

Three Myths About... *Disclosure*

In the majority of states and federally, if you contribute relatively small amounts to a candidate for elected office or to a political committee, your **name, address, employer, and occupation** is stored in a government database and often posted on the Internet for anyone to see. Many politicians and groups are advocating a broad expansion of this disclosure in order to obtain more information about your political activity or the nonprofit groups that you support. Here's the reality behind three common myths often asserted about disclosure:

Myth #1: *There's no danger from the release of disclosure information.*

FALSE. Disclosure information is increasingly being used by non-governmental entities and individuals to harass, threaten, or financially harm speakers or contributors to candidates and causes with whom they disagree. Once contributor information becomes public, little can be done to safeguard against potential harassment.

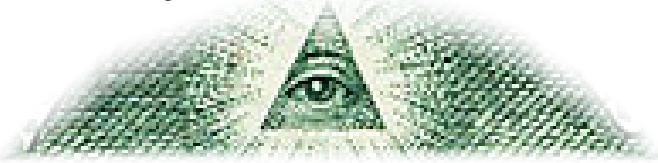
Myth #2: *Disclosure is necessary to improve transparency because of the vast amount of "dark money" in American elections.*

FALSE. Actually, more political disclosure information is required currently than at any time in our history. Candidates, political parties, Political Action Committees (PACs), and Super PACs are **all required to disclose** information about their donors.

Myth #3: *Disclosure information increases knowledge about a candidate or cause's supporters.*

NOT NECESSARILY. While disclosure of *significant* financial contributors can inform voters as to who is supporting a candidate, low disclosure thresholds make disclosure information less meaningful by muddying disclosure reports with the names and addresses of smaller donors.

THE VERDICT: Although sold as a virtue, disclosure comes with a cost and is often very burdensome. Accordingly, it should be mandated at thresholds that only capture the most significant donors to candidates and causes.





Congress shall make no law...

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