

AT&T Phoning It In On Hiding Hypocrisy: Despite Disclosing That Both Its Reputation And Political Activity Affect Its Shareholder Value, The Company Continues To Risk Its Reputation By Funding Anti-Democratic And Far-Right Efforts

SUMMARY: AT&T has stated on multiple occasions that its reputation and political activity affect its shareholder value. However, AT&T continues to put its reputation at risk by funding anti-democratic and far-right efforts even though these efforts sometimes stand in contrast to the company's stated values and public positions.

On October 6, 2021, Reuters released a [report](#) outlining how AT&T funneled "tens of millions" of dollars into far-right news network One America News (OAN). Beyond the tens of millions of dollars funneled into OAN, AT&T has also been a significant contributor to legislators that have pushed through restrictive voting legislation in Texas and to members of Congress who objected to certifying the results of the 2020 presidential election. Those donations are outlined below:

- AT&T has donated over **\$244,000** to Texas legislators after they voted in favor of two restrictive voting bills — SB 1 And SB 1111 — and to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who signed both bills into law. Hypocritically, AT&T's CEO has [stated](#), "we believe the right to vote is sacred and we support voting laws that make it easier for more Americans to vote in free, fair and secure elections."
- As of March 2022, AT&T had donated at least **\$96,000** to the members of Congress who voted against certifying the 2020 election results following the insurrection on January 6th, 2021. The corporation had previously [claimed](#) it was suspending contributions to members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of electoral college votes.

AT&T continues to act hypocritically in its support of purveyors of the "big lie" and those who advance voting restrictions, clearly risking its reputation and shareholder value to fund elements of a far-right agenda.

AT&T Has Repeatedly Acknowledged That Damage To Its Reputation Can Negatively Impact Its Stockholder Value And Has Claimed That Its Political Involvement Is Intended To "Create Stockholder Value"...

In Its 2021 Annual Report, AT&T Said It Believes Damage To Its Reputation Could "Adversely Affect Our Business, Reputation, Financial Condition, Results Of Operations And Cash Flows."

AT&T Said In Its 2021 Annual Report That It Believes Its "Brand Image, Awareness And Reputation Strengthen Our Relationship With Consumers And Contribute Significantly To The Success Of Our Business." "We believe that our brand image, awareness and reputation strengthen our relationship with consumers and contribute significantly to the success of our business. [...] Any damage to our reputation or payments of significant amounts, even if reserved, could materially and adversely affect our business, reputation, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows." [SEC.gov, AT&T 2021 Annual Report, Accessed [4/26/22](#)]

- **AT&T Added That Damage To Its Reputation "Could Materially And Adversely Affect Our Business, Reputation, Financial Condition, Results Of Operations And Cash Flows."** "We believe that our brand image, awareness and reputation strengthen our relationship with consumers and contribute significantly to the success of our business. [...] Any damage to our reputation or payments

of significant amounts, even if reserved, could materially and adversely affect our business, reputation, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.” [SEC.gov, AT&T 2021 Annual Report, Accessed [4/26/22](#)]

AT&T Claims It Participates In The Political Process In Order To “Support Policies That Sustain And Grow Our Business And Create Stockholder Value.”

AT&T Said In Its 2022 Proxy Statement That It Participates “In The Political Process In A Bipartisan Manner To Support Policies That Sustain And Grow Our Business And Create Stockholder Value.” “We participate in the political process in a bipartisan manner to support policies that sustain and grow our business and create stockholder value.” [SEC.gov, AT&T 2022 Proxy Statement, Accessed [4/26/22](#)]

...Yet, AT&T Continues To Put Its Reputation At Risk By Funding Anti-Democratic And Far-Right Efforts, Even Though These Efforts Sometimes Stand In Contrast To The Company’s Values And Public Statements.

AT&T Was Fundamental In The Creation And Funding Of Far-Right News Network, One America News (OAN).

AT&T Funded OAN To The Tune Of “Tens Of Millions” Of Dollars And Played A Role “In Creating And Funding” The Network.

A 2021 Reuters Review Of Court Records Revealed AT&T Funneled “Tens Of Millions” Of Dollars Into Far-Right News Network One America News (OAN) And Played A Role “In Creating And Funding” The Network. “One America News, the far-right network whose fortunes and viewership rose amid the triumph and tumult of the Trump administration, has flourished with support from a surprising source: AT&T Inc, the world's largest communications company. A Reuters review of court records shows the role AT&T played in creating and funding OAN, a network that continues to spread conspiracy theories about the 2020 election and the COVID-19 pandemic. [...] Since then, AT&T has been a crucial source of funds flowing into OAN, providing tens of millions of dollars in revenue, court records show.” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

According To Testimony From An OAN Accountant, 90% Of OAN’s Revenue Came From AT&T-Owned Television Platforms. “Ninety percent of OAN’s revenue came from a contract with AT&T-owned television platforms, including satellite broadcaster DirecTV, according to 2020 sworn testimony by an OAN accountant.” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

- **The Accountant Testified Without The DirecTV Deal, The Value Of OAN “Would Be Zero.”** “Without the DirecTV deal, the accountant said under oath, the network’s value ‘would be zero.’” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]
- **Court Records Show That AT&T Offered A Five Percent Equity Stake In OAN.** “The state and federal court documents reviewed by Reuters detail a lucrative relationship for OAN with AT&T, even as the two occasionally tangled in court. The records include a reported offer by AT&T to acquire a 5% equity stake in OAN and AWE, though the two sides ultimately signed a different deal. The court filings also cite a promise by OAN to ‘cast a positive light’ on AT&T during newscasts.” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

OAN Founder Robert Herring Sr. Testified That AT&T Approached Him To Create OAN.

OAN Founder And CEO Robert Herring Sr. Testified That AT&T Executives Asked Him To Build A Conservative News Network. “OAN founder and chief executive Robert Herring Sr has testified that the inspiration to launch OAN in 2013 came from AT&T executives. ‘They told us they wanted a conservative network,’ Herring said during a 2019 deposition seen by Reuters. ‘They only had one, which was Fox News, and they had seven others on the other [leftwing] side. When they said that, I jumped to it and built one.’” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

ON Capitalized On Trump's Loss To President Biden And Pushed The Big Lie, Allowing Guests And Segments That Pushed Election Conspiracies.

ON Provided A Space For Trump Supporters After His Loss To President Biden In The November 2020 Presidential Election. “America’s post-election turmoil, punctuated by the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, continues to roil the country. Dozens of election administrators in battleground states Trump lost have received a barrage of death threats, Reuters has reported. A Reuters poll in May showed that a quarter of Americans – and 53% of Republicans – wrongly believe Trump won the 2020 election. ON caters to this audience. Trump’s loss was ON’s gain, social media data show.” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

ON Aired Interviews With Two 2020 Election Volunteers — One Who Alleged Democrats Were Falsifying Ballots And One Who Claimed Republicans Were Excluded From Ballot Processing. “On November 23, 2021, ON aired two interviews with 2020 election volunteers who alleged improper conduct by Democrats. One interview was with a Michigan voter and volunteer who claimed that thousands of falsified ballots were dropped off in the early hours after election night, and the other was with a Republican poll worker who claimed that Republicans were excluded from ballot processing.” [Anti-Defamation League, [1/4/22](#)]

ON Was Sued By Dominion Voting Systems Inc. For Pushing Election Conspiracies In A Docuseries That Targeted Dominion Voting Machines. “Since March, ON has sold hours of infomercial time to MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, a leading purveyor of false claims the election was stolen. Lindell has used that time on ON to repeatedly broadcast his election conspiracy ‘docu-movies.’ A primary Lindell target is Dominion Voting Systems Inc, whose machines count votes in 28 states and use paper ballots and records for auditing. In August, Dominion sued ON for defamation. ‘ON saw a business opportunity’ and fueled bogus conspiracies about alleged vote tampering, Dominion contended. ‘ON helped create and cultivate an alternate reality where up is down, pigs have wings,’ the lawsuit said.” [Reuters, [10/6/21](#)]

AT&T Donated Over \$244,000 To Texas Legislators That Voted In Favor Of Two Restrictive Voting Bills In The State — SB 1 And SB 1111 — And To Gov. Greg Abbott, Who Signed The Bills Into Law, Despite The Corporation’s Public Comment Saying It Believes “The Right To Vote Is Sacred And We Support Voting Laws That Make It Easier For More Americans To Vote In Free, Fair And Secure Elections.”

AT&T CEO John Stankey: “We Believe The Right To Vote Is Sacred And We Support Voting Laws That Make It Easier For More Americans To Vote In Free, Fair And Secure Elections.” “AT&T issued a statement from its CEO, John Stankey. He said, ‘We believe the right to vote is sacred and we support voting laws that make it easier for more Americans to vote in free, fair and secure elections. ‘We understand that election laws are complicated, not our company’s expertise and ultimately the responsibility of elected officials. But, as a company, we have a responsibility to engage. For this reason, we are working together with other businesses through groups like the Business Roundtable to support efforts to enhance every person’s ability to vote. In this way, the right knowledge and expertise can be applied to make a difference on this fundamental and critical issue.’” [Deadline, [4/1/21](#)]

- **Stankey Added That AT&T Was “Working Together With Other Businesses Through Groups Like The Business Roundtable To Support Efforts To Enhance Every Person’s Ability To Vote.”** “AT&T issued a statement from its CEO, John Stankey. He said, ‘We believe the right to vote is sacred and we support voting laws that make it easier for more Americans to vote in free, fair and secure elections. ‘We understand that election laws are complicated, not our company’s expertise and ultimately the responsibility of elected officials. But, as a company, we have a responsibility to engage. For this reason, we are working together with other businesses through groups like the Business Roundtable to support efforts to enhance every person’s ability to vote. In this way, the right knowledge and expertise can be applied to make a difference on this fundamental and critical issue.’” [Deadline, [4/1/21](#)]

RECIPIENT	CONTRIBUTOR	AMOUNT	DATE	VOTE ON SB1	VOTE ON SB1111
Andrew Murr Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22	Yes	Yes
Angela Paxton Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Kelly Hancock Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$20,000	6/21/21	Yes	Yes
Brooks Landgraf Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$1,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Cole Hefner Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$1,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
David Spiller for Texas Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Phil King Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	6/22/21	Yes	Yes
Drew Springer Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22	Yes	Yes
Texans for Trent Ashby	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	6/22/21	Yes	Yes
Texans for Greg Abbott	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$100,000	6/22/21	Signed	Signed
Dustin Burrows Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$10,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Ernest Bailes Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$4,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Friends of Donna Campbell	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Friends of Travis Clardy	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Gary VanDeaver Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22	Yes	Yes
Giovanni Capriglione Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Charles Schwertner Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$10,000	6/29/21	Yes	Yes
Robert Nichols Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000.00	6/29/21	Yes	Yes
Glenn Rogers for Texas	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/8/22	Yes	Yes
Jeff Leach Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
John Raney Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Justin Holland for Texas Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Ken King for State Representative Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/10/22	Yes	Yes

Lacey Hull Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/8/22	Yes	Yes
Texans for Joan Huffman	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$10,000	12/7/21	Yes	Yes
Lynn Stucky Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Mike Schofield Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$1,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Reggie Smith Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22	Yes	Yes
Stan Lambert Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$3,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Stephanie Klick Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Steve Allison for Texas House	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,500	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Texans for Phil Stephenson	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
The Kyle Kacal Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/11/22	Yes	Yes
Valoree Swanson Campaign	AT&T Inc. Texas Political Action Committee	\$2,000	2/8/22	Yes	Yes
TOTAL:		\$244,500			

March 2022: AT&T Has Donated At Least \$96,000 To The Members Of Congress That Voted Against Certifying the 2020 Election Results Following the Insurrection on January 6th, 2021 — A Group That Has Been Dubbed The “Sedition Caucus” — After Suspending Donations To The Group.

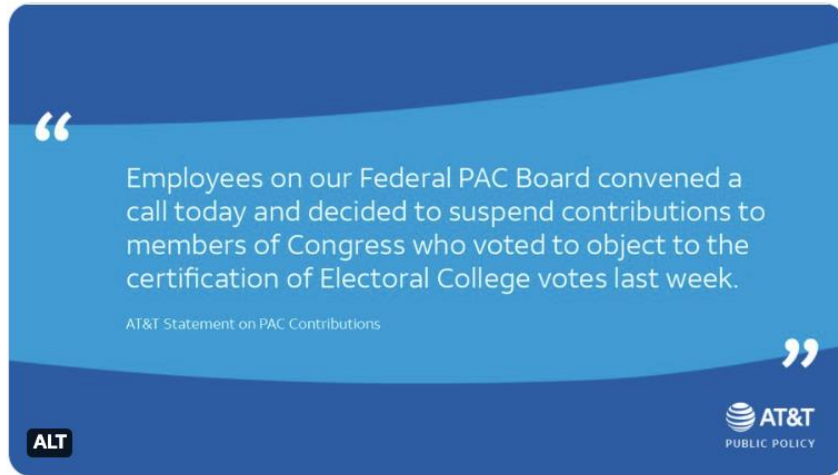
AT&T Told Popular Information That It Was Going To “Suspend Contributions To Members Of Congress Who Voted To Object To The Certification Of Electoral College Votes Last Week.”

“Previously, AT&T told Popular Information that it would ‘weigh candidates’ positions, votes cast and actions taken when making decisions about future PAC support.’ But on Monday the company told Popular Information that it will ‘suspend contributions to members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of Electoral College votes last week.” [Popular Info, [1/10/21](#)]

AT&T Said Its Federal PAC Board “Decided To Suspend Contributions To Members Of Congress Who Voted To Object To The Certification Of Electoral College Votes Last Week.” “Employees on our Federal PAC Board convened a call today and decided to suspend contributions to members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of Electoral College votes last week”:



AT&T Statement on PAC Contributions



3:44 PM · Jan 11, 2021 · Twitter Web App

[Twitter, @ATTPublicPolicy, [1/11/21](#)]

RECIPIENT	CONTRIBUTOR	AMOUNT	DATE
Jodey Arrington	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Sam Graves	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
John Carter	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/18/22
Michael Burgess	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/18/22
Mario Diaz-Balart	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/25/22
Virginia Foxx	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Tim Walberg	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Mike Bost	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Jeff Duncan	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Bill Johnson	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Morgan Griffith	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	2/25/22
Richard Hudson	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Jason Smith	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Buddy Carter	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$5,000	1/31/22
Cynthia Lummis	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$4,000	1/31/22
Pat Fallon	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	2/18/22

Greg Pence	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	1/31/22
August Pfluger	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	2/18/22
Pete Sessions	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	1/31/22
Greg Steube	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	1/31/22
Beth Van Duyne	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$3,000	2/18/22
Debbie Lesko	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$2,000	1/31/22
John Joyce	AT&T Inc. Employee Federal Political Action Committee	\$2,000	1/31/22
TOTAL:		\$96,000	

[Accountable.US, Corporate Donations Tracker, Accessed [5/3/22](#)]

- The “Sedition Caucus” Is Made Up Of The 147 Republican Lawmakers “Who Voted Against Certifying The 2020 Election Result” After The Insurrection.** "After a pro-Trump mob stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, many companies scrambled to cut ties with the 147 GOP lawmakers who voted against certifying the 2020 election result. Dozens of companies including Walmart, Amazon, Morgan Stanley, and AT&T said they would stop donating to these 147 Republican lawmakers – a group dubbed the Sedition Caucus by political opponents." [Business Insider, [1/15/22](#)]