*EDITOR’S NOTE: This column is provided to Wisconsin Newspaper Association members by WisPolitics.com. Proper attribution in your newspapers IS REQUIRED, including the byline “WisPolitics.com” and the tagline at the end of the column.*

**Michels’ money strategy questioned**

While GOP gubernatorial candidate Tim Michels won’t take PAC contributions, running mate Roger Roth isn’t placing any similar restrictions on his fundraising.

Roth, a state senator from Appleton who is running for lieutenant governor, hosted a fundraiser in Madison recently that featured Michels as the “special guest,” according to an invite obtained by WisPolitics.com.

Along with that event, which listed donations of $12,000 to be a host and $2,500 per person, the fundraiser also included a “$26,000 private host round table event option,” according to an email that accompanied the invite.

The maximum PAC contribution to a candidate for lieutenant governor is $26,000, and Roth adviser Matt Henkel said Roth’s campaign is accepting such contributions.

Under state law, candidates for lieutenant governor and governor run separately in the primaries before becoming a ticket for the general election. Henkel said Roth hasn’t made any transfers to Michels’ campaign to date, but didn’t address the possibility of one in the future.

“We’re running the campaign the same way we always have, which is we’re open to all forms of fundraising,” Henkel said. “The Michels campaign respected that when we told them how we’ve been doing things.”

Critics accused Michels of creating a way around his ban on donations from PACs and lobbyists.

Michels originally limited donations to $500 per person during the primary. After winning the primary, the construction executive said he would begin accepting individual donations of up to $20,000 — the
maximum allowed — but wouldn’t take donations from PACs or lobbyists.

Under state law, candidates for lieutenant governor and governor can make unlimited transfers between their campaigns.

During the 2018 campaign, then-Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch transferred $1.6 million to Gov. Scott Walker between late August and late October. She transferred $1.1 million to his campaign in October 2014.

Meanwhile, Mandela Barnes transferred $635,000 to Tony Evers’ campaign in 2018 after they became running mates.

“Tim Michels is the ultimate political insider and has already made it clear that he won’t follow through on the promises he makes to voters,” said Sam Roecker, a spokesman for Evers’ reelection campaign.

*See more at*[*www.wispolitics.com*](http://www.wispolitics.com)

*The Capitol Report is written by editorial staff at WisPolitics.com, a nonpartisan, Madison-based news service that specializes in coverage of government and politics, and is distributed for publication by members of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association.*

*Copyright © WisPolitics.com*