

## Republicans Find Themselves in a Campaign Hole

Written by Rich Miller  
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The House and Senate Democratic leaders have once again dominated the quarterly fundraising race. The Democrats are currently sitting on almost three times the amount of cash as the Republicans.

House Speaker Michael Madigan's three committees raised a combined \$591,000 in the quarter that ended June 30. Madigan had more than \$3.5 million cash on hand. Senate President John Cullerton's two committees netted about \$655,000 during the quarter. Cullerton finished with more than \$2.7 million in cash and investments.

House Republican Leader Tom Cross' two committees raised \$353,000 during the quarter. Cross ended the filing period with \$789,000 on hand. Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno raised just under \$263,000 during the quarter but had more than \$1.4 million on hand.

The disparities become even more problematic for the Republican leaders when you look at some of their hottest races. For instance, Downstate Senate candidate Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) raised an impressive \$127,000 in the second quarter and ended the filing period with \$340,000. In contrast, Manar's Republican opponent, Decatur Mayor Mike McElroy, raised just \$26,000 and had less than \$69,000 in the bank at the end of June.

Manar is John Cullerton's former chief of staff, so he'd be expected to raise a lot of cash, but this is a must-win district for the Republicans, and they need a far better performance out of

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their candidate. They're going to have to dip into the reserves in a big way to help out McElroy if he doesn't kick himself into high gear.

Mike Babcock, a Republican running against Senator Bill Haine (D-Alton), raised a mere \$6,263 and ended the filing period with less than \$20,000 on hand. Haine, on the other hand, raised more than \$75,000 and had almost \$430,000 in the bank. Babcock has since raised \$5,000 from conservative businessman Richard Uihlein, who has helped bankroll former gubernatorial candidate and GOP operative Dan Proft.

Uihlein contributed \$72,500 to Republican candidates since the recently ended filing period began on April 1. The Uihlein list reads like a "who's who" of hot campaigns. Randy Frese, who's up against Senator John Sullivan (D-Rushville), received \$5,000 from Uihlein. Freeze raised an impressive \$111,000 during the quarter and had \$127,000 in the bank. That almost matched Sullivan's \$131,000 raised in the latest filing period, but Sullivan had more than \$435,000 in the bank.

The House Republicans, meanwhile, have attempted to push their candidates to raise more money with a new "Young Guns" program modeled on the federal super-PAC affiliated with U.S. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor. And Uihlein played a role there, too.

According to the House Republicans, U.S. Representative Aaron Schock approached Leader Cross last year about starting a program similar to the federal Young Guns effort. Cross agreed, and candidates were given fundraising and voter-contact goals for the second quarter to qualify for big bucks. Generally, the fundraising targets were \$50,000.

Jonathan Greenberg, a Republican running against Representative Elaine Nekritz (D-Northbrook), raised about \$51,000 during the quarterly reporting period. That qualifies him for a \$100,000 contribution from the state's Young Guns network, which will pool money from Schock, Cross, U.S. Representative John Shimkus, and individual House Republican members.

According to the House Republicans, about a half-dozen candidates out of 12 met their Young Guns goals and will receive the \$100,000 in matching funds. Neil Anderson is one of them. Anderson, like Greenberg, received a late \$5,000 contribution from Uihlein. Anderson is up against Representative Pat Verschoore (D-Milan). Uihlein's money put Anderson over the

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\$50,000 mark and qualified him for the Young Guns matching funds.

John Lawson also received \$5,000 from Uihlein to get him into the Young Guns program. Lawson is up against Representative Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg), who raised a mere \$1,795 in the quarter and had only \$27,000 in the bank. Another \$5,000 Uihlein contribution went to Julie Biggam Eggers, who is running against Representative Jerry Costello II (D-Smithton).

One other campaign finance story. Even though State Representative Mark Beaubien passed away last year, his campaign committee was still funding his widow's independent House bid this spring. Dee Beaubien received more than \$15,000 from her late husband's committee in April, when the account was finally closed out. This is not unusual. Representative Bernie Pedersen died in 1996, but his campaign account wasn't closed down until 2009.

*Rich Miller also publishes Capitol Fax (a daily political newsletter) and [CapitolFax.com](http://CapitolFax.com).*