donor” as those giving between \$150 and \$1,000. The data are complete as of 12/31/14, the end of the reporting period for the most recent quarterly report.

Campaigns do not itemize contributions from donors who give less than \$150. In order to estimate the number of donors giving under \$150, we divide the total amount given by \$150. This also affects our calculation of where contributions come from, as we have no location data for non-itemized contributions. We treated all non-itemized contributions as coming from Chicago. As a reference, for contributions between \$150 and \$300, seventy-two percent of the money contributed came from within Chicago, while twenty-eight percent was from outside the city.

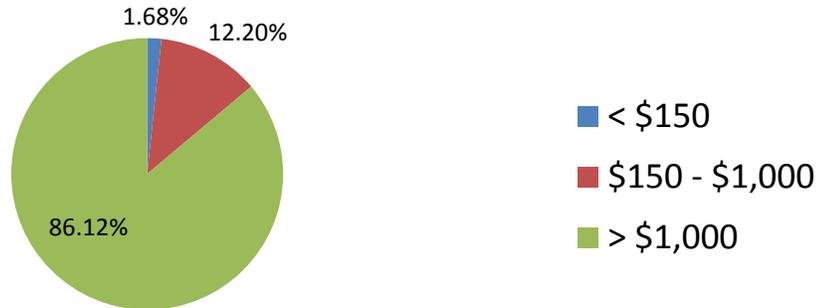
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With public debate around important issues often dominated by special interests pursuing their own narrow agendas, Illinois PIRG Education Fund offers an independent voice that works on behalf of the public interest. Illinois PIRG Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization. For more information about Illinois PIRG Education Fund please visit www.illinoispirgedfund.org.

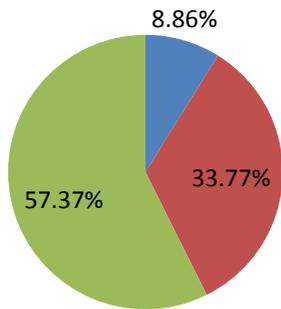
Money Contributed by Contribution Size

The following graphs represent the percentages of overall money contributed by contribution size.

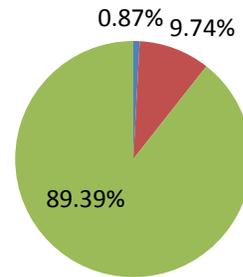
All Candidates



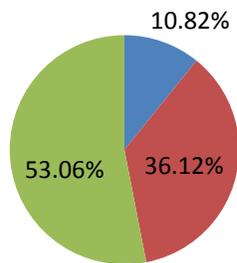
No Emanuel - All other Candidates



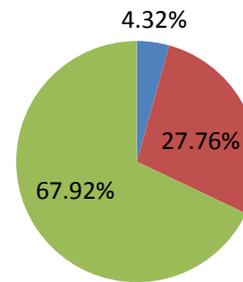
Emanuel



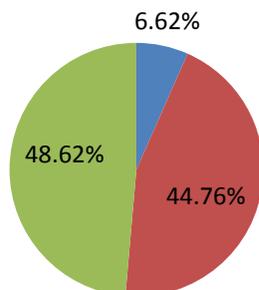
Fioretti



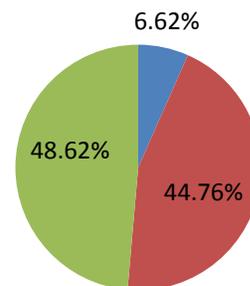
Garcia



Walls



Williams



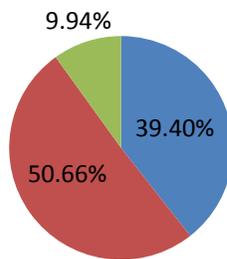
Contributors by Contribution Size

The following graphs represent the percentages of contributors by contribution size.

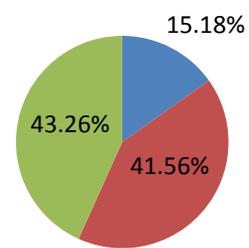
All Candidates



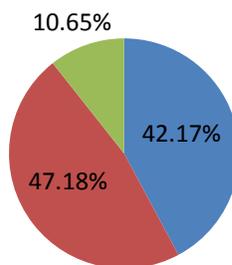
No Emanuel - All other Candidates



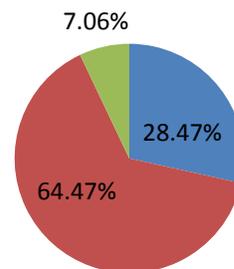
Emanuel



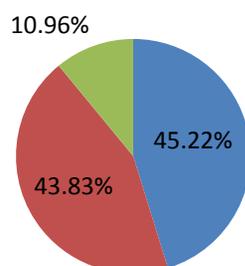
Fioretti



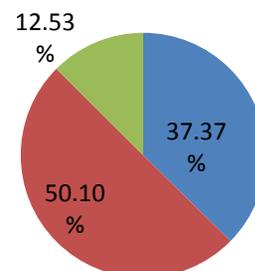
Garcia



Walls

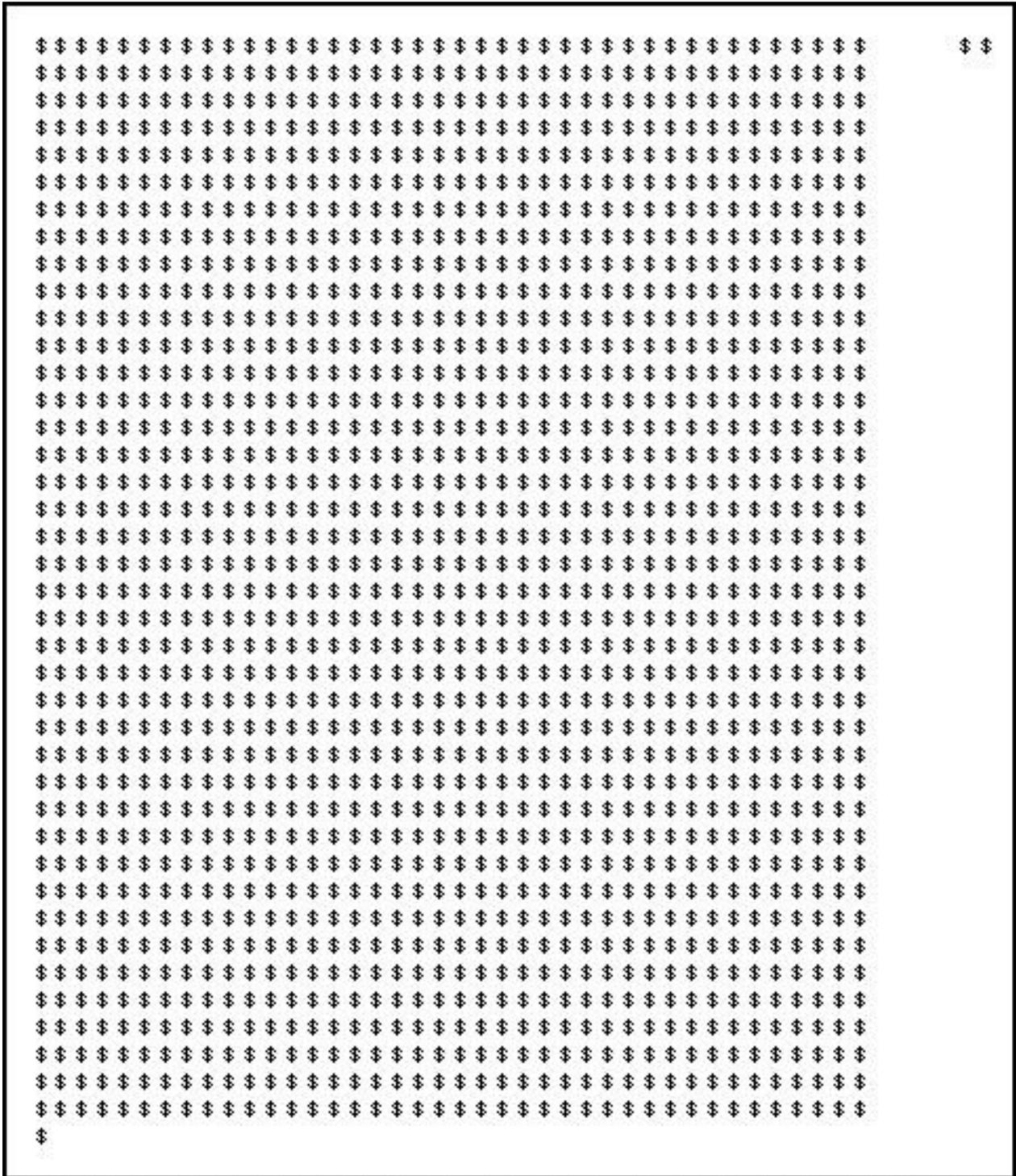


Wilson



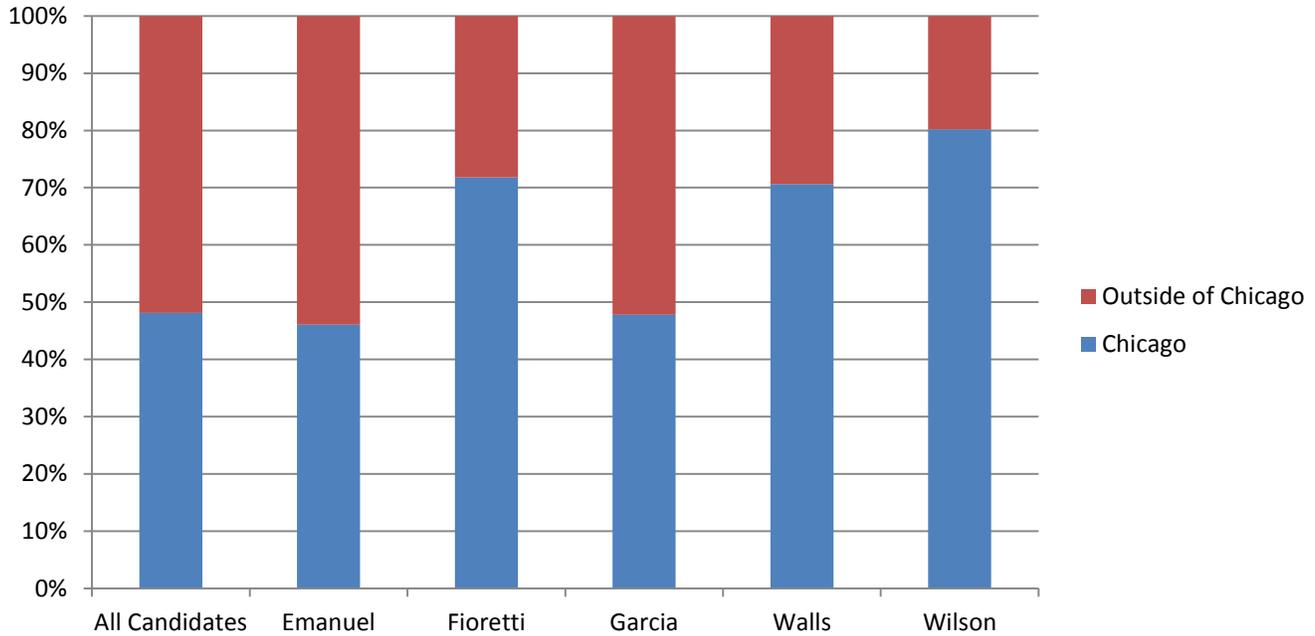
Number of Big Donors it takes to Outspend Small Donors

The top two donors easily outspent all small donors to all campaigns combined – at least 1,601 of them.

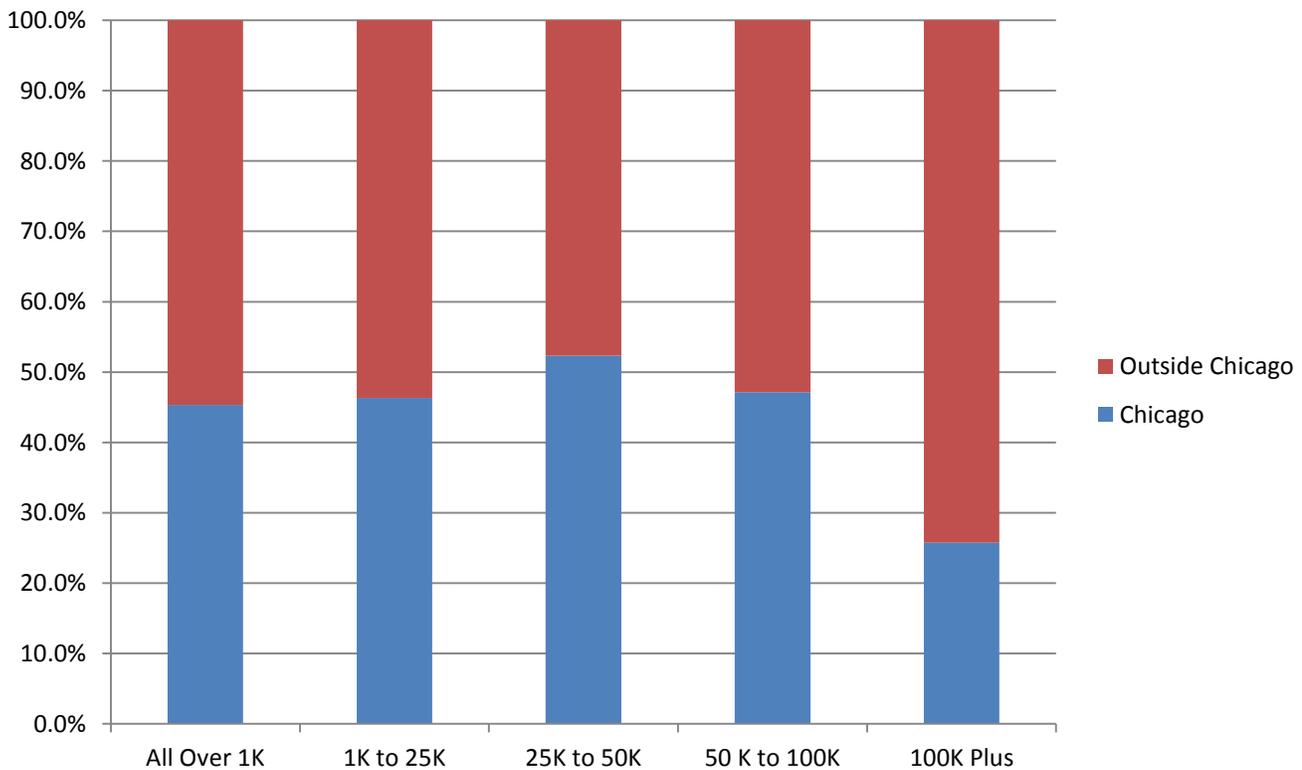


Inside Chicago vs. Outside of Chicago

Even assuming that all small contributions came from Chicago residents, the majority of money contributed to the five candidates has come from donors that live outside the city.



The bigger the contribution, the more likely it is to come from outside the city.



Tables

Money Contributed by Contribution Size			
	Small	Medium	Large
Emanuel	0.87%	9.74%	89.39%
Fioretti	10.82%	36.12%	53.06%
Garcia	4.32%	27.76%	67.92%
Walls	14.33%	56.73%	28.94%
Wilson	6.62%	44.76%	48.62%
All Candidates	1.68%	12.20%	86.12%
No Emanuel, all other	8.86%	33.77%	57.37%

Contributions by Contribution Size			
	Small	Medium	Large
Emanuel	15.18%	41.56%	43.26%
Fioretti	42.17%	47.18%	10.65%
Garcia	28.47%	64.47%	7.06%
Walls	45.22%	43.83%	10.96%
Wilson	37.37%	50.10%	12.53%
All Candidates	22.66%	44.37%	32.96%
No Emanuel, all other	39.40%	50.66%	9.94%

Inside vs. Outside Chicago - Candidates		
	In	Out
All Candidates	48.14%	51.86%
Emanuel	46.07%	53.93%
Fioretti	71.78%	28.22%
Garcia	47.76%	52.24%
Walls	70.64%	29.36%
Wilson	80.22%	19.78%

Inside v. Outside Chicago - Contribution Range		
	In	Out
All Over 1K	45.31%	54.69%
1K to 25K	46.34%	53.66%
25K to 50K	52.33%	47.67%
50 K to 100K	47.16%	52.84%
100K Plus	25.76%	74.24%