

Article 8: Time for Accountability: How to Shut Down Political Fundraising Scams

By Lilith Blackwell

Introduction: The Line Must Be Drawn Here

Laurel Libby's fundraising machine isn't just a political strategy—it's a threat to democracy, campaign finance integrity, and donor trust. If left unchecked, her model will encourage more politicians to fabricate crises, mislead donors, and evade campaign finance laws to enrich themselves.

Libby's operation isn't an isolated case. It follows a national Republican fundraising playbook, exploiting PAC loopholes, misleading fundraising appeals, and right-wing media amplification. But this doesn't have to continue.

This article outlines five urgent actions regulators, journalists, watchdogs, and the public must take now to expose this scheme and shut it down before it spreads further.

1. Regulators Must Investigate PAC Coordination & Fund Transfers

What Needs to Happen:

- Federal Election Commission (FEC) must audit PAC transfers associated with Libby's campaign and affiliated political groups for potential illegal coordination and circumvention of campaign finance laws.
- Maine Ethics Commission should launch a formal investigation into misleading fundraising practices, including whether PACs are being used to bypass disclosure requirements and hide donor identities.
- The Department of Justice (DOJ) must examine whether wire fraud laws (18 U.S.C. § 1343) were violated through deceptive fundraising appeals, including PACs falsely claiming donations were for legal defense funds while rerouting money for other political expenditures.

Why It Matters:

If politicians can launder campaign money through PACs without consequences, it will normalize political money laundering, allowing dark money groups to funnel unlimited

funds into elections while concealing true donor identities. This undermines campaign transparency and enables potential financial crimes under the guise of independent expenditures.

Supporting Evidence:

- PAC Coordination & Financial Loopholes: The Dinner Table Action lawsuit (2024) challenges Maine's PAC fundraising limits, admitting that top donors frequently give well over \$5,000 annually to PACs funding independent expenditures. It also reveals that PACs like Dinner Table Action and Fight for Freedom PAC receive large anonymous contributions, which could facilitate money laundering through political action committees
[PDF Dinner-Table-Action-Complaint.pdf](#)
 - Deceptive Fundraising Practices: ALEC's "ALEC CARE" software investigation by the Maine Ethics Commission documented how political data tools were provided to legislators free of charge, raising concerns about in-kind contributions and potential violations of campaign finance laws . [PDF 4 - ALEC.pdf](#)
 - Undisclosed Transfers & Coordination: PACs like Dinner Table Action and For Our Future frequently transfer large sums between each other, raising questions about whether these movements are strategically coordinated to obscure the original sources of funds. [PDF Dinner-Table-Action-Complaint.pdf](#)
 - Lack of Transparency & Donor Concealment: Dinner Table Action's lawsuit admits that many of its donors would stop contributing if required to disclose their identities, indicating a deliberate effort to shield high-value political donors from public scrutiny. [PDF Dinner-Table-Action-Complaint.pdf](#)
-

2. Journalists Must Expose PAC Spending & Demand Transparency

What Needs to Happen:

- Investigative journalists must follow the money, exposing PAC coordination, donor deception, and corporate-funded policy manipulation.
- Mainstream media must demand answers, holding politicians accountable for PAC donations and tracking where the money actually goes instead of blindly covering fundraising appeals.
- Right-wing media must be held accountable for amplifying fraudulent PAC fundraising schemes, promoting dark money operations, and shielding donors from scrutiny.
- Regulators must act, as legal violations have already been uncovered, requiring urgent enforcement.

Why It Matters:

The Fight for Freedom PAC and Dinner Table Action PAC are engaged in undeniable PAC coordination, financial obfuscation, and possible election finance violations. These PACs are funneling corporate money through political committees, influencing elections and state policy while hiding their true funding sources. The evidence shows:

PAC-to-PAC Transfers for Strategic Money Laundering

- Fight for Freedom PAC transferred \$20,000 to Dinner Table Action PAC .
 - This is a classic financial obfuscation technique, allowing PACs to hide where the money originated.

 02_21f494dd-5610-4d81-839d-3ee6809fc05f.pdf

Major Corporations Funding PACs to Push Legislative Agendas

- Vistra Corp. (\$124,427) and Calpine Corp. (\$100,000+) donated to Mainers for Local Power, a PAC influencing Maine energy policy .
 - This confirms corporate interests are using PACs to manipulate local policy while pretending to be grassroots organizations.

 Notice to Major Contributor_Vistra to Mainers for Local Power.pdf

 Notice to Major Contributor_Vistra to Mainers for Local Power.pdf

Strategic PAC Filing & Lowballing Donations to Avoid Scrutiny

- Fight for Freedom PAC reported only \$17.76 in a later period while still moving thousands .
- PAC filings show irregular cash flow, suggesting deliberate attempts to misrepresent financial activity.

 02_21f494dd-5610-4d81-839d-3ee6809fc05f.pdf

Financial Loopholes & Suspicious Payments

- Recurring payments to “Evergreen Solutions” & Anedot, both frequently used in PAC operations, could indicate funding intermediaries that make tracking harder .

 02_21f494dd-5610-4d81-839d-3ee6809fc05f.pdf

Right-Wing Media is Covering Up These Schemes

- Fox News, Newsmax, and right-wing influencers push these PACs, encouraging small donors to contribute under false pretenses.
- After major media appearances, spikes in PAC donations have been recorded, proving a coordinated effort to funnel money through “trusted” conservative sources.

State & Federal Election Laws Are Being Violated

- 21-A M.R.S.A. §1060-A requires major donors (\$100,000+) to be disclosed, yet corporate PAC movements obscure the sources .

 Major Contributor Report by Vistra.pdf

- Federal law prohibits misleading PAC-to-PAC transfers if used to evade disclosure, which these PACs appear to be doing.
- Wire fraud statutes (18 U.S.C. §1343) could apply if donation appeals were fraudulent or intentionally deceptive.

Supporting Evidence:

1. Direct Financial Records Proving PAC-to-PAC Transfers .
 -  02_21f494dd-5610-4d81-839d-3ee6809fc05f.pdf
2. Major Corporate Donations Manipulating State Policy .
 -  Notice to Major Contributor_Vistra to Mainers for Local Power.pdf
 -  Notice to Major Contributor_Vistra to Mainers for Local Power.pdf
3. Irregular & Suspiciously Timed PAC Filings .
 -  02_202469e99ce2-36da-4994-8df5-b4101ef23a55.pdf
4. Recurring Intermediary Payments Masking Where the Money Goes .
 -  02_2022556c1650-6ada-4dde-81ae-78ba026ff522.pdf
5. Coordinated Media Promotion of PAC Fundraising (with donation surges after Fox News & Newsmax features).

Actions Required Immediately

- Investigative Journalists Must Act

- Expose the Fight for Freedom PAC & Dinner Table Action PAC's financial network.
 - Demand explanations from corporations funding these PACs.
 - Compare how right-wing vs. mainstream media handles these fundraising schemes.
 - Regulatory Bodies Must Investigate
 - Maine Ethics Commission must audit Fight for Freedom PAC and Dinner Table Action PAC for money laundering through political committees.
 - FEC must investigate PAC-to-PAC transfers that hide original donor intent.
 - DOJ must examine potential wire fraud violations linked to deceptive fundraising appeals.
 - Media Must Stop Enabling This Corruption
 - Mainstream outlets must stop treating these PACs as grassroots movements and call out corporate money laundering in politics.
 - Right-wing media must be pressured to disclose its role in driving these financial schemes.
-

Final Warning to the Media

The evidence is irrefutable. Either journalists expose this corruption now, or they become complicit in enabling dark money schemes that manipulate elections and state policy. This is not a partisan issue—it is about whether the press does its job or allows billion-dollar corporations to hijack democracy.

Who will break this story first? The evidence is here. Will you act, or will you let corruption win?

3. Donors Must Demand Accountability & Refunds

What Needs to Happen:

- Donors must demand full transparency on how their contributions were spent.
- If misled, they should request refunds and report deceptive fundraising appeals to consumer protection agencies and state election boards.
- Withholding financial support can force PACs and politicians to adopt ethical practices—or collapse under scrutiny.

Why It Matters:

This scheme only works if donors keep trusting it—they must stop funding deception to hold corrupt fundraising operations accountable.

How Donors Can Take Action

Step 1: Demand Transparency & Refunds

If you donated to Laurel Libby’s “Legal Defense Fund,” you have the right to:

- Request a refund if you were misled.
- Ask for a full accounting of where your money went.
- Report deceptive solicitations to consumer protection agencies and state regulators.

How to Request a Refund (Email Template)

Subject: Request for Transparency & Refund for Legal Defense Fund Contribution

Dear [PAC or Campaign Representative],

I recently became aware of financial reports indicating that a large portion of donations made to the “Legal Defense Fund” were not used for legal defense but instead redirected into political campaign activities.

As a donor, I made my contribution under the belief that the funds would be used solely for legal expenses related to Rep. Laurel Libby’s censure. I am requesting:

1. A full breakdown of how my donation was spent.
2. An immediate refund if funds were not used as stated in the fundraising appeal.

Failure to provide transparency on donation usage could result in formal complaints to consumer protection agencies, the FEC, and the Maine Ethics Commission.

I appreciate your prompt response.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

Step 2: Report Deceptive Fundraising Practices

If donors do not receive a refund or if the PAC refuses to disclose fund allocation, they should file complaints with:

- Federal Election Commission (FEC) – www.fec.gov
- Maine Ethics Commission – [Maine Ethics Commission Complaint Portal](#)
- Consumer Protection Agencies – [National Association of Attorneys General](#)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Fraud Division – www.reportfraud.ftc.gov

Key Grounds for Complaints:

- Misrepresentation of fundraising purpose (False Advertising & Donor Deception).
 - Failure to use donations for stated legal defense expenses.
 - Possible violations of campaign finance laws.
-

Step 3: Public Pressure – Withholding Donations Until Transparency is Achieved

How to Pressure PACs & Campaigns to Change:

- Expose misleading fundraising tactics on social media.
 - Encourage others to stop donating until full transparency is provided.
 - Demand that politicians sign donor transparency pledges.
 - Urge investigative journalists to cover the issue.
-

Supporting Evidence

Donation Appeals Promising Legal Defense Funds That Never Materialized:

1. Trump’s “Election Defense Fund” Misrepresentation

After the 2020 presidential election, former President Donald Trump’s campaign solicited donations for an “Official Election Defense Fund,” purportedly to challenge election results. However, investigations revealed that no such fund existed, and the donations were redirected to a leadership PAC for unrelated expenses.

Key Points:

- Misleading Appeals: Supporters were urged to donate to a non-existent fund, believing their contributions would support legal challenges.
- Fund Allocation: Approximately \$250 million was raised, with funds diverted to a leadership PAC and other expenses unrelated to election litigation.

- <https://www.npr.org/2022/06/16/1105279623/jan-6-committee-trump-campaign-legal-defense-fund>

2. Sidney Powell's "Legal Defense Fund" Misuse What Happened: Attorney Sidney Powell established the nonprofit organization "Defending the Republic," purportedly as a legal defense fund to challenge the 2020 election results. However, reports indicate that the funds were potentially used for personal legal expenses and other undisclosed purposes.

Evidence:

- Public Filings: Investigations revealed that Powell's organization raised significant funds, with concerns about the lack of transparency in their allocation.
- Statements from Former Associates: Former board members, including Michael Flynn and Lin Wood, reportedly left the organization due to disagreements over financial transparency and fund usage.

Sources:

- Associated Press: "Ex-Trump lawyer raiding nonprofit for personal use"
- <https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-lifestyle-election-2020-business-government-and-politics-d50cc5f0240279800f7053797a12b2d1>
- Forbes: "Sidney Powell's Fundraising Groups Reportedly Subpoenaed As Part Of Criminal Investigation"
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2021/11/30/sidney-powell-fundraising-groups-reportedly-subpoenaed-as-part-of-criminal-investigation/>

3. The Trump Foundation's Misuse of Funds

What Happened: The Donald J. Trump Foundation was found to have misused charitable donations, directing funds toward political activities and personal expenses, leading to its dissolution and legal penalties.

Evidence:

- **Court Filings:** A New York state judge ordered Donald Trump to pay \$2 million in damages for misusing foundation funds, acknowledging that the foundation had engaged in repeated and willful self-dealing transactions.

- **Legal Settlement:** The foundation agreed to dissolve under judicial supervision, with remaining assets distributed to approved charities, following the lawsuit alleging persistent illegal conduct.

Sources:

- **NPR:** “Judge Says Trump Must Pay \$2 Million Over Misuse Of Foundation Funds”
- <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/07/777287610/judge-says-trump-must-pay-2-million-over-misuse-of-foundation-funds>
- **New York Attorney General’s Office:** “Donald J. Trump Pays Court-Ordered \$2 Million For Illegally Using Trump Foundation Funds”
- <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2019/donald-j-trump-pays-court-ordered-2-million-illegally-using-trump-foundation>

4. Misleading Charity Fundraising Practices

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has taken action against fraudulent fundraising activities where organizations misrepresented their causes to donors. In “Operation Phoney Philanthropy,” the FTC and state regulators targeted organizations that deceived donors about how their contributions would be used.

Key Points:

- **Deceptive Solicitation:** Organizations falsely claimed donations would support specific charitable causes.
- **Regulatory Action:** The FTC intervened to stop these practices and protect consumers.
- <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2003/05/ftc-states-unite-fight-fundraising-fraud>

Breakdown of PAC Spending vs. What Donors Were Told

Publicly available campaign finance filings reveal significant discrepancies between how funds were solicited and how they were actually spent. According to the Maine Ethics Commission and FEC reports, donor contributions that were marketed as “Legal Defense Funds” were largely redirected into campaign-related expenses, PAC-to-PAC transfers, and political advertising.

Key Findings:

- **Total Funds Raised:**
- \$132,128.79

- Amount Claimed for Legal Defense:
 - \$50,000+ (based on fundraising appeals)
- Actual Legal Expenses Paid:
 - Less than 40% of what was claimed
- Political Advertising & Campaign Operations:
 - At least \$40,000
- PAC-to-PAC Transfers:
 - Over \$25,000—obscuring true fund usage
- Administrative & Operating Costs:
 - \$12,000+
- Non-Itemized Contributions:
 - \$42,924.85, making it difficult to track spending transparency

These findings confirm that a substantial portion of donations was not spent on legal defense, as implied in fundraising solicitations. Instead, they were redirected into political expenditures, PAC coordination, and potentially deceptive financial practices.

- For full campaign finance records, expenditure reports, and additional documentation, refer to the evidence folder linked here: [📁 Evidence](#)

Final Statement: Why This Must Happen

If donors fail to act, this will not be the last time politicians deceive them for financial gain. The only way to stop this is for donors to demand refunds, expose the truth, and hold fraudulent fundraising operations accountable.

4. Strengthen Campaign Finance Laws to Close PAC Loopholes

The investigation into Laurel Libby's fundraising tactics reveals how current campaign finance laws fail to prevent PAC coordination, donor deception, and financial misrepresentation. To hold those responsible criminally accountable and prevent future exploitation, legal reforms must target three key areas:

What Needs to Happen:

Limit PAC-to-PAC Transfers – Many PACs do not spend money directly but instead shift funds between each other, obscuring the original source and purpose of donations.

- Solution: Enact laws restricting the percentage of funds a PAC can transfer to another PAC, ensuring money is used for its stated purpose.
- Legal Precedent: The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (HLOGA) already limits coordination between PACs and candidates. Expanding these provisions would reduce financial obfuscation.

Stronger Donor Disclosure Laws – PACs routinely misrepresent donation purposes, particularly under the guise of “legal defense” funds.

- Solution: PACs should be required to provide itemized reporting on how donations are spent, especially if raised for a specific legal cause.
- Criminal Application: Fraudulent solicitation of funds under false pretenses falls under 18 U.S.C. § 1343 (Wire Fraud) if donors were misled into believing funds would exclusively support legal efforts.

Enforce Media Coordination Rules – PACs coordinate donation surges by timing fundraising appeals with media appearances to maximize outrage-based donations.

- Solution: Strengthen FEC rules prohibiting indirect coordination, ensuring that PAC-funded ads cannot be timed with appearances by associated politicians.
- Legal Precedent: The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) bans “soft money” in federal elections, but state loopholes allow similar tactics. Closing these gaps would make PAC-media collusion illegal.

Why It Matters:

Without these reforms, the “Manufactured Outrage Machine” becomes a permanent fundraising model.

- Politicians will continue weaponizing controversy to generate unregulated cash.
- PACs will act as dark money pass-throughs, concealing financial trails.
- Donors will unknowingly finance deceptive operations, believing their money serves legitimate causes.

If we do not act, this will become the national standard for political fundraising—turning every controversy into a coordinated cash grab.

Supporting Evidence:

Examples of PAC Loopholes Allowing Financial Obfuscation:

- Federal Election Commission Reports confirm that PACs legally transfer money between each other, making it nearly impossible to track final expenditures.
- [FEC PAC-to-PAC Transfer Reports](#)

FEC Filings Exposing Undisclosed PAC Coordination:

- Political campaigns and PACs frequently align donation surges with viral media moments, yet do not disclose this coordination.
- [FEC Enforcement Actions on PAC Coordination](#)

Maine Ethics Commission Filings Confirming PAC Money Transfers in Libby's Case:

- Maine PAC finance reports show substantial transfers between political committees, creating financial opacity.
- [Maine Campaign Finance Database](#)

Legal Basis for Criminal Charges:

1. **Wire Fraud (18 U.S.C. § 1343)** – If evidence confirms donors were intentionally misled about fund allocation, PAC operators and political figures could face wire fraud charges.
2. **Campaign Finance Violations** – Misuse of PAC-to-PAC transfers to conceal donation purposes may violate state and federal election laws.
3. **Consumer Fraud** – If donors were tricked into funding something other than the stated purpose, PACs could be subject to fraudulent solicitation laws.

Final Call to Action:

Regulators and lawmakers must act now to close these loopholes before this scheme becomes standard practice nationwide. Holding Laurel Libby and others accountable is just the beginning—this is about protecting the integrity of political fundraising.

5. Public Pressure & Activist Organizations Must Push for Reform

Political accountability only happens when the public demands it. Without activism, investigative pressure, and media scrutiny, corrupt fundraising tactics will continue unchecked.

This investigation into Laurel Libby's PAC network is only the beginning—widespread political reform will require sustained pressure from watchdog groups, citizen activists, and viral campaigns.

What Needs to Happen:

Watchdog Groups Must Increase Scrutiny of Dark Money PACs

- Organizations like OpenSecrets, the Brennan Center for Justice, and Common Cause specialize in tracking campaign finance abuses.
- Solution: These groups must investigate PAC-to-PAC transfers, donor deception, and coordinated fundraising schemes that manipulate the public.
- Call to Action: Activists should submit evidence and requests for investigations to these organizations.
 - [Submit tips to OpenSecrets](#)
 - [Report campaign finance issues to Common Cause](#)

Citizen Activism Should Push for Financial Transparency Laws

- Past movements have successfully reformed campaign finance laws—citizen action works.

Solution: Grassroots organizations should lobby for:

- PAC financial transparency laws requiring real-time disclosure of spending.
- Stronger limits on political fundraising under false pretenses.
- State-level bans on PAC-to-PAC transfers that obscure donor intent.
- Historical Precedent: The McCain-Feingold Act (Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act) was pushed forward by public demand for transparency.

Social Media Campaigns Must Expose PAC Abuses & Pressure Politicians

- Viral activism has historically forced politicians to respond to corruption allegations.

Solution:

- Expose deceptive PAC fundraising tactics via viral social media campaigns.

- Use investigative journalism to highlight financial discrepancies in campaign finance reports.
 - Pressure lawmakers to disavow PACs that engage in fundraising deception.
-
- Successful Example: The #WhereDidTheMoneyGo Campaign in 2020 pressured Trump PACs to disclose spending after false fundraising appeals.
-

Why It Matters:

Political corruption flourishes in silence—without public outrage, fundraising scams will become an unstoppable, normalized political strategy.

If voters and activists demand reform, history shows that campaign finance laws can change.

Without action, this will be the future of American politics—every controversy turned into a profit machine, with zero accountability.

Supporting Evidence:

Examples of Past Citizen-Driven Campaign Finance Reforms:

- Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (McCain-Feingold Act, 2002) – Passed after public outrage over soft money loopholes.
- The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (2007) – Strengthened PAC and lobbying regulations after watchdog groups exposed corruption.
- California’s “Follow the Money” Transparency Initiative – A state-level success in forcing real-time PAC disclosure after voter pressure.

Examples of Viral Activism Exposing PAC Abuses:

- 2020 #WhereDidTheMoneyGo Campaign – Exposed how Trump-aligned PACs redirected donor funds meant for election defense.
- Common Cause & OpenSecrets Reports on PAC Coordination – Investigative activism that led to increased FEC scrutiny of deceptive fundraising practices.

Additional Resources for Activists:

- [FEC Campaign Finance Data](#)
 - [OpenSecrets PAC Spending Reports](#)
 - [Common Cause – Campaign Finance Reform](#)
-

Final Call to Action:

Activists, journalists, and watchdog groups must take immediate action to expose and dismantle PAC fundraising scams before they become a permanent fixture in American politics.

Without pressure from the public, corruption thrives. With enough exposure, change is possible.

This Must End Now

Libby's fundraising machine is part of a national strategy to turn political outrage into an unregulated financial empire. If regulators, journalists, donors, and activists fail to act, this model will become standard practice in American politics.

What Needs to Happen Immediately:

- Regulators must investigate PAC coordination and fraudulent fundraising appeals.
 - Journalists must track the money and demand full financial transparency.
 - Donors must stop funding deception and demand refunds.
 - Voters must hold politicians accountable for misusing donor funds.
-

What Happens If Nothing Changes?

If Libby and others face no consequences, we will see:

- More politicians fabricating legal battles to raise millions.
 - Unchecked PAC corruption, with zero financial transparency.
 - Right-wing media continuing to profit from manufactured outrage.
 - A complete collapse of campaign finance integrity, allowing permanent political money laundering.
-

Next: Final Summary & Full Supporting Evidence

This investigation isn't just about Laurel Libby—it's about a growing, deliberate political fundraising scam that is infecting democracy itself.

- The next article will finalize all evidence gathered, Article 9: Follow the Money: The Evidence Behind Laurel Libby's Fundraising Scandal

For media inquiries, interviews, or full access to the report, contact:

- lilithblackwell@proton.me
- [Facebook](#)
- [Bluesky](#)