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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Bush Campaign Ads Brought to You by Special Interests; Industries That Give to Bush Get Their Money's Worth**

#### ***Public Citizen Report Outlines the Many Favors Bush Has Given Industries That Bundle Money for Campaign***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As President Bush prepares to launch a multimillion-dollar campaign ad blitz, Public Citizen today released a report outlining who helped pay for the campaign ads and what favors they have received during his presidency.

In the report, *Bush Campaign Ads: Brought to You by . . . Special Interests*, Public Citizen details how much money representatives from key industries – including finance, real estate, communications, energy, health care, and insurance – have helped raise and lists the tax breaks, regulatory changes, legislative favors and plum appointments Bush has given his backers. Many of the beneficiaries of his policies are Rangers and Pioneers, terms Bush gives donors who bundle contributions that total at least \$200,000 and \$100,000 respectively.

The ads will run on cable networks and will target voters in 17 battleground states. Bush had spent at least \$41 million of his campaign money by the end of January; his war chest holds another \$110 million. He is expected to raise another \$50 million before September's nominating convention and accept \$75 million in public financing for the two months before Election Day.

Public Citizen's report finds that the 416 Bush Rangers and Pioneers have bundled together at least \$58.1 million for the 2004 campaign and that 90 percent of them (374) represent the special interests of America's corporations.

Public Citizen's report details how Bush has given tax breaks that benefit the finance industry, made it easier for real estate developers to build on wetlands and in the Florida Everglades, reneged on a campaign pledge to regulate carbon dioxide emissions (pleasing the electric utility and mining industries), increased the amount of public land available for oil and gas exploration and coal mining, filled top Interior Department positions with executives from the mining industry, and aided the pharmaceutical industry by pushing pro-industry Medicare drug legislation.

“When people watch TV this week and see the ads touting President Bush and his record, they should know that major corporations helped pay for those ads,” said Public Citizen President Joan

Claybrook. “More important, they should know that these industries got their money’s worth from Bush administration decisions worth billions of dollars.”

Added Frank Clemente, director of Public Citizen’s Congress Watch, “This report shows the insidious influence of money in politics. The Bush campaign’s unprecedented fundraising has made this administration more indebted to special interests than any in recent times.”

Among the industries highlighted in the report are:

- **The financial industry.** Bankers, stockbrokers, venture capitalists and wealthy private investors have contributed at least \$38.4 million to Bush’s campaign efforts in 2000 and 2004 and produced more Rangers and Pioneers than any other industry – 73 who have bundled at least \$10.8 million this cycle. Bush’s tax cut dramatically reduced the “double taxation” of dividends, the securities industry’s No. 1 priority. His other major tax cuts benefited the securities industry and its CEOs, who personally will save hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars in taxes a year. Social Security privatization, likely to be a top Bush priority in a second term, would shift trillions of dollars of retirement savings to private sector investment accounts.
- **Real estate developers.** The real estate industry has donated \$32.2 million to Bush campaign efforts in 2000 and 2004, and 37 real estate developers have qualified as Rangers or Pioneers in 2004, bundling at least \$5.4 million. The Bush administration has made it easier for developers to build on wetlands, has attempted to narrow the Clean Water Act so that it no longer covers many ponds, streams and wetlands, and has appointed crusading opponents of the Endangered Species Act to key positions at the Interior Department.
- **Electric utilities.** The electric utility industry has donated nearly \$6 million to Bush campaign efforts in 2000 and 2004. In return, in 2000 three industry Pioneers got slots on the transition team at the U.S. Department of Energy. The administration also rewrote a key Clean Air Act rule to effectively neutralize existing government lawsuits against energy companies and prevent future challenges. Bush launched a “Clear Skies” initiative that would dramatically delay emissions reductions and do nothing to contend with carbon dioxide, and has proposed mercury regulations indistinguishable from industry proposals.
- **Oil and gas.** Oil and gas companies gave \$15.8 million to Bush campaign efforts in 2000 and 2004. Bush has opened federal land for oil and gas exploration and coal mining, targeted Wyoming’s Powder River Basin for coalbed methane drilling, and required federal agencies to consider how agency rules will affect energy supply, distribution and use.
- **Mining companies.** The mining industry has contributed at least \$3.1 million to Bush campaign efforts in the 2000 and 2004 cycles. Mining executives have been appointed to top posts in the Interior Department, and Bush’s Environmental Protection Agency has permitted mountaintop removal for coal mining, is trying to lift a Reagan-era regulation that banned mining within 100 feet of a stream and increased the amount of public land available for mining company waste dumping.

In addition, the administration-backed Medicare bill was a boon to the pharmaceutical and managed care industries, the insurance industry benefited by government agreeing to cover 80 percent of terrorism damages, and media conglomerates have gained from policies encouraging mega-mergers. A copy of the report is available at <http://www.whitehouseforsale.org/contributorsandpaybacks/page.cfm?pageid=519>.

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Public Citizen is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit [www.citizen.org](http://www.citizen.org)