

Opinion: Disclosure key to campaign finance reform

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

Common Cause and other, similarly inclined reform groups have for decades advocated limits on campaign contributions as a cure for the corrupting influence of special interest money.

The Watergate scandal begat limits on presidential and congressional campaign contributions four decades ago and more recently, they found their way into California's politics.

However, every election cycle proves anew that the supposed contribution limits don't really limit money in politics, but do drive political money underground and make it more difficult for voters to know who's giving to whom.

So-called "independent expenditures" have exploded, many from grandiosely named front groups that do not have to disclose their financial sources.

Moneyed interests, from the presidential level downward, not only wield more influence than ever, but they and their favored politicians now have a vested interest in maintaining the supposed limits so that they can hide what they do.

Read the whole story