



Endowing Chairs:

November 14, 2013

Dewhurst Gave Senators A Fundraising Boost

Chairs Capitalized on Early Picks to Head 2013 Committees

After he lost \$2 million to a campaign manager¹ and lost a U.S. Senate seat to Terrible Ted Cruz, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst embraced new methods in late 2012. That October, Dewhurst announced state senate committee chair assignments, which typically don't emerge until the legislative session starts in January.

Dewhurst's early announcement gave his 18 committee chairs a golden opportunity to convert their leadership posts into campaign cash before a fundraising blackout surrounding the legislative session took effect in mid-December. At the time the *Texas Tribune* said of this fundraising gift, "In three months, you might even be able to put a number on it."²

This *Lobby Watch* belatedly analyzes what senators raised before and after Dewhurst announced his chair picks on October 3, 2012.³ It finds that the 18 committee chairs raised 37 percent of their 2012-cycle campaign cash *after* Dewhurst's announcement. This surpasses the 12 other senators, who raised 30 percent of their money in that late period.

If Dewhurst radically overhauled his leadership team, this spread might have been wider. Instead, he kept eight senators at the helm of their same old committees and reshuffled six other chairs from one chairmanship to another. Dewhurst gave chairmanships to just four senators who did not control one in 2011. They are Democrat Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa

Fundraising by Senate Committee Chairs Versus Non-Chairs in the 2012 Election Cycle

Types of Texas Senators	Total Raised 1/11-12/12	% Raised Before Chairs Annc'd 10/3/12	% Raised After Chairs Annc'd 10/3/12
18 Chairs	\$16,894,262	63%	37%
12 Non-Chairs	\$15,840,429	70%	30%

Fundraising By Senators Chairing 2013 Committees

Senator (Party)	Com. Chaired 2011	Com. Chaired 2013	% Vote on 11/6/12	Total Raised 1/11-12/12	% Raised 1/11-10/2/12	% Raised 10/3/12-11/6/12	% Raised 11/6/12-12/18/12
Carona (R)	Business	Business	100%	\$1,339,937	63%	15%	21%
Deuell (R)	Nomin	Eco Dev	100%	\$569,503	55%	33%	12%
Duncan (R)	State Aff	State Aff	86%	\$786,431	71%	17%	12%
Ellis (D)	Gov Org	Open Gov	100%	\$507,975	68%	21%	11%
Eltife (R)	Admin	Admin	72%	\$755,990	55%	6%	39%
Estes (R)	Agricult	Agricult	86%	\$746,139	86%	4%	10%
Fraser (R)	Nat'l Res	Nat'l Res	100%	\$568,458	53%	26%	21%
Hegar (R)		Nomin	100%	\$697,555	52%	19%	29%
Hinojosa (D)		IntGov Rel	62%	\$1,348,882	58%	24%	18%
Nelson (R)	Health	Health	83%	\$830,935	59%	21%	20%
Nichols (R)		Transpo	100%	\$1,050,253	72%	12%	17%
Patrick (R)		Education	68%	\$903,946	60%	12%	28%
Seliger (R)	Redist	Higher Ed	100%	\$991,195	72%	3%	25%
Van De Putte (D)	Vet Aff	Vet Aff	80%	\$707,068	58%	13%	29%
West (D)	IntGov Rel	Jurisprud	82%	\$888,917	60%	23%	17%
Whitmire (D)	Crim Just	Crim Just	62%	\$1,178,735	38%	8%	54%
Williams (R)	Transpo	Finance	86%	\$1,533,577	71%	11%	18%
Zaffirini (D)	Higher Ed	Gov Org	68%	\$1,488,766	71%	13%	16%
TOTALS				\$16,894,262	63%	15%	22%

(Intergovernmental Relations) and Republicans Glenn Hegar (Nominations), Robert Nichols (Transportation) and Dan Patrick (Education).

Democrat Eddie Lucio was the only senator to be completely stripped of a chairmanship. The 12 senators who did not get a committee chair (see next page) include five freshmen Republicans, five veteran Democrats (including Lucio), and two veteran Republicans.

Sen. Mario Gallegos does not appear in this study because he died two weeks after Dewhurst's announcement (going to his grave without a chairmanship). Voters did not choose Gallegos' successor until March 2013.

In awarding chairs, Dewhurst passed over this study's biggest anomaly: Democratic Sen. Wendy Davis. Even before the [fundraising bonanza](#) that followed her June 2013 filibuster

of abortion restrictions, Davis raised \$4.3 million in the 2012 cycle (more than doubling the Senate's next-richest victor).⁴ Davis used her stockpile to win the Senate's only competitive general election with 51 percent of the vote. Until polls closed, contributors could not be certain that she would remain in the Senate.

After Dewhurst announced his committee chairs, Davis went on to raise 46 percent of her hoard—an unusually high percentage for a non-chair. Closer inspection reveals that she collected an unrivalled 42 percent of her haul in the month between Dewhurst's announcement and Election Day. Meanwhile, she raised just 4 percent of her money in the post-election period.

No senator raised a smaller share of money in this late-train period, when special interests seize their last chance to butter up lawmakers before the session.

Fundraising By Senators Not Chairing 2013 Committees

Senator (Party)	Com. Chaired 2011	% Vote on 11/6/12	Total Raised 1/11-12/12	% Raised 1/11- 10/2/12	% Raised 10/3/12- 11/6/12	% Raised 11/6/12- 12/18/12
Birdwell (R)		86%	\$547,946	70%	11%	19%
*Campbell (R)		66%	\$1,535,153	77%	15%	8%
Davis (D)		51%	\$4,288,033	54%	42%	4%
*Hancock (R)		58%	\$1,711,877	89%	5%	6%
Huffman (R)		78%	\$1,249,440	77%	5%	18%
Lucio (D)	Int'l Rel	100%	\$559,710	60%	15%	25%
*Paxton (R)		62%	\$791,627	59%	28%	13%
Rodriguez (D)		69%	\$473,621	52%	35%	13%
*Schwertner (R)		77%	\$906,694	88%	5%	7%
*Taylor (R)		66%	\$1,931,054	89%	5%	6%
Uresti (D)		59%	\$840,766	62%	19%	20%
Watson (D)		80%	\$1,004,508	69%	17%	14%
TOTALS			\$15,840,429	70%	20%	10%

* Freshman Senator.

The *Texas Tribune's* report on Dewhurst's committees zeroed in on Democrat Judith Zaffirini. Dewhurst shifted this senator from heading the Higher Education Committee to chairing the Government Organization Committee. The *Tribune* speculated that this apparent demotion could fill the pockets of Sen. Zaffirini, who would control a Sunset review of the state agency that oversees the wealthy oil and gas industry.

Lobby Watch could not document that prediction. Zaffirini raised 29 percent of her 2012 war chest after Dewhurst's announcement, less than the 37 percent committee-chair average. Energy interests provided roughly 10 cents of every dollar that Sen. Zaffirini raised both before and after Dewhurst appointed her as chair of the Government Organization Committee. •

Notes

¹ "Dewhurst Suit: Former Manager Stole Millions," *Austin American-Statesman*, March 8, 2013.

² "A Little Bit Extra for Lawmakers and Lobbyists," *Texas Tribune/New York Times*, October 26, 2012.

³ Researchers also considered comparing what senators raised in the 2010 cycle to what they raised in the 2012 cycle. This approach was abandoned because redistricting put all senate seats on the 2012 ballot, while just half of those seats appeared on the 2010 ballot.

⁴ Larry Taylor raised \$1.9 million.