**GOP U.S. Senate candidate Hovde putting millions into his own campaign**

By WisPolitics.com

The U.S. Senate race in Wisconsin is well underway. Ads are running. And money is flowing.

GOP U.S. Senate candidate Eric Hovde loaned his campaign $8 million during the first quarter while pulling in just shy of $1.1 million from other donors.

It’s already one of the largest personal investments by a U.S. Senate candidate in Wisconsin history.

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, reports raising $5.4 million during the first three months of 2024, spending $3.2 million and finishing the quarter with $10.3 million in the bank.

Hovde filed a report with the FEC showing he spent $3.7 million during the period and finished March with $5.3 million cash on hand.

Hovde had previously said he raised more than $1 million from others by March 31, a key mark because it made him eligible for the Wisconsin GOP’s endorsement at the state convention next month.

His filing shows he raised $940,437 from individuals, with $90,000 he raised from PACs helping push him over the $1 million mark. He also reported $39,374 in transfers from the victory committee of U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas.

Candidates’ unitemized donations — those from donors who have given $200 or less — are often seen as a sign of the success of their small-dollar operations. Hovde reported $159,468 in such contributions between his launch Feb. 21 and March 31, or just less than 1.7% of what he raised from individuals.

By comparison, unitemized donations make up 35.7% of the more than $4.4 million that Baldwin raised from individuals.

She also reported $268,554 from PACs and $560,152 in transfers from other committees.

Baldwin was fundraising during the entire three-month period, while Hovde’s Feb. 21 launch gave him just more than five weeks of activity. Still, Baldwin’s overall fundraising haul averaged $59,477 a day. Hovde, meanwhile, pulled in an average of $27,431.

Some of Hovde’s top individual donors include Illinois business couple and GOP megadonors Dick and Liz Uihlein. They each gave $6,600, the maximum contribution over the primary and general election.

Hovde’s personal contribution trails what Dem Alex Lasry gave his campaign in the 2022 cycle or what Republican Ron Johnson contributed toward his bid in 2010. But it was more than either one contributed during any fundraising period of those campaigns.

Lasry, whose father was a part owner of the Milwaukee Bucks, ultimately put $14.9 million of his own money into his bid for the U.S. Senate in 2022 as he dropped out of the race weeks before the August primary. That included $6.5 million during the second quarter of 2022.

Johnson, meanwhile, contributed $2.9 million toward his campaign in the pre-primary period of 2010 as he went on to put more than $8.9 million into the race as he knocked off then-Dem U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold, of Middleton.

Former U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Madison, was largely a self-funder. The most the former grocery chain scion personally put into one of his campaigns was just more than $6.9 million in 1994.

The report showed Hovde put $6 million into his campaign Feb. 23, two days after he formally launched his bid, with another $2 million March 28.

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