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## Shale Gas Contributions Favor Lawmakers Voting to Exempt Extracting Process From the Safe Water Drinking Act

Submitted by Owen Poindexter on Monday, Nov 15th, 2010

**Nov. 15, 2010** - On Sunday, CBS's '60 Minutes' aired [a piece on the growing shale gas industry](#). The processes used to extract shale gas, namely [hydraulic fracturing](#) and horizontal drilling, have raised environmental concerns, particularly around water safety. Despite these concerns, shale production was exempt from the [Safe Drinking Water Act](#) in the [Energy Policy Act of 2005](#).

The final passage votes on the Energy Policy Act of 2005 was 85-12 in the Senate (June 28, 2005) and 249-183 in the House (April 21, 2005). In both votes, there was a strong correlation to money from [independent oil and gas producers](#). House members voting "yes" [received \\$3,865 on average](#) compared to \$331 per member who voted "no" over the 2006 election cycle (Jan. 1 2001 to Dec. 31 2006). The [85 senators who voted "yes" received an average of \\$22,366 over the previous three election cycles \(Jan. 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2006\)](#) compared to \$8,329 on average to the 12 who voted "no."

An amendment (S. Amdt. 979) to promote the development of shale and tar sands was offered by [Orrin Hatch](#) (R-Utah) and [Ken Salazar](#) (D-Colo.), who is now the Secretary of the Interior. Salazar received \$25,750 and Hatch took in \$14,250 in contributions from independent oil and gas producers from Jan. 1 2001 to Dec. 31 2006. The measure passed by voice vote.

In the current election cycle, independent oil and gas producers have [given legislators over \\$1.6 million](#). Chesapeake Energy Corp., a focus of the 60 minutes story, has [accounted for \\$278,900 of this total](#). Other leading contributors this cycle were the [Independent Petroleum Association of America, which gave legislators \\$200,500](#), and [Anadarko Petroleum, who gave \\$186,050](#). Anadarko is a member of the Marcellus Shale Coalition.

On [Tues. Nov. 9](#), [Matt Daily of Reuters reported](#) that Chevron plans to buy [Atlas Energy](#) for \$3.2 billion. Atlas Energy is a member of the Marcellus Shale Coalition. Since the 2000 election cycle, [Chevron has contributed over \\$1.7 million](#) to the campaigns of elected members of Congress serving in the 109th, 110th and 111th congresses.

*Includes reported contributions to congressional campaigns of lawmakers in office on day of vote on H.R. 6, from [Independent oil & gas producers interest groups, January 1, 2005 – December 31, 2006](#), and to [Senators, January 1, 2001 – December 31, 2006](#). Includes reported contributions to congressional campaigns of all members of the House and Senate from [January 1, 2009 – August 30, 2010](#). Contributions data source: [OpenSecrets.org](#).*

### About our data



[www.wisdc.org](#)

Read the details about our [data sources and methodology](#). Data refers to direct contributions to the campaign committees of elected legislators. For example, contribution totals exclude contributions to party committees such as the RNC or the DNC and exclude contributions made to individuals that did not win their election. For U.S. Congress, contributions data provided by the Center for Responsive Politics ([OpenSecrets.org](#)) and legislative data provided by [GovTrack.us](#). California contributions data provided by the National Institute on Money in State Politics ([FollowTheMoney.org](#)). Wisconsin contributions data provided by the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign ([wisdc.org](#)).

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