

Right-Wing Special Interests Prepared To Spend Millions To Support Dan Kelly

Written by WisDems Press, Hannah Menchhoff
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MADISON, Wis. — In [new reporting today](#) from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Dan Kelly claimed that right-wing special interest groups are prepared to spend \$20 million to support him should he advance past the Spring Primary Election.

Far-right special interests have already committed millions to back Dan Kelly. Just this week, a PAC sponsored by extreme anti-abortion group Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America announced a [six-figure spend](#) in support of Kelly, who has been endorsed by all three major anti-abortion groups in Wisconsin. This announcement comes after a PAC linked to GOP megadonor Dick Uihlein pledged to [spend millions](#) backing Kelly's campaign.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [Big special interest money is flowing into the Wisconsin Supreme Court race. Dan Kelly says that's good for him.](#)

Wisconsin Supreme Court candidate Dan Kelly has come up with another argument for why he says he's a better choice for conservative voters than rival Waukesha County Judge Jennifer Dorow.

Cash. Specifically, the cash he says he can pull in from outside interest groups that, he suggests, Dorow can't.

While politicians — particularly those running for judicial office — typically shy away from talk of super PACS and outside interest groups, Kelly told a Price County GOP caucus he is in the best position to bring in outside money — a statement that a lawyer specializing in campaign finance said should raise eyebrows.

Kelly, who has challenged Dorow on her level of experience and conservative credentials, said the race is shaping up to bring in \$20 million in outside donations from both conservative and liberal donors. Already, outside groups have brought in close to \$6 million before next week's

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primary, breaking previous records.

"Our campaign is really going to be a very small piece of total spend," Kelly said. "Where you gonna get the other \$20 million from? There are these organizations around the country, and they have specific concerns. And they will only support a candidate who has a proven record of constitutional conservatism."

Kelly, a former Supreme Court justice, said Dorow has never faced an opponent in Waukesha County or run a statewide race. He said donors are wary of her inexperience.

"If Jennifer's the one who comes out, she's going to be horribly underfunded, in a race that will break all kinds of records in the history of the country in this race," Kelly said. "So, I think that if the question is electability and I can't... my parents taught me not to brag about myself."

Dorow's campaign did not respond to Kelly's remarks.

Kelly and Dorow are the conservative candidates running along with two liberals, Dane County Judge Everett Mitchell and Milwaukee County Judge Janet Protasiewicz, for a seat being vacated by conservative Justice Patience Roggensack. The outcome could change the ideological makeup of the court, which now has a 4-3 conservative majority.

The top two vote-getters Feb. 21 will compete in April for the 10-year term.

Kelly personally raised \$100,169 from Jan. 1-Feb. 6, according to his latest campaign finance report. He spent \$174,757 and had \$201,966 in the bank to end the period, putting him well behind Protasiewicz who raised more than \$725,000 during the same period and Dorow who raised \$365,271.02.

Kelly's largest individual donation was \$20,000 from Kim Hendricks, daughter of Diane Hendricks, a major GOP donor and owner of ABC Supply in Beloit. Kelly has gotten \$1.79 million from Fair Courts America, a super PAC underwritten by billionaire and GOP mega-donor Richard Uihlein.

Dorow's largest individual donation was \$20,000 from Remi Harris, of Mequon.

Michael Maistelman, a Milwaukee attorney who specializes in campaign finance said, Kelly should be careful about coordinating fundraising super PACs and other outside interest groups.

"In my opinion, a candidate cannot coordinate with and solicit unlimited amounts of money for a third party group only to have that third party spend it on behalf of that candidate," Maistelman said. "I would advise any candidate that attempts to do this to lawyer up, as I am confident that a civil and criminal complaint would be filed against that candidate."

When reached for comment, Kelly campaign spokesman Jim Dick said, "We appreciate the support of all voters and organizations that believe Justice Daniel Kelly is the one who can decide complex constitutional cases by applying the law as written and remaining faithful to the

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Constitution."