

Who Are the Individual Donors to Gubernatorial and State Legislative Elections?

by

Wesley Y. Joe, Campaign Finance Institute

Michael J. Malbin, Campaign Finance Institute and
University at Albany, SUNY

Clyde Wilcox, Georgetown University

Peter W. Brusoe, American University

Jamie P. Pimlott, Niagara University

ABSTRACT: This is the second paper from a multi-year, multi-state Campaign Finance Institute (CFI) research effort known as "The CFI Small Donor Project". The full project involves surveys of candidates in six states, survey of donors and non-donors in seven states, and data analysis of individual contribution records from these jurisdictions and others. This paper presents preliminary findings from the first large-scale survey of private individual contributors to gubernatorial and state legislative election campaigns. We find that the policy views and priorities of small donors sometimes correspond more closely with those who give no money than do the views and priorities of large donors. We also find that large donors are more likely to give for reasons related to particularistic material concerns, particularly business concerns. These particularistic motives also carry over into the large donors' policy communications with lawmakers and staffs.

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"We have created a parallel public financing system where the American people decide if they want to support a campaign, they can get on the Internet and finance it. And they will have as much access and influence over the course and direction of our campaign that has traditionally reserved for the wealthy and the powerful." [sic]

-- Democratic Presidential Candidate Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL)¹

The spectacular success of the Obama presidential campaign's small donor fundraising has led some observers to wonder whether the surge of small donor participation might herald a new era in the way Americans finance our election campaigns. Reacting to the campaign's early fundraising reports, *Newsweek*/CNN commentator Gloria Borger, for example, asked "What if fundraising is on its way to becoming less of an elite phenomenon?...There's something ultimately democratizing about citizens logging on to give. Not to mention holding low-dollar events (say, between \$25 and \$100 a ticket)" (Borger 2007). Similar reports inspired *Washington Post* columnist E.J. Dionne, Jr. to exhort "Small donors, arise!" and to highlight the possibility that "by democratizing fundraising—the most elitist aspect of our politics—small donors could bring a salutary dose of equality to the process" (2007).

The pundits' speculation echoes elements of an emerging conversation within the campaign finance policy community. Academics and other researchers are devoting increasing attention to the potential benefits of policies that cultivate more small donors (see, e.g., Ornstein et al. 1997; Wilcox 2001; Rosenberg 2002; Boatright and Malbin 2005; de Figueiredo and Garrett 2005; Mann 2005; Boatright, Green, and Malbin 2006; Schmitt 2007). Some interest reflects a search for alternatives to regulatory approaches to addressing the potential for corruption. Since the 1970s, debates about campaign finance policy have concentrated on the goals of preventing corruption or the appearance of corruption. Policy responses have historically taken the form of limits on campaign contributions and spending, as well as the strengthening of disclosure regimes. Incentives for small contributions hold the promise of a nonregulatory approach to reducing the influence of large donors. Others, however, point to an even more ambitious set of possibilities. Political scientists have long recognized that preventing corruption is only one way by which campaign finance policy can potentially affect the democratic quality of our political system. Policies can influence competition, the types of

¹ Zeleny and Luo 2008.

candidates who run for office, participation, and more.² Aside from the voluminous literature on competition, however, there has been little research about most of these issues.

The Campaign Finance Institute (CFI) has undertaken a broad research program focused on participation by small donors and volunteers. The current small donor phase of this project (of which this paper is a part) asks whether small donors are different from those who give larger amounts as well as from non-donors – not only in the amount they can afford to give, but in their motivations, policies, and in the other forms of their volunteer political and civic activities. The questions asked in this phase of the project are as follows:

1. In what ways are small donors descriptively different from large donors and non-donors?
2. Are their issue positions or priorities different?
3. How are donors solicited?
4. What are their motivations for giving?
5. Does the act of giving stimulate donors to become more active in other ways? What is the relationship between giving and doing?
6. Are these relationships (between giving and doing) different for small and large donors?
7. And finally, are the relationships different for small donors in a system funded purely by private funds than in one with some public incentive program for small givers – whether tax incentive, rebate, matching fund system or a “clean money” system of voluntary full public funding with small seed money contributions?

This paper offers a preliminary look at several of these questions in the context of a consideration of representation. In particular, we explore the potential for representational distortion created by contributing as a form of political participation. We also probe the possibility that enlarging the role of small donors could reduce such distortion. Here, we consider representativeness in a variety of senses, such as basic social characteristics, policy views, and participatory priorities.³

We address these questions using the results of an original survey of donors and non-donors to state election campaigns. Our findings are the first based on a large-scale survey of state donors and, as far as we can tell, of small donors to candidate campaigns. Looking at small donors, large donors, and people who gave no money for an election, we compare social and demographic characteristics, policy preferences and priorities, and reasons for giving to campaigns. In brief, we found the following. First, small donors to gubernatorial and state legislative campaigns are not more ideologically charged than donors who give larger amounts. Second, with respect to positions on a variety of broad-impact public policies and beliefs about the importance of these issues, small donors are usually more representative of the non-donors than are larger donors. But sometimes the differences among levels of contributing are negligible. Small donors are, however, more representative than large donors in two important respects. Large donors are more likely to indicate that their giving is motivated by a concern about narrowly targeted economic benefits for themselves. They are also more likely to contact lawmakers and their staff members about their own business, job, or industry.

² For a more thorough consideration of the issues raised in this paragraph, see Malbin (2008).

³ We shall examine the remaining questions more fully in future papers.

I. SMALL DONORS AND REPRESENTATIONAL DISTORTION

From a policy perspective, one might well ask whether it is worthwhile to attempt to bring more small donors into the system. If small donors are more representative than other election financiers, policies that cultivate small donors may be worth the effort. If not, then questions of policy effectiveness may not be so important.

Speculation about the representational consequences of an influx of small donors typically falls into one of two clusters. Claims advanced from the “small donor democracy” perspective hold that bringing more small givers into the system can help make the donor pool more representative of the public at large. A more modest version of this theory contends that a larger role for small donors would at least reduce the distortion produced through this participation channel. Compared with larger donors, small donors are thought more likely in the aggregate to look like and to share the views of the general public. To be sure, only a relatively small proportion of the public will probably contribute to campaigns even under the most optimistic scenarios. The aggregate profile of the potentially politically significant attributes of the donor pool will probably never match that of the vast majority who do not contribute money. Nevertheless, increasing the donor pool’s share of small contributions from average citizens should at least partially redress the present imbalance by reducing candidates’ dependence on the largest givers. The view is supported by a plethora of anecdotal evidence and systematic studies that have found that the amount of money that a donor gives to a campaign depends partially on the donor’s income level (e.g. Brady et al. 1999, Francia et al. 2003).

The experience of earlier presidential campaigns, however, offers an alternative, “extremist activism” forecast. Perhaps mobilizing more small donors will bring into the system people with more intense policy views—thus not making the system more representative of the general public, but making it unrepresentative in a different way. Fundraising techniques associated with the targeting of small donors—principally direct mail—have usually been most important to the more ideologically or emotionally charged candidates (see, e.g., Godwin 1988, Brown et al. 1995). Before 2004, the record in small contributions among presidential candidates was held by Christian Broadcasting Network founder Pat Robertson. Later, Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) and Family Research Council president Gary Bauer had almost as much small money and almost certainly more small donors than Governor George W. Bush (R-TX) did in 2000 (Wilcox, 2008). Intuitively, it is reasonable to speculate that it takes a powerful purposive motive and extreme (or intensely presented) views to get someone of average means to give money to a political campaign in response to direct mail. The perspective finds additional support from other studies that have found that more intensely held partisan, ideological, or policy preferences can animate a variety of forms of electoral participation (see, e.g., Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Grant and Rudolph 2002; Saunders and Abramowitz 2004). Hence a larger role for small donors could increase candidate reliance on, for example, extreme cultural conservatives, such as evangelicals, or low-income redistributionists, such as labor union activists.

Concerns about the extremist activism perspective may be even more acute at the state and local levels. Many subnational legislatures operate under significant resource constraints, such as limited staff assistance and relatively brief session lengths (see, e.g., King 2000, Squire

2006). If members of nonprofessional or semiprofessional legislatures must devote too many resources to addressing the concerns of a minority of unrepresentative activists, legislative work on behalf of broader interests may suffer. In any case, policies that stimulate small donor participation are less attractive if they increase the importance of intolerant extremists.

How accurate are these perspectives? Is the strength of the evidence that supports each at least partially contingent on the observer's choice of attributes used to measure representativeness? Evidence for the "small donor democracy" perspective frequently emphasizes larger donors' distinct social and demographic characteristics, such as their higher income or relatively high degree of racial homogeneity. Evidence for the extremist activism perspective highlights small donors' stronger policy views and other dimensions of substantive representation. This preliminary analysis examines the question from both descriptive and substantive angles.

Our investigation of descriptive representation follows the standard practice of comparing distributions of potentially politically significant social and demographic characteristics. Verba, Brady, and Schlozman's influential study of participation and representation (1995) argues that the representativeness of candidates' politically active constituents' in this regard matter, even if the activists do not explicitly raise them during a campaign. This is particularly true of attributes that candidates can observe among their constituents who attend political gatherings, such as rallies, town hall meetings, or fundraisers. Policy-makers infer constituency policy interests from some of these characteristics, and the inferences can inform policy decisions. Many policies define their target populations in terms of social and demographic characteristics, explicitly linking them to a policy's allocation of costs, benefits, or both. To be sure, we know little about how candidates acquire such knowledge of their donors or infer their donors' (sometimes latent) policy interests. But rational elected officials have effective reasons for attempting to do so. For example, to the extent that fundraising depends on prospecting and solicitation (see, e.g., Brady et al. 1999), lawmakers want to know things about their donors.

Substantive representational distortion can take a variety of forms. A common method of appraising substantive representational distortion is an evaluation of the correspondence between the issue positions of one group and those of a broader group that the former is supposed to represent. Here, we ask whether the policy preferences of the few who contribute to gubernatorial and state legislative campaigns reflect the collective views of the overwhelming majority of voting age residents who do not give. We are also interested in knowing whether small donors, in the aggregate, better reflect the policy priorities of the broader public than do those of large donors. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) found that political activists differ from the general public more with respect to agenda priorities than with respect to issue positions. Hence bringing more small donors into the system conceivably could increase candidates' reliance on minorities that would demand government agenda space for pet concerns that are less important to other citizens.

Finally, although policy preferences and priorities are obviously important, they do not exhaust the universe of reasons—even substantive reasons—for contributing to campaigns. Many donors contribute to campaigns for reasons that have little to do with broad public policies but still create potential for substantive representational distortion. Adapting Wilson's typology

of reasons for participation (1973), Brown *et al.* (1995) and Francia *et al.* (2003) found that, in addition to being motivated by their views about general policy issues, people also contribute to enjoy social aspects of giving or because they seek assistance with acquiring or protecting material goods, including particularistic goods. Across levels of giving, differences in these general motives have implications for representational distortion. For example, large donors may be more concerned than small donors about the welfare of individual businesses, industries, or professions.

Here, it is helpful to think of donors' reasons for giving as their "campaign contributing agendas." Among donors who do not limit their participation to giving, it is plausible that their contributing agendas stem from their own broader participatory agendas that animate political participation through nonfinancial as well as financial channels. Among the donors at any single level of giving, the balance of giving motives may thus correspond with the balance of subjects that the donors collectively raise in communications with candidates, the kinds of social networks they mine for activist recruiting prospects, and more. Increasing candidates' reliance on small donors could therefore reduce pressure on lawmakers, applied through a variety of participatory channels, to devote time to the narrow economic concerns of the more affluent.

The types of representational distortion described here generate straightforward hypotheses that we formalize here, sometimes consolidated into an omnibus formulation:

Hypothesis 1: The social and demographic characteristics of non-donors correspond more closely with those of small donors than do those of large donors.

Hypothesis 2: The public policy preferences of non-donors correspond more closely with those of small donors than with those of large donors.

Hypothesis 3: The public policy priorities of non-donors correspond more closely with those of small donors than with those of large donors.

Hypothesis 4: The welfare of a donor's own business, profession, or industry will matter more to the giving decisions of large donors than to small donors.

Hypothesis 5: Large donors are more likely than small donors to contact lawmakers about their own business, industry, or profession.

To the extent that our results support each of the five hypotheses, support for the small donor democracy theory accumulates. To the extent that Hypotheses 2 and 3 are false, the results will confirm the "extremist activism" theory. The policy question, however, is whether increasing the proportional role of small donors will reduce the representational distortion that exists under present systems or create another kind of distortion.

II. DATA AND MEASURES

The data for this paper come from an original survey of donors to candidate campaigns and non-donors in seven states: Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Ohio, Minnesota, and

Pennsylvania.⁴ The survey asked respondents about their public policy views, political participation, campaign experience, and social and demographic characteristics, among other things. We fielded two overlapping versions of the instrument: one for non-donors and another for donors. Knowledge Networks (KN) administered both versions of the survey on behalf of CFI.

We measured policy views by asking respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with each of seven statements about a variety of broad-impact public policy issues. The list of issues included some that national opinion surveys often mention as the general public's high priorities (excluding issues over which the federal government has near exclusive control, such as the war in Iraq) and others that activist groups frequently raise. Respondents rated their own agreement or disagreement with each statement on a standard five-point scale that ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." We also asked a version of the National Election Studies question about abortion policy, which we modified to include an option for an open-ended response. We measured issue salience by asking respondents to indicate how important it is for their state's governor and legislature to address each of the issues in our battery within the next year or two.⁵ Respondents rated the "importance" of near-term government attention using a four-point scale that ranged from "extremely important" to "not at all important." To measure reasons for contributing to campaigns, we asked a variety of direct questions that tap the three general types of reasons—purposive, material, and social—discussed earlier. Here, we used several measures of donor motives that have proven useful in earlier studies of federal donors (e.g., Francia et al. 2003).

KN administered the non-donor survey online to a sample of its KnowledgePanelSM members who resided in our survey states and who did not give any political contributions during the 2005-2006 election cycle.⁶ The KnowledgePanelSM comprises a very large, nationally representative sample of U.S. residents.⁷ The non-donor sample was stratified by state

⁴ We selected the states for reasons related to our broader research effort, which includes studies of state policy experiments with incentives for contributing small amounts of money to campaigns. For more information about the criteria for choosing states, see Malbin et al. 2007.

⁵ Our survey also included the open-ended question that asks respondents to identify the two "most important issues for the governor and state legislature in <respondent's state> to address in the next year or two." The process of standardizing these responses for quantitative analysis, however, is not yet complete. Once we have these data, we shall analyze them and incorporate the results into a future paper.

⁶ KnowledgePanelSM members were screened for eligibility with this question: "Did you contribute any money to a candidate's campaign, a political party organization, or a political organization in 2005 or 2006?" Respondents who answered "no" were eligible to take the non-donor survey.

⁷ KN recruits KnowledgePanelSM members from the general U.S. population by using list-assisted random digit dialing methods and telephone contact. Additional information about KN's sampling methodology is available from KN's Web site: <http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp/index.html>. Independent research (see, e.g., Chang and Krosnick 2002) has found that KN's recruiting process produces samples that are approximately as representative as those extracted by rigorous telephone survey sampling methods. To increase the number of cases in states that lacked a sufficient *n*, an additional 11.4 percent of the non-donor cases came from an "opt-in" panel sample that is separate from the KnowledgePanelSM.

to produce a balanced number of responses across the more and less populated states that we surveyed. The field period of the non-donor survey ran from October through November 2007.

KN administered the donor survey by U.S. surface mail and online to a random sample of donors from each of the seven states. KN sent three waves of the instrument and several reminder mailings between October 2007 and January 2008.⁸ The donor survey sampling frame consisted of all in-state individual donors to major party state legislative and gubernatorial candidates' campaigns from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.⁹ We excluded candidates for those offices as well as members of the candidates' households.

Our information about donors and their contributions comes from official state records of all itemized individual contributions to the candidates of interest. The National Institute for Money in State Politics acquired, processed, and consolidated the records from each state. CFI aggregated each donor's calendar year 2006 contributions to the candidates and then classified donors according to the following levels of giving: small donors are individuals who contributed \$100 or less to all candidates of interest; medium donors include those who gave more than \$100 but less than \$500; and large donors gave at least \$500.¹⁰

Technical considerations required us to adjust the sample design for Minnesota donors. Most of our states require candidates to report the names and addresses of donors who contribute more than \$20 to \$50 in a year. Minnesota candidates, however, do not have to report that information until the candidate receives more than \$100 from the donor within a calendar year. To compensate for the missing small contributors, we stratified medium donors in Minnesota. Supporters who donated at least \$101 but no more than \$150 were classified as "medium donors, lower tier." The remaining medium donors were classified as "medium donors, upper tier." We oversampled the medium and large donors to ensure that we had an adequate number of responses from these groups.¹¹

For some analyses, we weighted the donor survey responses on a number of different variables so that the respondents in each state would accurately reflect the proportion of donors

⁸ In January 2008, to employ more aggressive measures, CFI mailed the third wave of the questionnaire mailing to a randomly selected half of the large donor sample nonrespondents in Connecticut, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

⁹ We limited the sampling frame to in-state donors for reasons related to our future studies of donor incentive programs.

¹⁰ The definition of small donors is admittedly somewhat arbitrary. The \$100 threshold represents a reasonable compromise between the \$50 contributions for which some state-level incentive programs reimburse donors and amounts of incentives that some have proposed for federal campaigns (see, e.g., Ornstein et al. 1997, Rosenberg 2002). The decision to define large donors as those who gave at least \$500 was to some extent a pragmatic one. A higher minimum threshold for this definition would have reduced some sampling frame strata to problematically small sizes.

¹¹ The overall response rate for the survey of non-donors was 81 percent among existing members of the KnowledgePanel. The proportion of opt-in panel members who responded to an e-mail request for survey participation and completed the survey was 5 percent. The response rate for the donor survey was 33.6 percent. Among donor sample segments, response rates ranged from 20 percent among large donors in Pennsylvania to 43 percent among medium donors in Colorado.

who gave to more than one major party, gave to a particular major party, gave to more than one candidate, gave only to incumbents, and gave only to primary losers. In some instances, we have combined the respondents from all states. In those cases, we also weighted the responses from each state so that each state's representation within a level of giving (non-donors, small donors, medium donors, etc.) would be roughly equal. KN created weights for the non-donors using available social and demographic data.

III. RESULTS

In general, the results of our analysis tend to favor the small donor democracy theory more than the activist extremism theory. But the strength of the support varies across dimensions of representation, as do the extant levels of representational distortion.

A. Descriptive Representation

Are donors to state-level campaigns representative of the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of non-donors? Are small donors more like medium and large donors or are they more like non-donors? That is, would increasing the proportion of small donors in the donor pool result in better representation of non-donors? Recent scholarship (Brown *et al.* 1995, Verba *et al.* 1999, Francia *et al.*, 2003) demonstrates that campaign donors in federal elections are older, more affluent, and better educated than non-donors. Our state donor findings are consistent with earlier scholarship on federal donors with respect to donors in general, but the findings with respect to small donors are mixed.

The demographic characteristics of our donor survey respondents appear in table 1. The differences in income between donors and non-donors are significant. Almost half of the non-donors in our survey have household incomes of less than \$40,000 a year, which is below the U.S. Census Bureau's average household income for the survey states of \$51,013.¹² In contrast, only 11 percent of small donors (aggregating to \$100 or less), 5 percent of medium donors (\$101-500) and less than one percent of large donors (\$500+) fall into this category. At the same time, 45 percent of the large donors report incomes in excess of \$250,000 a year, compared with only 0.6 percent of non-donors. In other words, donors live in households with more money than non-donors. As in past federal research, we find a direct and positive relationship between contribution size and income. The typical contributors who give small amounts have household incomes between \$40,000 and \$250,000 per year. They fit between the incomes of non-donors and larger donors. This is unsurprising: wealth correlates with the amount one is willing to give.

[Insert table 1 here]

¹²\$48,023 was the average median household income for the U.S. in 2006. See "Two-Year-Average Median Household Income by State: 2004-2006" from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2005 to 2007 Annual Social and Economic Supplements. Site: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income06/statemhi2.html> accessed 3:37 PM March 20th 2008.

The results are more nuanced with respect to education. All sets of donors to state candidates have more formal education than the set of non-donors. Nearly half of all non-donors have a high school education or less, compared with only 8 percent of small donors, 6 percent of medium donors and 3 percent of large donors. The large donors are more likely than those in other groups to have professional degrees, but more than 70 percent of the small donors have either finished college, earned a master's degree or a degree from a postgraduate professional school. Thus, the small donors may have somewhat less formal education than the large donors, but their education levels tend to look more like that of other donors than like the non-donors. Again, this is unsurprising. Education seems to relate in these bivariate tables to the act of contributing (as it does in other studies with voting and other forms of participation) while income seems to relate to the amount given.

Past surveys of federal donors have also shown donors more likely to be white and male and likely to be older than non-donors. This carries over to state elections, but for the gender variables there is an observable difference between small and large donors. Race seems consistent across donor groups: 85 percent of the non-donors identify themselves as white, compared with about 95 percent of the small, medium and large donors. With respect to gender: 53 percent of the non-donors are female, compared with 28 percent of the large donors, 39 percent of the medium donors and 45 percent of the small donors. That is, the small donors nearly reflect the non-donors in gender – a fact which was *not* seen in a past federal study of presidential campaign donors (Wilcox *et al.* 2003). Finally, donors are substantially older than non-donors, with small donors being even older as a group than the medium or large donors.

We thus find modest support for Hypothesis 1. There are significant differences between donors to state elections and non-donors along lines that would be familiar to those who have looked at federal donors. However, we also find differences among donors that will need to be pursued further. Small donors have less household income than large donors, are less likely to have a postgraduate professional degree, and are more likely to be female. This suggests that an increase in small donors would result in a somewhat more representative donor pool along some dimensions, while along other dimensions the differences between small and large donors are smaller than the differences between all donors and non-donors. Not yet known – but to be investigated – is whether contributors who are brought into the system because of a state's donor incentive program differ from the small donors in states without such a program. Our previous paper reporting the results of candidate surveys suggested that the candidates in Ohio and Minnesota believe their state's tax credit or rebate leads the candidates to recruit donors from different backgrounds (Malbin *et al.* 2007). We have not yet tested this possibility in the donor survey responses.

B. Substantive Representation I: Public Policy Preferences and Priorities

We can directly test both the small donor democracy and extremist activism theories by examining distributions of respondents' views about public policies and their importance. We evaluate the strength of Hypotheses 2 and 3 by looking at donors' and non-donors' views about a variety of issues that frequently surface in state election campaigns. We begin with the respondents' policy preferences and then consider their policy priorities.

1. Positional Representation

We look first at positions on two of the most consistent, prominent battlegrounds of the “culture wars”: abortion and same sex marriage (see, e.g., Fiorina 2006). The distribution of respondents who took the most extreme position on each issue appears in figures 1 (abortion) and 2 (same sex marriage). In most states, the distribution of the individuals who hold the strongest views supports Hypothesis 2. The views of non-donors are closer to those of small donors than to large donors. Even when small donors take the strong pro-life position, their positions may be “extreme,” but they remain, in the aggregate, more representative than are those of the large donors. In Arizona, small donors are somewhat more likely to take the strongest pro-choice view. Small donors in Connecticut are less pro-choice than non-donors or other donors. The distributions of strong positions about same sex marriage offer less consistent support for either perspective. In some instances, the views of small donors fall between those of non-donors and large donors. In other instances, such as Arizona and Iowa, small donors are distinctive. But they are distinctive on different sides of the issue. In Arizona, which had a state referendum on same sex marriage in 2006, small donors were more likely than non-donors or large donors to indicate strong disagreement with the proposition that their state government should ban same sex marriage. Alternatively, in Iowa, small donors strongly agreed with the statement in significantly higher proportions than did non-donors or other donors.

[Insert figures 1 and 2 here]

If small donors are not a consistently skewed or unrepresentatively extreme social issue constituency, perhaps they hold unrepresentatively strong views about economic issues. To test for this possibility, we created a scale of economic ideological orientation by taking the average response to four questions about government intervention in the health insurance market, the minimum wage, tax cuts, and a tradeoff between environmental protection and jobs. The alpha reliability score of this index for each state always exceeded 0.7 and frequently exceeded 0.8. The mean scale score for each sample segment is reported in figure 3. Considered collectively, small donors are slightly more conservative than non-donors. Confirming Hypothesis 2, that difference is usually quite small, and their mean score is usually closer to that of the non-donors than to the large donors. Hence bringing more small donors into the campaign finance system could improve the representative quality of the donor pool. But overall, the aggregate differences are small. Hence the potential representation gains from an influx of small donors are minor.

[Insert figure 3 here]

The results of both tests are more consistent with the small donor democracy theory than with the extremist activism theory. We thus conclude that an influx of more small donors into the system would *not* inherently skew the composition of the donor pool in any particular ideological direction. Nor would it necessarily leave candidates more dependent on people with extreme public policy preferences. In some contexts, greater participation from small donors could increase the pool’s proportion of redistributive liberals, cultural conservatives, or others. But the nature of the changes in each state and election cycle would depend on particular combinations of mobilization capacity, political culture, and other variables.

2. Issue Importance

Even if small donors do not constitute a minority of activists with extreme public policy positions, their public issue priorities could deviate considerably from those held by other campaign donors and by non-donors. We asked donors to rate the importance of state government attention to the issues in our survey's positional representation battery. The mean rating that the members of each sample segment gave for each issue appears in table 2.

[Insert table 2 here]

Considered together, the results favor Hypothesis 3. Across a broad range of traditionally polarizing issues, the intensity of small donors' preference for near-term state action usually falls between that of the non-donors and large donors. Some distributions of responses, of course, depart from this general conclusion. Yet in light of the variety of issues and states for which we have results, the consistency is impressive. We thus see few grounds for the concern that a greater influx of small donors will increase pressure on lawmakers to allocate more agenda space to issues that concern ideological activist minorities more than others.

We look first at differences in the importance accorded two social issues that citizen activist groups frequently highlight: abortion and government policy toward same sex couples. Contrary to the fear of small donors as culture warriors, we find that these issues receive the highest average importance scores from the non-donors. Large donors give these issues the lowest average priority score. The intensity of small donors' concern is somewhere between that of the other groups. Exceptions to this pattern are very rare. On the issue of abortion, the sole, minor exception occurred in Iowa, where the difference between small donors and non-donors is negligible. Looking at the issue of government policy toward same sex couples, the views of non-donors and small donors normally correspond even more closely than they do with respect to abortion. We cannot rule out the possibility that in at least two states (Arizona and Colorado), non-donor interest in the issue could have been temporarily inflated by relatively competitive, directly related ballot referenda campaigns.¹³ But the aggregate non-donor ratings of this issue's importance are remarkably consistent across the states. Here we find the only case in which the small donors appear more zealous about an issue than do the non-donors. In Iowa, the small donors consider the issue more important than do the non-donors. In general, however, we find little here to warrant concern about small donors pushing inordinate attention to ideological social issues.

If small donors do not push harder than average citizens on cultural values issues, what about economic issues? Would an increase in small donor participation bring unrepresentative pressure on state governments to devote agenda space to organized labor's pet causes, for

¹³ During the November 2006 general elections, Arizona held a referendum on Proposition 107, a proposal to ban same sex marriage. The measure failed by a narrow 51 percent to 49 percent margin. Colorado voters were asked to vote on two policies: a same-sex marriage ban (Amendment 43) and the legalization of domestic partnerships (Referendum I). The ban passed by a 56 percent-to-44 percent margin. The referendum failed by a 53 percent to 47 percent margin.

example? We find little support for this concern, too. By sizable margins in every state we surveyed, near-term state action on the minimum wage was more important to non-donors than to any group of donors. The average degree of concern among small donors is more congruent with that of the large donors, from whom the issue receives its lowest average score. The question about the importance of health insurance elicited a similar pattern of responses, although the differences among the groups are usually smaller.

The potential consequences of an influx of more small donors seem even less predictable if one examines the levels of importance accorded several other issues about which we asked. In three states, the average small donor considers taxes moderately less important than do the non-donors. In other states, the differences between small donors and non-donors are trivial. In Arizona and Colorado, which have libertarian political cultures, non-donors consider reform of state business regulations more important than do the small donors. In most of our other states, however, there are minor differences between the non-donors and small donors. Most donors consider the quality of public education more important than do the non-donors. The differences between small donors and large donors are usually small but do not follow a consistent direction.

The issue importance scores, then, provide little reason for concern that bringing more small donors into the system will increase pressure on lawmakers to devote more attention to the obsessions of a vocal minority. That good news for exponents of small donor democracy, however, is tempered by the inconsistent potential of more small donors to reduce participatory distortion, at least with respect to issue priorities. In some instances, small donors' sense of an issue's urgency may correspond more closely with non-donors than with large donors. We found this to be true for abortion, policy toward same sex couples, and perhaps environmental protection. In other cases, however, small donors' priority evaluations are more congruent with large donors than with non-donors. This pattern prevailed for both of the basic economic needs issues.

C. Substantive Representation II: Reasons for Contributing

We examine additional potential forms and pathways of participatory distortion by looking at differences in donors' motives for giving and in their contacts with lawmakers. We begin by identifying the donors' general reasons for giving and seeing whether these vary across levels of giving. Then, we offer a preliminary look at whether differences in major reasons for giving reflect differences in broader participatory agendas. We conclude with an assessment of the implications of these findings for the desirability of increasing the donor pool's share of small donors.

1. Identifying Donors' Reasons for Contributing

To measure donor motives, we began with a method that others have used in analyses of donor motives (Brown *et al.* 1995; Francia *et al.* 2003). The method consists of three steps: 1) asking a variety of questions about more specific reasons for contributing, 2) using a factor analysis to identify the broader types of motives that comprise distinct combinations of the specific reasons, and 3) finding the broad type of motive that most accurately characterizes each donor's reason for giving. The earlier studies of federal campaign donors found that donor

motives generally cluster into one of three broad, composite types: pursuit of purposive goals, advancement of material interests, and the enjoyment of social benefits. We expected that our factor analysis would produce similar results because the broad types are general enough to operate in state political contexts as well as in federal ones.

We report the average importance of each of the more specific reasons for each level of donating in table 3. The results largely comport with those of Francia *et al.*'s (2003) earlier study of donors to Congressional candidates' campaigns. Across levels of giving, donors indicate that broad public policy views figure prominently.¹⁴ Social considerations, such as the desire to attend a fundraiser, generally matter least. Stratifying by donor level, however, reveals an interesting finding with respect to material motives. Large donors consider benefits for their own business, industry, or job to be far more important than do small donors. These differences are statistically significant within every state we surveyed, usually at levels of $p < 0.001$, and confirm Hypothesis 4.¹⁵

[Insert table 3 here]

The results of our factor analysis, shown in table 4, are substantively consistent with those obtained elsewhere (Brown *et al.* 1995; Francia *et al.* 2003). (The analysis generated three factors with eigenvalues that exceeded one. Together, the three factors explained 66.8 percent of the variance.) Our three factors do not precisely match those in the studies of federal donors because we did not completely replicate their batteries of motive questions. The most important difference is that our battery included only one item that directly taps solidary motives (whether the contribution "involved an event [that the donor] wanted to attend"). Our other two related items (donor was asked by someone he/she knows personally or by a group to which the donor belongs) get more at the importance of social network mobilization.

Our first factor, material giving, is dominated by items that ask about particularistic material benefits, with the heaviest loadings registering for questions that tap the welfare of the respondent's business, industry, or job. The solidary motive and social network mobilization items load somewhat on this factor, too, suggesting that some of the materially-motivated giving may have been activated by business networks, professional associations, labor unions, and, perhaps to a lesser extent, neighborhood homeowners' associations. Most important to the second factor, purposive giving, are a candidate's ideological orientation and views on social and moral issues; little else matters here. The final component is a combination of the solidary item and social mobilization items. Socially activated givers indicate that they contributed because they were asked by someone they know personally, by a group to which they belonged, or to attend a social event. Some of these donors also answered that they gave out of concern for their business interests, neighborhood property values, or both.

¹⁴ We agree with Francia *et al.* that social desirability biases in survey responses may overstate the relative importance of giving to promote policy views. See Francia *et al.* 2003, pp. 45-46.

¹⁵ In Connecticut, the differences between small and large donors are significant at $p < 0.05$. In Ohio, $p < 0.01$. The higher p values for these states may stem partially from smaller numbers of large donor respondents. In Minnesota, similarly significant differences exist between the low mid-tier and large donors. For the item "candidate would be better for my business, industry, or job, $p < 0.01$. For the item "so my business will be treated fairly, $p < 0.001$.

Figure 4 charts the average score on each of the factors across donors' levels of giving. The figure illustrates the relative importance of a motive to each level. Material motives for giving are more important to large donors than to small donors, again confirming Hypothesis 4. Candidates' ideological orientations and positions on social and moral issues exert more influence on the giving of small donors than of large donors.

[Insert table 4 and figure 4 here]

To classify donors by general type of giving motive, we used Francia et al's (2003) method of comparing factor scores. The factor analysis produced a score for each of the three factors in our solution. We measured a donor's general type of motive by finding the factor for which the donor had the highest score. For example, if the value of a donor's "purposive" factor score exceeded his or two other scores, we designated that donor a "purposive giver." Our classification terminology falls back on a modified version of Wilson's typology because our measures do not completely replicate those used in Francia et al's (2003) typology. We thus use "material donors" to describe those who scored highest on the material motives factor, and so on. We did, however, adopt Francia et al's practice of using the category "incidentals" refer to respondents who scored below average on all three factors. Members of the latter group probably contributed for reasons that our measures fail to capture.

The classification of donors by a general class of motives provides an interesting perspective on the composition of our three strata of giving. Figure 5 charts the distribution of donors by each donor's general motive and the donor's level of giving.

[Insert figure 5 here]

The results are consistent with Hypothesis 4. Among small donors, a plurality is motivated most by appraisals of a candidate's broad policy views. Alternatively, the modal large donor is a material giver. In three states, there are minor germane departures from this general pattern. In Ohio, the large donors are evenly divided across the three groups of motives. In Connecticut, the proportion of large donors who qualify as socially activated givers slightly exceeds that of donors who gave primarily for material reasons. Material goals are most important for a majority of large donors in Arizona. In general, then, it would seem that increasing a donor pool's share of small donors could reduce candidates' dependence on funds from donors who are unusually more interested in the welfare of their own business, industry, or job.

2. Levels of Giving, Reasons for Giving, and Broader Participatory Distortion

A donor's general reason for contributing may reflect a participatory agenda that also informs his or her nonfinancial forms of political involvement. Hence differences in the mix of donor motives across levels of giving may be associated with differences in the subjects that donors raise through other channels of participation. In this preliminary analysis, we conducted one test of this hypothesis, focusing on donors' communications about their own business or job. We asked donors whether they had initiated contact with the governor, a state legislator, or someone on the staff of such an official within the last two years. A follow-up question asked

whether the most recent contact related to the donor's job or business. The results appear in figures 6 and 7.

[Insert figure 6 here]

Figure 6 reports the relative frequency of initiating contact by the donors' level of giving and dominant general motive. Most donors have initiated contact with a lawmaker or a member of a lawmaker's staff within the last two years. Unsurprisingly, the likelihood of initiating contact is correlated with a donor's level of giving. A donor's likelihood of initiating contact is generally unrelated to a donor's dominant motive type. There are a few notable exceptions, all of which are consistent with our expectations. First, the undiscernibly motivated or less motivated "incidentals" who gave small amounts are least likely to initiate contact. Large donors with greater interest in narrowly targeted economic benefits are the most likely to do so.

[Insert figure 7 here]

Differences in general motive types are associated with differences in the concerns that donors raise in communications that they initiate with lawmakers. For each general motive type and level of giving, figure 7 reports the percentage of donors whose last self-initiated contact concerned the donor's own business, job, or industry. Such concerns were usually the subject raised in the last such contact initiated by material givers. Across motive types, however, the likelihood of having raised such issues increases with level of giving. For the majority of large donors, this was the subject of their most recent contact. Also, it is important to interpret these results in the context of the distributions of motive types reported in figure 5. Although half of the small material donors brought up their job or business in their last communication with a lawmaker, only 23 percent of the small donors are material givers. Alternatively, 38 percent of the large donors are material givers, and a large majority of these donors focused on their own economic concerns in their last communication.

Considered together, the results support Hypothesis 5 and suggest that increasing a donor pool's share of small givers could reduce representational distortion – not simply in the pool of donors, but in the character and mix of the policy communications between donors and office holders. Small donors are less likely than large donors to be material givers. They are also less likely to contact lawmakers about their own job or business. Bringing more small donors into the system, then, may reduce pressure on lawmakers to devote time to the particularistic economic concerns of their biggest campaign donors.

Finally, we freely acknowledge an important limitation of our data. A more thorough examination of these issues would require that we know something about differences in the mode of donors' contacts with lawmakers (or their staff members) and how seriously those communications were taken. A small donor's e-mail message to a gubernatorial staff member probably does not garner the same level of attention that a lawmaker gives to a meeting with a group of senior corporate officials and their lobbyists. From this perspective, our measures probably understate participatory distortion in the current system.

IV. CONCLUSION

We began this inquiry by asking whether cultivating more small donors could reduce distortion in the system. If the answer to this question is “no,” then an important rationale for policies that attempt to stimulate participation vanishes. We found, however, that small donors differ from large donors in important ways. In some instances, the policy views of small donors correspond more closely with those of non-donors than of large donors. To be sure, in other instances, the beliefs of small donors, in the aggregate, have more in common with those of other donors than with those of people who contribute nothing. Even in those cases, however, there is a larger gap between the positions of large donors and non-donors than between small donors and non-donors.

An increase in the proportional role of small donors would also seem to attenuate another form of participatory distortion. Large donors are more likely than small donors to give in the interest of advancing their own narrow economic concerns, as distinct from a more general concern about the economy. They are also likely to extend this concern to other forms of political participation, such as contacts that they initiate with lawmakers and members of lawmakers’ staffs. A system in which candidates raise most of their money from large donors, in other words, is one that favors those most likely to lobby later on behalf of their particularistic interests. By extension, a system that increased the role of small donors, thus decreasing the dependence on large donors, could also reduce the subsequent pressure placed on lawmakers to respond to such particularistic concerns.

We also found little reason to fear that small donors inherently are an unrepresentative minority of ideological extremists. In the aggregate, at least, the broad policy views of small donors are no more deviant than those of other donors. Indeed, the views of small donors often correspond more closely with those of the non-donors than with those of other donors. Whether an influx of small donors will alter the balance of financial participation more toward liberals or conservatives seems to depend on other contextual influences, such as a state’s political culture, the balance of strength among mobilizing institutions, qualities of the candidates, and the like.

In addition, increasing the role of small donors may have implications beyond those that directly relate to campaign finance. The act of contributing money could well serve as a kind of “gateway” form of participation that leads previously uninvolved donors to acquire a greater stake in the election’s outcome, inducing them to participate as volunteers. Sen. Barack Obama’s (D-IL) presidential campaign has led small donors through this process (see, e.g., Luo 2008 and Morain 2008). Responses to the Campaign Finance Institute’s survey of state legislative candidates in 2006 also indicate that the candidates see such a relationship (see Malbin *et al.* 2007). In a future report, we shall examine the responses of donors and non-donors to see whether and to what extent this occurred.

In another follow-up study, we shall examine the effects (or lack thereof) of state-level policies that provide incentives to increase the role of small donors. In particular, we want to know whether such policies in fact bring in new people as donors and volunteers. We also want to know whether new people will alter the representational characteristics of the system. Even when this research is complete, however, it will be but one step. We have begun in this project

to trace out some representational issues on the contributors' or citizens' side of the equation. Larger questions about representation ultimately must involve both ends of the relationship: those on one end who gain a voice through contributions and volunteering, and those on the other who campaign and then govern.

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Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Non-donors and Donors, by Level of Giving

	All States Except Minnesota				Minnesota			
	Non-donors (%)	Small donors (%)	Medium donors (%)	Large donors (%)	Non-donors (%)	Medium donors, Lower Tier (%)	Medium Donors, Upper Tier (%)	Large donors (%)
Age								
18 to 30	22.9	1.9	1.5	1.5	25.1	0.0	1.5	0.0
31 to 45	28.3	10.7	11.6	13.8	27.3	13.5	14.4	11.3
46 to 64	34.6	49.0	54.9	57.3	33.2	55.5	57.7	67.3
65 or over	14.2	38.4	32.0	27.3	14.5	31.1	26.4	21.4
	(n = 2630)	(n = 2185)	(n = 1168)	(n = 776)	(n = 407)	(n = 431)	(n = 201)	(n = 159)
Education								
HS degree or less	45.4	8.1	5.8	3.0	38.5	5.7	6.6	3.2
Some college	28.5	19.2	15.0	10.7	34.1	17.5	15.2	12.7
Bachelor's degree	17.2	27.9	27.9	31.3	19.6	38.4	37.9	35.4
Master's degree	6.8	27.3	24.9	21.7	5.9	18.2	16.7	16.5
Professional (e.g., MD, DDS, JD, LLB) or doctoral degree	2.1	17.4	26.4	33.3	2.0	20.3	23.7	32.3
	(n = 2630)	(n = 2147)	(n = 1150)	(n = 774)	(n = 408)	(n = 424)	(n = 198)	(n = 158)
Household Income in 2006								
Less than \$40,000	48.3	11.2	4.9	0.8	44.8	6.1	6.5	0.7
\$40,000 to < \$75,000	31.6	25.4	13.9	5.8	33.8	19.3	5.9	3.4
\$75,000 to < \$250,000	19.5	55.5	60.0	48.9	21.5	54.0	53.2	32.4
\$250,000 to < \$500,000	0.4	6.1	13.7	26.6	0.0	15.2	23.1	27.0
\$500,000 or more	0.2	1.7	7.6	17.9	0.0	5.4	11.3	36.5
	(n = 2568)	(n = 2024)	(n = 1112)	(n = 744)	(n = 391)	(n = 409)	(n = 186)	(n = 148)
Race								
White	85.2	95.6	94.0	94.7	92.9	96.8	96.5	96.9
Nonwhite	14.8	4.4	6.0	5.3	7.1	3.2	3.5	3.1
	(n = 2631)	(n = 2200)	(n = 1174)	(n = 786)	(n = 408)	(n = 435)	(n = 202)	(n = 162)
Sex								
Male	46.9	55.2	61.1	71.8	45.3	55.9	72.8	70.4
Female	53.1	44.8	38.9	28.2	54.7	44.1	27.2	29.6
	(n = 2631)	(n = 2201)	(n = 1174)	(n = 786)	(n = 408)	(n = 435)	(n = 202)	(n = 162)

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

	All States Except Minnesota				Minnesota			
	Non-donors (%)	Small donors (%)	Medium donors (%)	Large donors (%)	Non-donors (%)	Low mid-tier donors (%)	High mid-tier donors (%)	Large donors (%)
Religious Service Attendance								
More than once a week	7.8	10.8	8.9	6.1	6.0	9.0	9.4	6.2
Once a week	18.6	31.4	26.8	26.0	26.1	34.7	25.7	29.0
Several times a month	8.5	13.0	15.2	14.4	13.2	18.9	19.8	24.1
A few times a year	22.0	20.9	25.9	27.6	23.1	19.1	19.8	23.5
Seldom or never	43.1	23.9	23.1	25.9	31.8	18.4	25.2	17.3
	(n = 2624)	(n = 2193)	(n = 1168)	(n = 784)	(n = 403)	(n = 435)	(n = 202)	(n = 162)
Job Involve Politics or Govt								
Yes	6.8	20.2	27.0	36.2	5.9	14.5	22.6	26.5
No	93.2	79.8	73.0	63.8	94.1	85.5	77.4	73.5
	(n = 2629)	(n = 2155)	(n = 1144)	(n = 780)	(n = 407)	(n = 427)	(n = 199)	(n = 162)

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2. Mean Rating of Near-Term Importance of Issues for R's Governor and State Legislature

All States Except Minnesota	Non-donors			Small Donors			Medium Donors			Large Donors		
	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>
Taxes	3.0	0.9	2609	2.9	1.0	2134	2.9	1.0	1156	2.9	1.0	765
Health insurance	3.1	0.9	2620	2.9	1.0	2136	2.9	1.0	1145	2.7	1.0	763
Government policy toward same sex couples	2.2	1.1	2623	2.1	1.1	2141	1.9	1.1	1148	1.8	1.0	770
Minimum wage	2.7	1.0	2572	2.1	1.0	2153	2.1	1.0	1151	1.9	1.0	770
Environmental protection	2.8	0.9	2623	2.7	1.0	2145	2.7	1.0	1142	2.5	1.0	770
Reform of my state's business regulations	2.4	0.9	2616	2.3	0.9	2131	2.4	1.0	1134	2.5	1.0	766
Quality of public education	3.2	0.8	2616	3.4	0.7	2166	3.4	0.7	1162	3.4	0.7	777
Abortion	2.4	1.0	2572	2.1	1.1	2147	1.9	1.0	1146	1.6	1.0	770

Minnesota	Non-donors			Medium, Lower Tier			Medium, Upper Tier			Large Donors		
	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>
Taxes	3.0	0.8	408	3.0	0.9	424	3.0	0.9	199	2.9	0.9	158
Health insurance	3.1	0.9	406	2.9	1.0	423	2.8	1.0	199	2.7	0.9	160
Government policy toward same sex couples	2.2	1.1	407	1.9	1.1	428	1.8	1.0	198	1.9	1.1	160
Minimum wage	2.6	0.9	405	2.1	0.9	427	2.0	0.9	197	2.0	1.0	158
Environmental protection	2.9	0.8	407	2.7	1.0	422	2.6	1.0	195	2.5	1.0	158
Reform of my state's business regulations	2.2	0.8	407	2.2	1.0	422	2.3	1.0	198	2.2	0.9	158
Quality of public education	3.1	0.8	408	3.3	0.8	432	3.2	0.8	199	3.3	0.8	161
Abortion	2.3	1.1	403	1.9	1.1	431	1.7	1.0	199	1.6	0.9	160

How important is it to you that the governor and the state legislature in <R's state> deal with each of the following issues in the next year or two? (extremely / very / moderately / not that important, coded so that "extremely" is the highest score).

Combined states table: For each issue, the differences between non-donors, small donors, and large donors are usually significant at $p \leq 0.001$. For "taxes", only the difference between the non-donors and small donors achieves significant ($p \leq 0.001$). For "quality of public education, the difference between small and large donors is insignificant. For "reform of my state's business regulations," the non-donors/small donors difference is insignificant.

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

Table 3. Mean Rating of Importance of Reasons for Donating to Candidate for Governor and/or State Legislature in 2006

All States Excluding Minnesota	Small Donors			Medium Donors			Large Donors		
	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>
Candidate's liberalism or conservatism	3.8	1.2	2110 ***	3.7	1.2	1131	3.6	1.2	762
Candidate would be better for the state's economy	3.9	1.0	2114 ***	4.0	1.0	1132	4.1	0.9	771
Candidate's views on social or moral issues	4.0	1.1	2130 ***	3.9	1.1	1136	3.7	1.2	768
Involved an event I wanted to attend	1.6	1.0	2060	1.7	1.0	1105	1.7	1.1	748
Asked by someone I know personally	2.2	1.3	2080 ***	2.3	1.3	1116	2.4	1.4	763
A group I belong to asked me to give	1.8	1.1	2062 **	1.8	1.1	1109	1.9	1.2	755
Candidate would be better for my business, industry, or job	2.2	1.4	2058 ***	2.8	1.5	1119	3.1	1.5	758
So my business will be treated fairly	2.2	1.4	2058 ***	2.6	1.5	1112	2.9	1.5	757
Candidate cares more about things that directly affect the property values in my neighborhood	2.7	1.3	2088	2.6	1.4	1117	2.6	1.3	760

Minnesota	Medium, Lower Tier			Medium, Upper Tier			Large Donors		
	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std dev	<i>n</i>
Candidate's liberalism or conservatism	4.0	1.0	425 ***	3.9	1.1	193	3.6	1.1	156
Candidate would be better for the state's economy	4.2	0.9	421	4.2	0.8	198	4.2	0.9	156
Candidate's views on social or moral issues	4.0	1.0	416 **	3.8	1.2	196	3.8	1.1	155
Involved an event I wanted to attend	1.6	1.0	409	1.8	1.1	192	1.6	1.0	154
Asked by someone I know personally	2.2	1.3	412 **	2.2	1.4	194	2.5	1.4	159
A group I belong to asked me to give	1.8	1.1	414	1.9	1.1	190	1.9	1.2	159
Candidate would be better for my business, industry, or job	2.7	1.5	415 ***	3.0	1.4	195	3.2	1.5	159
So my business will be treated fairly	2.5	1.5	411 ***	2.9	1.5	194	3.0	1.5	158
Candidate cares more about things that directly affect the property values in my neighborhood	2.7	1.3	417	2.6	1.3	196	2.6	1.3	157

How important to you were the following reasons for making a campaign contribution to candidates for the governor or the state legislature in 2006? (extremely / very / somewhat / not too / not at all important, coded so that "extremely" is the highest score).

Differences between means of small donors and large donors (combined sample of all states except Minnesota) and medium, lower tier donors and large donors (Minnesota only) are statistically significant at the following levels: *** ($p < 0.001$); ** ($p < 0.01$)

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

Table 4. Factor Analysis of Importance of Reasons for Contributing to a Candidate

	Material items	Purposive items	Social network activated items
Candidate's liberalism or conservatism	.030	.828	-.046
Candidate's views on social or moral issues	.012	.830	.046
Involved an event I wanted to attend	.241	.100	.740
Asked by someone I know personally	.179	-.100	.839
A group I belong to asked me to give	.342	.008	.757
Candidate would be better for my business, industry, or job	.909	-.062	.281
So my business will be treated fairly	.915	-.013	.269
Candidate cares more about things that directly affect the property values in my neighborhood	.645	.123	.233

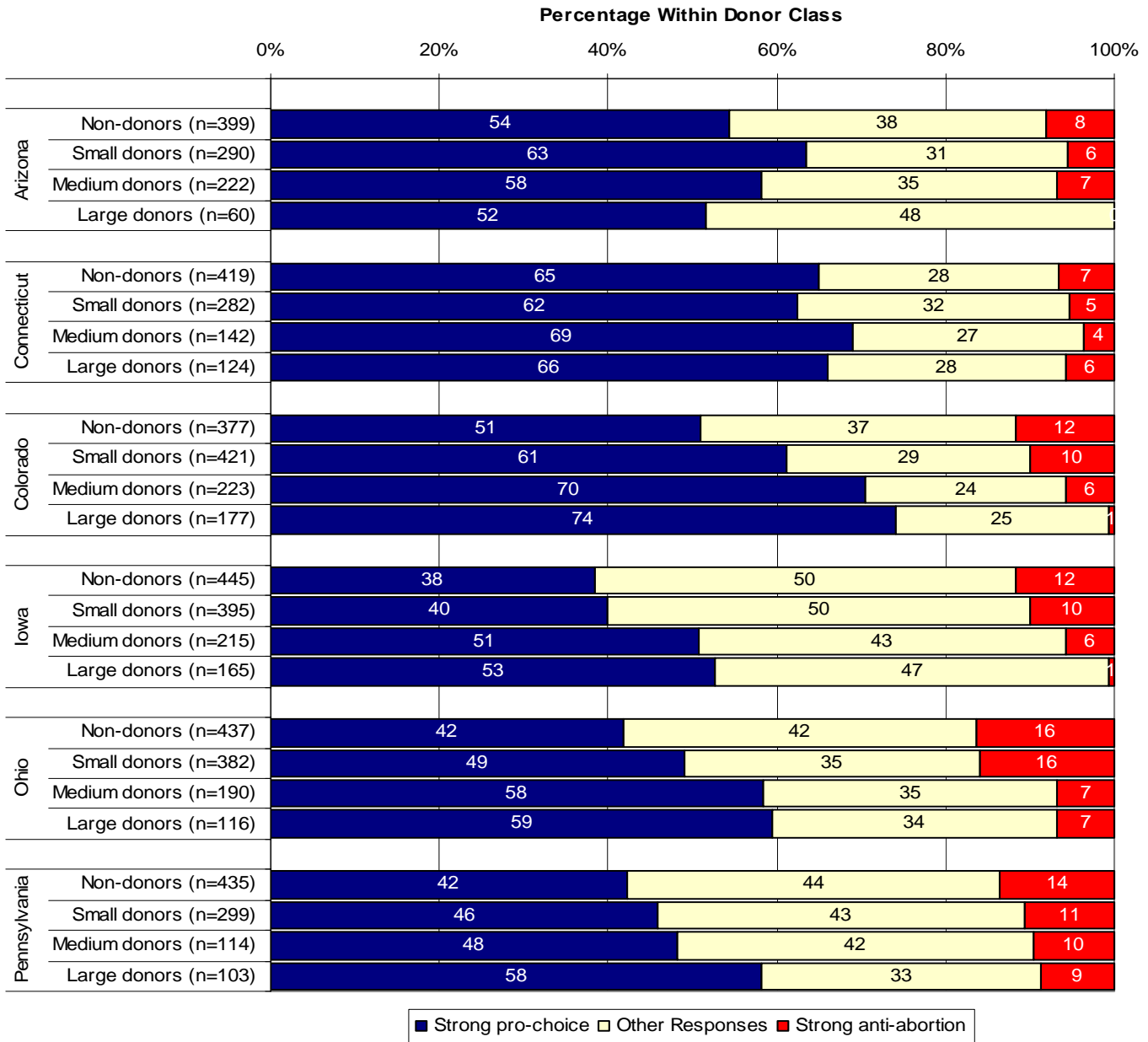
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Question: How important to you were the following reasons for making a campaign contribution to candidates for the governor or the state legislature in 2006? (extremely / very / somewhat / not too / not at all important, scaled so that "extremely" has the highest score).

Small donors n = 1956; medium donors n = 1056; large donors n = 720.

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

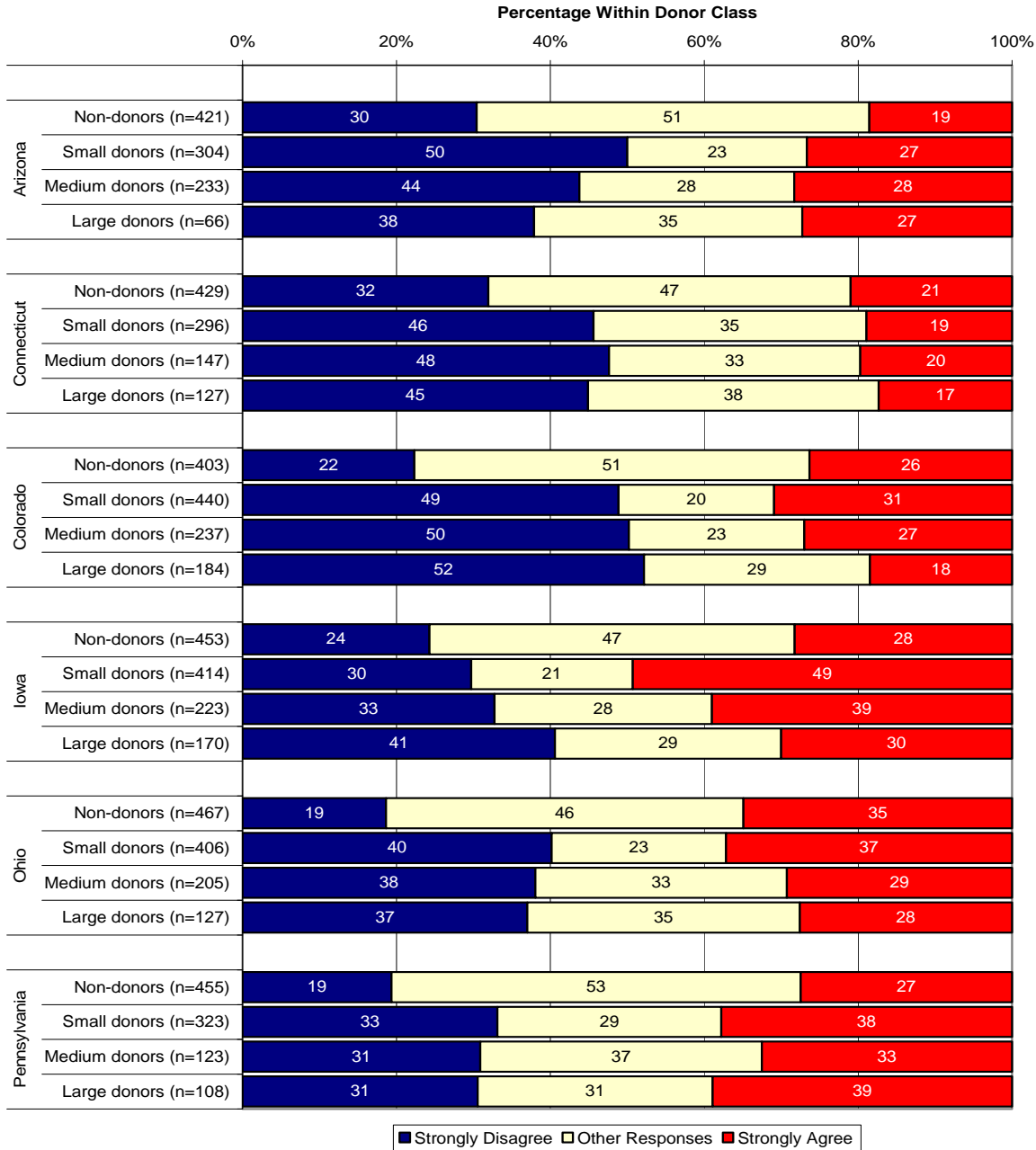
Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents with Strong Positions on Abortion, By Donor Class and State



Question wording: Which ONE of the following statements COMES CLOSEST to your views on abortion, even if it does not exactly match your views about this controversial subject? (Please select one only.) By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice. / The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established. / The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger. / By law, abortion should never be permitted. / Other (please specify). The response "By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice" was coded as "Strong Pro Choice." The response "By law, abortion should never be permitted" was coded as "Strong Anti-Abortion" all other responses were collapsed into "Other Responses"

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

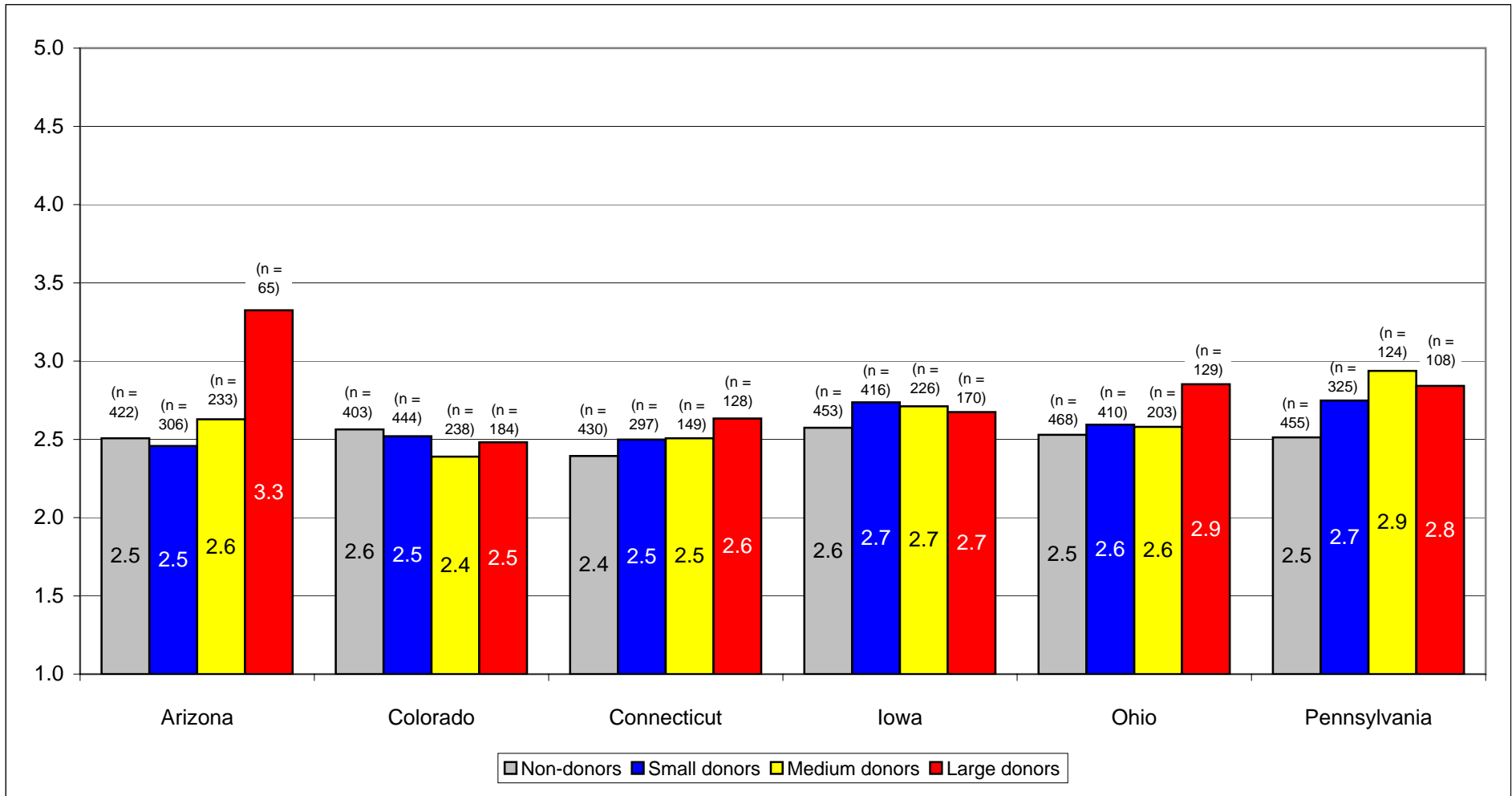
Figure 2. Percentage of Respondents with Strong Positions on Gay Marriage, By Donor Class and State



Question wording: The government should ban same sex couples from getting married. (Please select one only.) Strongly Agree / Agree Somewhat. / Neither Agree nor Disagree. / Disagree Somewhat / Strongly Disagree.

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

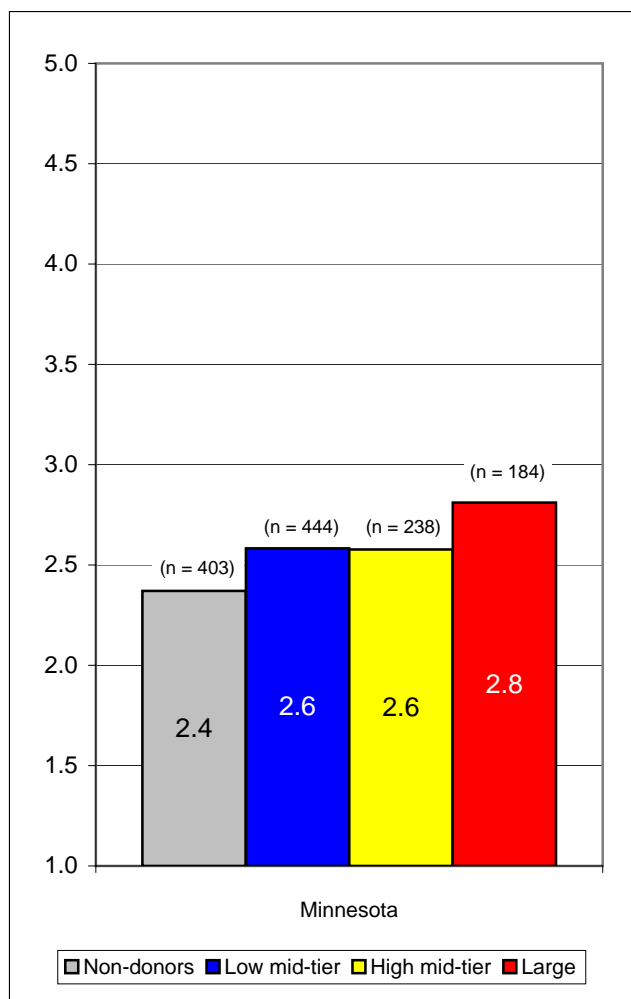
Figure 3. Mean Score on Economic Liberalism-Conservatism Scale



Questions: What are your views on the following political issues? The government should make health insurance available to those not currently insured. / The minimum wage should be higher. / More environmental protection is needed even if it raises prices or costs jobs. / Taxes should be cut even if it means reducing public services (coding reversed). (strongly agree / agree somewhat / neither agree nor disagree / disagree somewhat / strongly disagree). Responses coded so that higher scores are associated with the more conservative position.

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data)

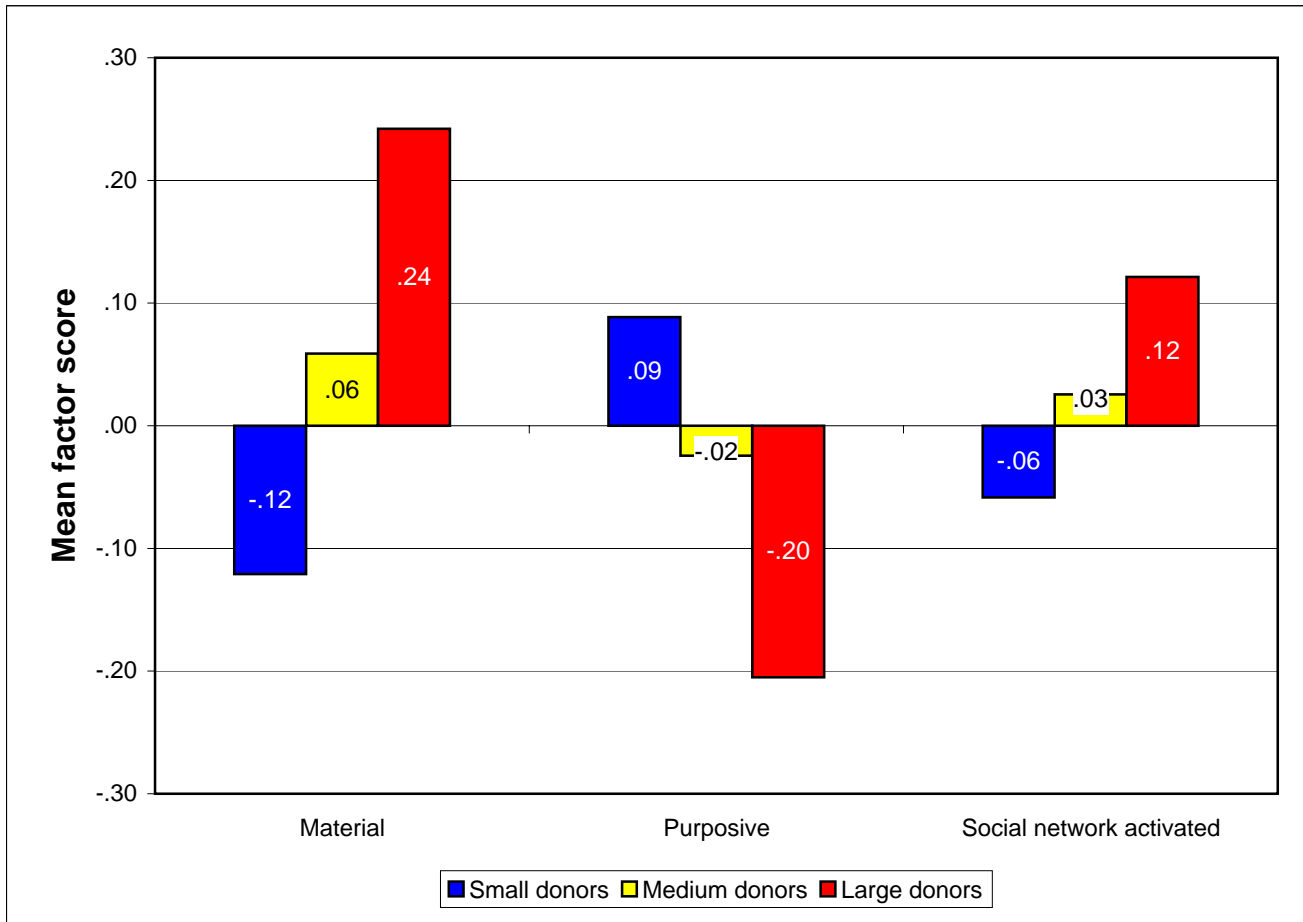
Figure 3. Mean Score on Economic Liberalism-Conservatism Scale (continued)



Questions: What are your views on the following political issues? The government should make health insurance available to those not currently insured. / The minimum wage should be higher. / More environmental protection is needed even if it raises prices or costs jobs. / Taxes should be cut even if it means reducing public services (coding reversed). (strongly agree / agree somewhat / neither agree nor disagree / disagree somewhat / strongly disagree). Responses coded so that higher scores are associated with the more conservative position.

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data)

Figure 4. Mean Factor Scores of Donor Motives, by Donor Motive and Donor Class

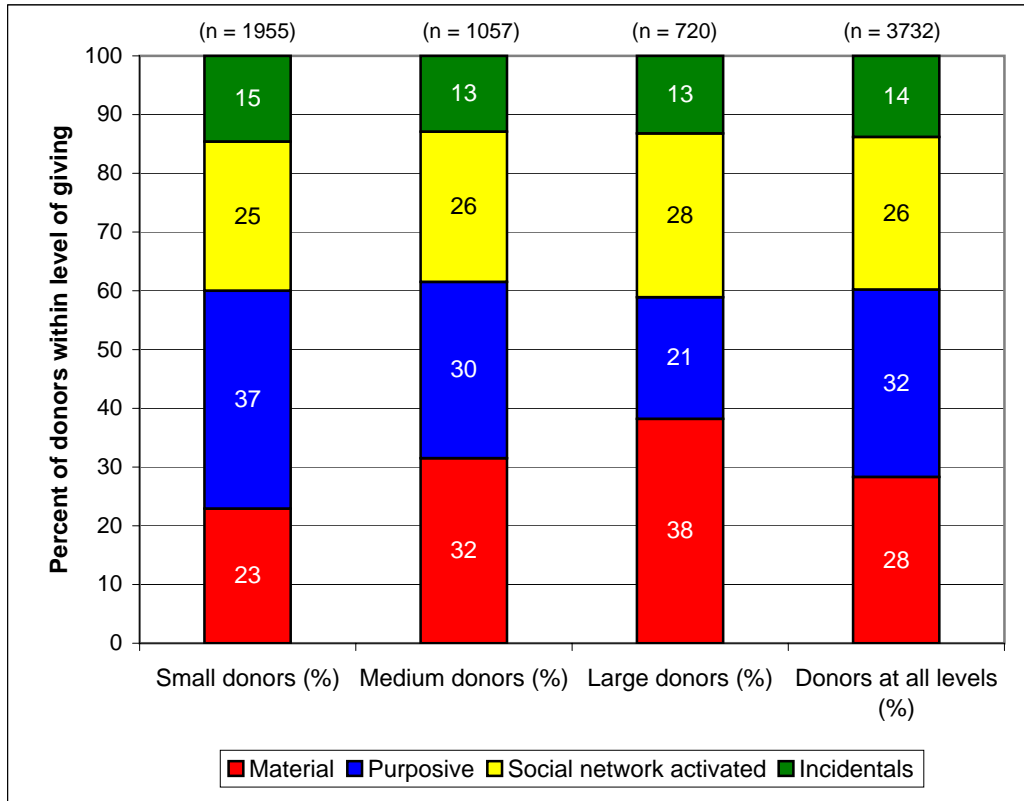


All differences of means of material and purposive scores are significant at $p < 0.01$. Differences of means of social network activated scores are significant at $p \leq 0.05$.

Small donors $n = 1956$; medium donors $n = 1056$; large donors $n = 720$.

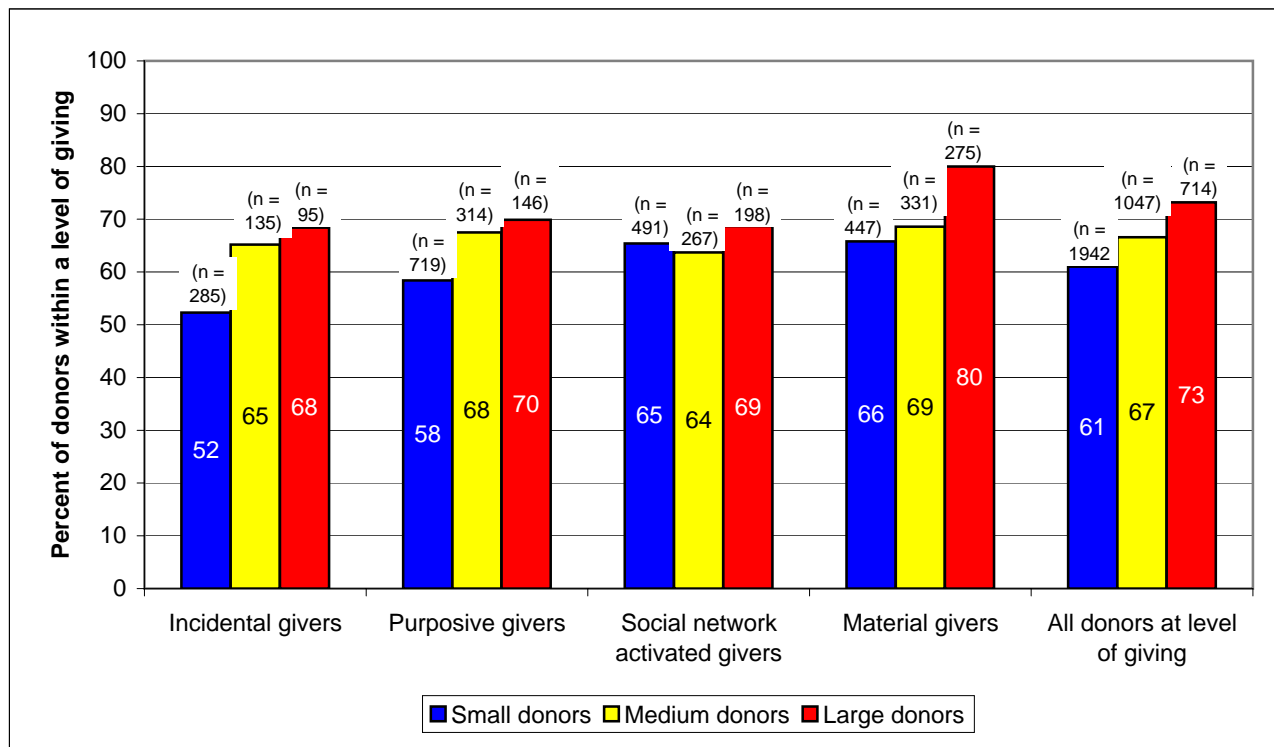
Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).

Figure 5. Percentage of Donors with Each Type of General Motive for Giving within Each Level of Giving



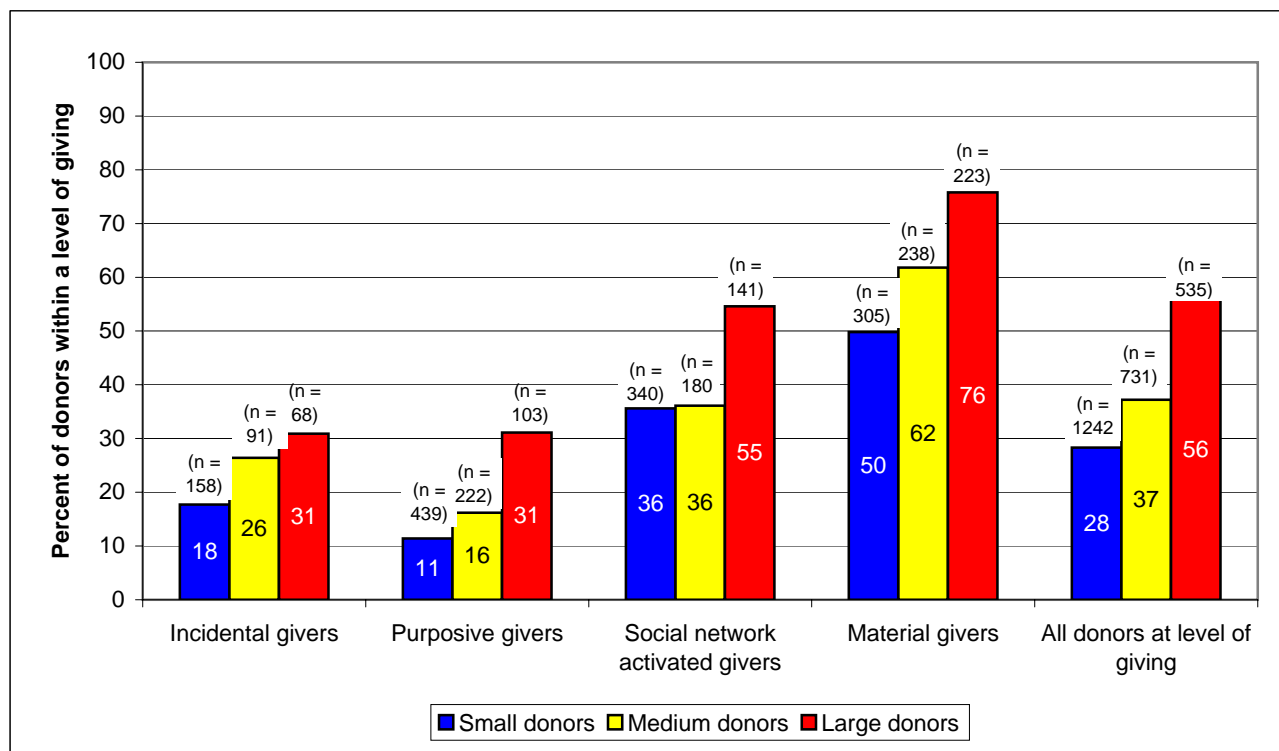
Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data)

Figure 6. Percentage of Donors Who Have Contacted a Lawmaker/Lawmaker's Staff Member within the Last Two Years, by Level of Giving and General Motive Type



Question: Please tell us about contact you may have initiated with the governor or a member of the state legislature, or someone on the staff of such an official. Have you telephoned, e-mailed, written a letter to, visited, or otherwise contacted such a state government official in the last two years?

Figure 7. Percentage of Donors Whose Last Contact with a Lawmaker/Lawmaker's Staff Member Concerned the Donor's Own Business or Job, by Level of Giving and General Motive Type



Question: Did the most recent contact relate to your job or business?

Source: Campaign Finance Institute Survey on Participation in 2006 State Elections (weighted data).