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Obama Has Flip-Flopped On Corporation Donations To His Inaugural Committee

Obama: “[Y]ou Can’t Say Yesterday, You Don’t Believe In ‘Em, And Today, You’re Having Three-Quarters Of A Million Dollars Being Spent For You. You Can’t Just Talk The Talk.” (Sen. Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Event, [Oskaloosa, IA](#), 12/22/07)

OBAMA HAS GONE FROM TOUTING HIS COMMITMENT TO CHANGING BUSINESS AS USUAL TO NONCHALLANTLY EMBRACING IT

THEN: In 2008, Obama’s Inauguration Committee Barred Contributions From Corporations. “The Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC) announced today that it will abide by an unprecedented set of limitations on fundraising as part of President-elect Obama’s pledge to put the country on a new path. Unlike previous inaugural committees, the PIC will not accept contributions from corporations, political action committees, current federally-registered lobbyists, non-U.S. citizens and registered foreign agents. The PIC will not accept individual contributions in excess of \$50,000. Current law does not restrict the size of donations. In past inaugurations, contribution limits have run as high as \$250,000.” (Press Release, “Presidential Inaugural Committee Unveils Unprecedented Limits On Fundraising; Broadens Public Access,” [Change.Gov](#), 11/25/08)

NOW: Obama Will Accept Unlimited Corporate Cash For His Inauguration. “President Barack Obama will accept unlimited corporate donations for his inauguration in January, reversing his position from his first inauguration, according to two sources close to the planning.” (Donovan Slack, “Obama To Take Corporate Cash For Inauguration,” [Politico](#), 12/7/12)

- **“The Legal Maximum Donation For An Inauguration Is \$250,000, But Four Years Ago, The President Capped All Contributions At \$50,000 And Barred Companies From Kicking In Any Money.”** (Donovan Slack, “Obama To Take Corporate Cash For Inauguration,” [Politico](#), 12/7/12)

Public Citizen President Robert Weissman: “When The American People Watch You Take The Oath Of Office, They Should Not Wonder If You Are Also Obligated To Corporate Donors.” “Good government group Public Citizen has already written to him and asked him to continue banning corporate contributions. ‘When the American people watch you take the oath of office, they should not

wonder if you are also obligated to corporate donors,' president Robert Weissman wrote in a letter last month. 'I am writing to urge you to exercise common sense and conduct a corporate-free, commercial-free inauguration.'" (Donovan Slack, "Obama To Take Corporate Cash For Inauguration," [Politico](#), 12/7/12)

IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME OBAMA HAS ABANDONED HIS CAMPAIGN FINANCE RHETORIC

This Election Cycle, Obama Reversed His Stance On Super PACs

In February, Obama's Re-Election Campaign Reversed Its Position On Super PACs, "Encouraging Donors To Send Their Unlimited Contributions" To Pro-Obama Priorities USA PAC. "President Obama's re-election campaign made an about-face late Monday in its opposition to super PACs, encouraging donors to send their unlimited contributions to one such group founded by a former administration spokesman. Obama campaign manager Jim Messina emailed supporters to formally endorse contributions to Priorities USA, the Democratic super PAC founded by Bill Burton, a former White House deputy press secretary." (Michael O'Brien, "Obama Campaign Reverses Stance, Urging Donations To Super PAC," NBC's ["First Read"](#), 2/7/12)

- **PolitiFact: Obama's Embrace Of Super PACs Is A "Full Flop."** "In this case, Obama and his campaign have gone from refusing to fundraise for super PACs to declaring that senior officials will attend and speak at Priorities USA fundraising events. We respect that the president himself won't participate, and that he still plans to fight the role of special interest money in campaigns, but that's a major reversal of position, and we rate it a Full Flop." ("Obama Campaign Says Officials Will Now Appear At Super PAC Fundraisers," ["PolitiFact"](#), 2/6/12)
- **"Obama Was Staunchly Anti-Outside Money During His Pre-White House Political Career."** "The new posture is a reversal for the president, and one likely to trouble some in the progressive universe (see: Feingold, Russ). Obama was staunchly anti-outside money during his pre-White House political career, and first ran for the White House encouraging deep-pocketed Democrats to send checks only through his campaign. He wanted a consistently coordinated message and his advisers were willing to starve non-campaign organizations of cash in order to achieve it." (Sam Stein, "President Obama Softens Super PAC Opposition," [The Huffington Post](#), 2/7/12)

In 2008, Obama Opted Out Of Public Financing After Pledging To Participate

In His 2008, Obama Was The First Major Party Candidate To Forgo Public Financing. "When then-presidential candidate Barack Obama decided against taking money from the Presidential Election Campaign Fund — and the accompanying limits on outside contributions — during the 2008 election, he was the first major-party nominee to opt out of the program since it was established in the 1970s." (Amanda Becker, "Public Funds Dwindle For 2012 Campaigns," [Roll Call](#), 7/7/11)

- **Obama Broke His Earlier Campaign Pledge To Participate In The Program.** "Sen. Barack Obama reversed his pledge to seek public financing in the general election yesterday, a move that drew criticism from adversaries and allies alike but could provide him with a significant spending advantage over Republican rival John McCain." (Shailagh Murray and Perry Bacon Jr., "Obama To Reject Public Funds For Election," [The Washington Post](#), 6/20/08)
- **Obama Backed Off His Pledge Once "It Became Clear That Obama Had The Potential To Be A Historic Fundraiser."** "Obama in 2007 had pledged to participate for the 2008 election. And he was lauded by advocates of stricter campaign rules for winning an FEC opinion granting flexibility

in the program and for announcing that if he won the Democratic nomination, he would 'aggressively pursue an agreement with the Republican nominee' for both to accept public financing. But after it became clear that Obama had the potential to be a historic fundraiser (he ultimately raised a record-shattering \$750 million for his 2008 bid), he backed out of his promise." (Kenneth P. Vogel, "Ex-McCain Lawyer: Barack Obama 'Mugged' John McCain In 2008," [Politico](#), 10/24/11)

- **Sen. Joe Biden: "I'm Not Going To Color That, He's Changed His Position."** "Look, I've been a strong supporter of public financing my whole career. I'm the first guy to introduce a public financing bill in the United States Senate in 1973. And the purpose was to get big money out of the politics. The irony is although he has changed his position, I'm not going to color that, he's changed his position." (NBC's "Meet The Press," 6/22/08)