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**James M. Jeffords Center's
Vermont Legislative Research Service**



Campaign Contributions from the Corrections Corporation of America

The Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) is a private corrections management industry that was founded in 1983. CCA specializes in the “design, construction, expansion and management of prisons, jails, and detention facilities, as well as inmate transportation services” and has become the “private corrections provider of choice” for both federal and state agencies.¹

CCA currently houses 75,000 detainees in over 60 facilities throughout the nation and partners with the three federal corrections agencies (the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the US Marshals Services, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement).² CCA is the fifth largest corrections system in the nation (behind the three federal corrections agencies and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation).³

CCA has also been prevalent in political elections, making campaign contributions to nominees who may support stricter prison policies, enabling CCA to stay in business.⁴

The National Influence of CCA

CCA is a member of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a conservative lobby group that is based in Washington DC and is specifically invested in criminal justice discussions.⁵

¹ Corrections Corporation of America, “About CCA,” CCA, accessed November 9, 2011, <http://www.cca.com/about>.

² Corrections Corporation of America, “About CCA,” CCA, accessed November 9, 2011, <http://www.cca.com/about>.

³ Office of Research, “Population Reports,” California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation accessed November 9, 2011, http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports_Research/Offender_Information_Services_Branch/Population_Reports.html

⁴ Harvey Silvergate and Kyle Smeallie, “Freedom Watch: Jailhouse Bloc,” The Boston Phoenix, December 9, 2008, accessed November 9, 2011, <http://the phoenix.com/Boston/News/73092-Freedom-watch-Jailhouse-bloc/?page=3#TOPCONTENT>.

⁵ Diversity Inc., “Who Profits From the Prison Boom?” Diversity Inc., accessed November 9, 2011, <http://diversityinc.com/investigative-series/who-profits-from-the-prison-boom/>.

Based on an article written in 2008, CCA spent more than \$2.7 million from 2006-2008 on lobbying for stricter crime laws.⁶

From the years 2003-2011, CCA donated more than twice the amount of money to Republican political candidates than to Democratic political candidates, as seen in Figure 1. Between 2003 and 2011, CCA donated \$1,090,994 to Republican candidates and \$501,350 to Democratic candidates nationwide.⁷

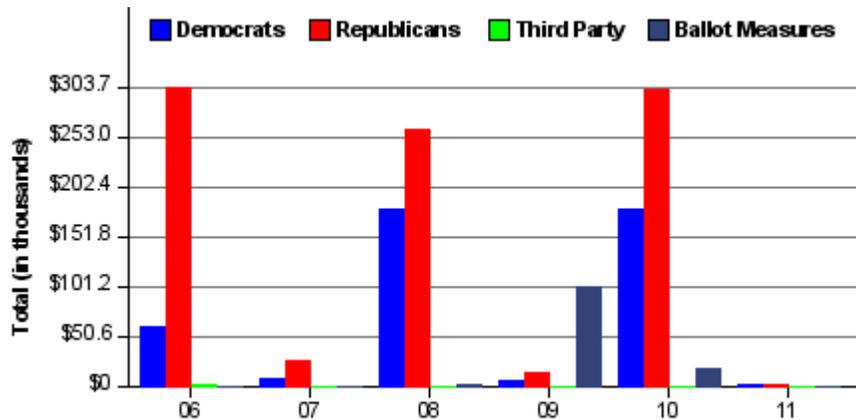


Figure 1: CCA donations by year and political affiliation.

Source: National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corporation of America,” accessed November 9, 2011, <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/topcontributor.phtml?u=695&y=0>.

CCA in Vermont

Prisons

In 2008, the Pew Center on the States projected that, based on current trends, the Vermont prison population would increase by 23% by 2018, based on the facts that the state prison population doubled between the years 1996-2006 and 50% of offenders leaving prison in 2003 had been re-incarcerated by 2006. Although the prison population has declined since 2008, the Vermont Department of Corrections has continued to partner with CCA and send prisoners out of state to facilities in Kentucky, Arizona, and Massachusetts.⁸

⁶ Harvey Silvergate and Kyle Smeallie, “Freedom Watch: Jailhouse Bloc,” The Boston Phoenix, December 9, 2008.

⁷ National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corporation of America,” accessed November 9, 2011, <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/topcontributor.phtml?u=695&y=0>.

⁸ Ken Picard, “Is it cheaper to house Vermont prisoners in state or out of state? It depends,” Seven Days, April 20, 2011, accessed November 11, 2011, <http://7dvt.com/2011vermont-prisons>.

Starting in 2004, the Vermont Department of Corrections signed an agreement with CCA to send prisoners out of state to CCA’s Lee Adjustment Center in Kentucky and Florence Correctional Center in Arizona. In 2011, Vermont agreed to add another two years to its contract with CCA, with the option of continuing the partnership until 2015. As of 2011, there are approximately 500 Vermont prisoners housed at these two CCA facilities.⁹

According to Ira Sollace, the director of finance for the Vermont Department of Corrections,¹⁰ the prisoners sent out of state usually serve longer sentences and have fewer health care needs. In order to move a prisoner out of state and into a CCA funded facility, the Department of Corrections must pay money to CCA to ‘buy a bed’ for the prisoner. This fee increases if Vermont has space in its system but chooses to send the prisoner out of state instead.¹¹

Over the past seven years, CCA has made campaign contributions in Vermont elections.¹²

Elections

From 2004 to 2010, Corrections Corporation of America has contributed \$9,650 to Party Committees in Vermont. Below are the contributions, separated by committee and the years that they received donations.¹³

Table 1. CCA donations by Party Committee in Vermont, 2004-2010.¹⁴

Party Committees	Years	Total	Party
VERMONT DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CAMPAIGN	2008-2010	\$750	D
VERMONT DEMOCRATIC PARTY	2004-2010	\$750	D
VERMONT SENATE VICTORY	2004-2010	\$6,750	D
VERMONT HOUSE REPUBLICAN PAC	2008-2010	\$900	R
VERMONT REPUBLICAN PARTY	2006	\$500	R
Total		\$9,650	

Source: National Institute on Money in State Politics

Individual Vermont candidates have also received contributions from CCA. Overall, candidates for Senate received \$2,800 in CCA contributions between 2004 and 2010 in Vermont.

⁹ Corrections Corporation of America, “CCA secures two year contract with Vermont Department of Corrections,” Correction Corporation of America, July 26, 2011, accessed November 11, 2011, <http://www.cca.com/newsroom/news-releases/264/>.

¹⁰ As quoted by Ken Picard in “Is it cheaper to house Vermont prisoners in state or out of state? It depends.”

¹¹ Ken Picard, “Is it cheaper to house Vermont prisoners in state or out of state? It depends.”

¹² National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corporation of America,” accessed November 9, 2011, <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/topcontributor.phtml?u=695&y=0>.

¹³ National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corporation of America.”

¹⁴ National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corporation of America.”

Candidates for the House of Representatives received a combined total of \$300 in 2004. Candidates for Governor received \$3,100 in CCA contributions between 2004 and 2008. CCA also contributed \$250 to a candidate running for Lieutenant Governor in 2008.¹⁵ Jim Douglas, a Republican, received the most money over a four year period of \$2,900, while Democrats Susan Bartlett and Matt Dunne, and Republicans Vince Illuzzi, Kevin J. Mullin, and Kate Purcell received \$200 each.¹⁶

Table 2: CCA donations by candidate in Vermont, 2004-2010

Candidate	Year	Amount	Party
BARTLETT, SUSAN	2004	\$200	D
DOUGLAS, JIM	2004-2008	\$2,900	R
DUBIE, BRIAN E	2008	\$250	R
DUNNE, MATT	2004	\$200	D
FLORY, MARGARET (PEG)	2010	\$500	R
ILLUZZI, VINCE	2004	\$200	R
KOCH, THOMAS F (TOM)	2004	\$100	R
MULLIN, KEVIN J	2004	\$200	R
PURCELL, KATE	2004	\$200	R
SEARS, DICK	2004-2010	\$1,700	D
TOTAL		\$6,450	

Source: National Institute on Money in State Politics

Note: State Senate candidates include Susan Bartlett, Vince Illuzzi, Kevin J. Mullin and Dick Sears. House of Representative candidates include Matt Dunne, Margaret Flory, Thomas F. Koch and Kate Purcell. Brian Dubie was a candidate for Lieutenant Governor and Jim Douglas was a candidate for Governor.¹⁷

This report was completed on December 28, 2011 by Monica Johnson, Michael Lawliss, and Kelly Walsh under the supervision of graduate student Kate Fournier and Professor Anthony Gierzynski in response to a request from Suzy Wizowaty,.

Contact: Professor Anthony Gierzynski, 513 Old Mill, The University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405, phone 802-656-7973, email agierzyn@uvm.edu.

Disclaimer: This report has been compiled by undergraduate students at the University of Vermont under the supervision of Professor Anthony Gierzynski. The material contained in the report does not reflect the official policy of the University of Vermont.

¹⁵ National Institute on Money in State Politics, "Corrections Corporation of America."

¹⁶ National Institute on Money in State Politics, "Corrections Corporation of America."

¹⁷ Adam R. Brown, "List of legislators in the Vermont lower chamber," Department of Political Science, Brigham Young University, accessed November 28, 2011, <http://adambrown.info/p/research/legislators/members/vermont/lower>.