

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of *Purchasing Power: The Brennan Center's Money in Politics Blog* is to publish well-informed commentary, fresh questions, and new answers about the facts of money in politics. We are interested in evidence-based inquiry and conclusions, as opposed to mere theory or conviction. What do we know, and how do we know it?

We hope this commentary will provide insight into the events of the day. Americans face a steady flow of news about record political fundraising and spending, policy battles between the donor elite and the non-donor majority, special industry influence of government insiders, public corruption, and more. How can we understand the significance of these events? What questions will help us get at the root of problems and craft real solutions? Some of the deepest challenges facing our democracy have to do with the interaction between money and politics: we want to understand that interaction better.

Right now too little of the thinking around campaign finance and related issues — including at the Supreme Court — relies on sound data and analysis about how money in politics actually operates. At the Brennan Center, we use empirical information as much as possible in our efforts to reduce the outsized influence of money in American politics. Our Empirical Evidence Database offers an updated catalog of the most relevant research. But we always wish there was more evidence-based work to draw on, and we remain open to the possibility that future research and reporting will change how we move forward.

Our aim is to identify new possibilities for research, illuminate current events with observations from existing research, test conventional assumptions, and above all encourage thinking about money in politics and the law that is grounded in objective evidence. That's what we'll need to come up with solutions that work.