



# Conservative Spotlight

## Capital Research Center

The Capital Research Center (CRC) is extremely busy these days of Obama. This is very understandable, given that its job is to keep track of ACORN and other radical activist groups, liberal think-tanks and labor unions, and left-wing foundations and donors such as George Soros. As a "philanthropic watchdog" for conservative donors, CRC gathers information on the leadership, activities and funding sources and financial resources of leftist groups, and makes its findings available to the public free and online at the CRC website ([www.capitalresearch.org](http://www.capitalresearch.org)) and through its monthly newsletters, e-mail updates, and a fully searchable database.

Founded in 1984, CRC also studies non-profit charities, particularly those that participate in government welfare programs or depend on government grants. "We consider ourselves a charity-watchdog group," says CRC President Terrence Scanlon. "We worry that the American traditions of private charity, individual giving and volunteering are threatened by the growth of government. Too many charities that were once religion-based or independent have become dependent on government money. Then they lose their sense of mission and become cheerleaders for even more government welfare programs."

Scanlon, who served in the Reagan Administration as chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, says CRC is a valuable resource for conservatives. "We encourage conservative donors to ask questions about the groups that ask them for donations. How does the organization use the money it gets? Does it also apply for government grants? Do its programs try to help people directly, or does the group mainly lobby for more taxpayer spending and government controls? Many donors don't realize how much change is taking place in the world of charity," says Scanlon. "There are groups with inspirational names like the Children's Defense Fund and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. They actually support radical groups or activities and advocate for big government. Even many well-respected charities have lost their way."

CRC also profiles grant-making foundations. "Ignoring donors' intentions is a big problem," says Scanlon. "Wealthy donors set up foundations to carry out their wishes, but after they die the foundation goes astray. Look at the Pew and Ford Foundations and so many others." CRC urges donors to make their intentions clear when they make a bequest. Donors should also consider putting time limits on the life of any foundation they create, says Scanlon.

CRC publishes three monthly newsletters: They investigate left-wing groups, labor unions and grant-making foundations and pay close attention to their activities and funding. The group, which is located in Washington, D.C., in a historic townhouse

eight blocks from the White House, also publishes books and monographs that celebrate what successful charities can accomplish. One book, *Classical Education: The Movement Sweeping America*, highlights an education curriculum that has attracted support from many private schools and homeschoolers. A revised and extensively updated version of CRC's *Classical Education* will be published later this year.

CRC's latest project is keeping close tabs on so-called "community-organizing groups" like ACORN, a corrupt nonprofit that CRC has been warning against since the late 1990s. Pressure groups like ACORN have conducted fraudulent voter registration drives and pressured banks to make loans to people who cannot afford to repay them. These groups often work with militant labor unions like the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

As a nonprofit charitable organization, Capital Research Center depends on voluntary contributions and does not accept government funding. It makes its research available to policymakers, the news media, donors and the general public online and at no cost. "Anyone interested in politics and philanthropy would be interested in our site," Scanlon says.

CRC has an eight-person in-house staff, works with writers and researchers across the country, and welcomes young people to work as research interns. Interns are encouraged to undertake independent research projects for CRC publication.

Scanlon warns that many wealthy people—knowingly or unknowingly—support social causes promoted by left-wing advocacy groups. And the Obama Administration is employing and funding a new generation of activists who want big government to spend billions—often trillions—of taxpayer dollars on their pet projects. Environmentalists, labor unions, the education establishment, animal rights groups and many other organizations have a constitutional right to protest and organize. But Scanlon says it's wrong to use taxpayer dollars to support a political agenda. And it distorts the meaning of charity to use tax-deductible contributions for political advocacy when those funds might otherwise go to a charity providing direct services to the needy.

"A former community organizer is now in the White House running the country," says Scanlon. "Americans want to know more about the radical groups that are demanding big, expensive new government programs. These groups operate in every major city and in every state. We are doing all we can to provide the public with the critical information about what these groups want and how they are funded."

For more information about Capital Research Center, visit its website at <http://www.capitalresearch.org>

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## HOW'S YOUR POLITICAL I.Q.? ANSWERS

1. None.
2. Democratic Sen. Abraham Ribicoff in 1980.
3. Mark Andrews, who was elected senator in 1980 and defeated in 1986.
4. Six: Mel Martinez (Fla.), Sam Brownback (Kan.), Jim Bunning (Ky.), Christopher Bond (Mo.), Judd Gregg (N.H.) and George Voinovich (Ohio).
5. Robert Taft, Jr., grandson of President William Howard Staff, who served in the Ohio House of Representatives from 1954-62, the U.S. House from 1962-64, and 1966-70, and the U.S. Senate from 1970-76.

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## And the Winner is...



**"The system worked—I kept my job."**

AND THE WINNER of the weekly photo caption contest on [HumanEvents.com](http://HumanEvents.com) (and the \$50 prize) is John Small of Reston, Va.