

Opinion: Has Adelson learned from his mistakes?

By Josh Voorhees, Slate

The Koch brothers are set to play a historic role in 2016, but they're not the only conservative mega-donors who could shape the election. This weekend, casino mogul Sheldon Adelson will host a pair of GOP contenders and a slew of other Republican politicians at one of his Las Vegas hotels. There, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry will be addressing the Republican Jewish Coalition – but in reality their eyes will be on Adelson, who spent a staggering \$100 million in 2012, making him the largest individual donor (non-dark money category) that election cycle .

If Adelson chooses to crack open his checkbook again – and all signs suggest he will – he could have a drastic impact on the GOP nominating contest. In 2012, Adelson almost single-handedly kept Newt Gingrich's primary bid afloat far longer than it had any right to be by donating \$20 million to the former House speaker's super PAC. Of course, Gingrich is also proof of the limits of deep-pocketed patrons like Adelson. His cash was enough to allow Gingrich to prolong the inevitable, but it wasn't enough to avoid it. (Adelson's other political bets didn't turn out much better for him that year.)

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