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Labor groups are main backers of reforming electoral mapping

Voters First report shows funding

REGINALD FIELDS
Plain Dealer Bureau Chief

COLUMBUS — A group that describes itself as a citizen-led effort to reform how Ohio draws its election maps filed a mandatory campaign finance report Tuesday that revealed it is nearly completely supported by organized labor.

All but about \$30,000 of the \$1.63 million that Voters First reported

raising in its semiannual campaign finance report to the Ohio secretary of state's office came from unions.

The group is angling to place a constitutional amendment on the Nov. 6 ballot that would take the once-a-decade process of redrawing congressional and legislative district lines away from politicians and give it to a citizens commission.

The largest supporters of the effort by far are teachers. The Ohio

Education Association thus far has contributed \$700,000 to the cause.

Another major backer is We Are Ohio, the coalition backed by organized labor and the Ohio Democratic Party that was formed last year to help repeal a collective-bargaining law known as Senate Bill 5. We Are Ohio has given \$250,000 to the redistricting reform effort.

We Are Ohio spokesman Dennis Willard said his group is not involved because of politics but because it wants to see that more moderate lawmakers are elected.

"We Are Ohio is supporting Voters First because after being attacked by out-of-touch politicians on Senate Bill 5 last year we want to put citizens in charge of drawing fair districts so that we have moderate, common-sense lawmakers from all parties at the Statehouse representing all of us," Willard said.

In news conferences and campaign materials, Voters First has presented itself as a nonpartisan outfit led by the Ohio League of Women Voters.

SEE VOTERS | B4

Statues toppled at South Euclid church



LISA DEJONG | THE PLAIN DEALER

The Rev. Dave Ireland points out damage to a 1,000-pound marble statue of the Virgin Mary, after vandals pushed it off its pedestal at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in South Euclid. Vandals knocked over three statues Saturday night.

Life-size marble figure of Mary chipped, two of St. Anthony are undamaged

MICHAEL O'MALLEY
Plain Dealer Reporter

SOUTH EUCLID — Three statues on the grounds of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, including a 1,000-pound, life-size, marble Blessed Virgin Mary, were found early Sunday pushed off their pedestals.

"When we found her, she was lying face-first in the grass and dirt," said Sacred Heart's pastor, the Rev. Dave Ireland. "I don't know how you

could get the strength to push it over."

The statue's nose and parts of its veil were chipped in the fall, said Ireland.

Two other statues, both of St. Anthony, were also toppled, though they were not damaged.

One of them, about 5 feet high, is fiberglass and was standing alongside a church driveway fairly close to South Green Road, which is a main street. The statue had been bolted and cemented down, said Ireland.

In addition, a 3-foot-high marble statue of St. Anthony in the back of the church by the parish Family Life Center was knocked over into a bush.

"It's so sad," said Ireland. "I don't understand vandalism, especially against a sacred piece. That's desecration, and that's very troubling to me."

Ireland suspects the statues were toppled under the cover of darkness late Saturday or early Sunday. He said the Rev. Thomas Winkel, paro-

chial vicar at the parish, discovered the vandalism as he was entering the church Sunday morning to celebrate Mass. He alerted Ireland, who called police.

Police said Tuesday that they had no witnesses or suspects. The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland is asking anyone with information about the vandalism to call the South Euclid Police Department at 216-381-1234.

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HIV-positive E. Cleveland man spotlighted at AIDS conference

CASEY CAPACHI
Plain Dealer Reporter

WASHINGTON, D.C. — At the opening session of the International AIDS Conference last Monday morning, 20-year-old Lawrence Stallworth II of East Cleveland sat listening to his story being told to the thousands of attendees.

"Lawrence Stallworth is in the audience today. He was 17 years old when he found out he was HIV-positive. It only took one mistake for the virus to become a personal reality," Phil Wilson, founder and executive director of the Black AIDS Institute, said as he looked out at the crowd packed into the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

Stallworth is one of 3,522 individuals in Cuyahoga County who, as of 2009, were living with HIV/AIDS. It's the highest number of any Ohio county, according to an AIDS United report.

"I was speechless," Stallworth

said of being mentioned in Wilson's speech, which garnered a standing ovation. "Phil has been such a great mentor to me."

Stallworth, a student at Cuyahoga Community College, said the series of events leading up to his first International AIDS Conference were a "whirlwind."

Since speaking publicly about his HIV-positive status in local schools only a couple of months after his 2009 diagnosis, Stallworth has shared his story at the United Nations on World AIDS Day and at the U.S. Conference on AIDS, and last September he was one of the first young people to speak before the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. During the conference last week, Stallworth called on the president, Congress, the Department of Health and Human Services and the HIV/AIDS community to create a National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day.

SEE CONFERENCE | B5

Wheels in Brown's Cruze ad from Europe, Chevrolet says

AARON MARSHALL
Plain Dealer Bureau

COLUMBUS — Now we know. The car that U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown shows off in his new commercial was assembled in Ohio, but its alloy wheels were not even made in America.

"We are very proud of the Chevrolet Cruze Eco wheel made in Ohio, however, the wheel showcased in the senator's video is not the Eco wheel," Annalisa Esposito Bluhm, a spokeswoman for Chevrolet, wrote Tuesday in an email. "It is a Cruze LTZ wheel which is manufactured in Europe. It's a small distinction that could have easily been missed by most people." The Plain Dealer discovered the error last week, but at the time, Chevrolet was not able to say where the wheels in the ad were manufactured.

In the 30-second ad airing statewide, the Democratic incumbent from Avon appears on the floor of a car dealership with a red Chevrolet Cruze LTZ. "I'm Sherrod Brown, and this is a

Chevy Cruze," he says. "We're both from Ohio."

General Motors produces the Cruze in Lordstown, Ohio. In the ad, Brown shows off specific Cruze components, rattling off a few parts and where they were made, including the wheels, which he says are from Cleveland. But only the Cruze Eco, a more energy-efficient model, uses the forged aluminum wheels made at Alcoa in Cleveland.

Brown's campaign said that the senator is aware that the Eco is the only model with wheels made in Cleveland and that he was speaking generally about the Cruze. "Regardless, it doesn't change the fact that Sherrod was speaking generically about the whole car," said Justin Barasky, spokesman for Brown's campaign.

Barasky said the ad underscores Brown's support for the federal loans that went to GM and Chrysler and represents a sharp contrast with his Republican opponent, Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel.

Commentary

PHILLIP MORRIS



Advice on next phase for Dimora

Now comes the close haircut, the complete loss of privacy and the really thin mattress.

Life as Jimmy Dimora knew it didn't change Tuesday. It ended.

Several hours before a defiant Dimora was sent off to prison for 28 years, Benny Bonanno, an old political acquaintance of Dimora's, reflected for me on the severe challenges that now confront the disgraced former Cuyahoga County commissioner.

"I hope he has prepared his mind for what's about to happen. If he hasn't, he's in for a world of trouble.

"If you don't make the mental transition quickly, prison will make the transition for you, forcefully, and I don't mean that in any sort of sexual way.

"I hope Jimmy realizes that he is no longer the man. That's what's going to be difficult. He's a number. I hope he keeps his sense of humor. He'll need it."

Bonanno is as qualified as anyone to speak on the transition that Dimora faces. He's been down that road.

Seventeen years ago, Bonanno was marched in shackles out of a Cuyahoga County courtroom and off to prison. He was busted for running political campaigns out of his office.

Lots of them. As clerk of the Cleveland Municipal Court, he was a kingmaker — on the public's dime. That's a felony. It's a crime that countless other officeholders committed. But Bonanno got busted.

He could have pointed fingers. He didn't. He took it on the chin.

He resigned in disgrace, pleaded guilty to theft and was sentenced to one year in prison.

Local politicians no longer run campaigns out of their offices, at least not the smart ones. Call it Bonanno's political legacy.

But the orange jumpsuit is where any similarities between Bonanno and Dimora fade. Both men trashed powerful political careers through criminal behavior. But Bonanno, now a successful businessman, owned up to his violation of the public trust. He was contrite. Dimora has steadfastly refused to go that route.

SEE MORRIS | B8

THE PLAIN DEALER
PolitiFact Ohio

U.S. debt did not double in a year



President Barack Obama "doubled the national debt, which had taken more than two centuries to accumulate, in one year."

Chain email

BILL WICHERT
Star-Ledger

No apologies, just a ridiculous attack on President Barack Obama for doubling the national debt in one year.

With that opening, a chain e-mail circulating in the cybersphere kicks off a series of statements about the Democratic president's record.

"SOME OF YOU MAY APPRECIATE THIS AND SOME OF YOU MAY NOT. I DO NOT APOLOGIZE FOR SENDING THIS, BECAUSE ITS THE TRUTH," the chain email states. "If any other of our presidents had doubled the national debt, which had taken more than two centuries to accumulate, in one year, would you have approved?"

Near the end of the chain email, the message adds: "Every statement and action in this email is factual and directly attributable to Barack Hussein Obama. Every bumble is a matter of record and completely verifiable."

PolitiFact has debunked a chain email claim that Obama added more to the national debt in his first term than his 43 predecessors combined — but what about doubling the debt in one year? Like its predecessor, federal data prove it's completely bogus.

The national debt has increased significantly during Obama's tenure, but it never doubled in one year. The debt hasn't doubled even over the roughly 3½ years since the president took office.

There are two commonly cited forms of national debt — debt held by the public and total debt.

The debt held by the public refers to money borrowed from investors outside of the federal government. The total debt represents debt held by the public as well as money the federal government owes itself, including for programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

On Jan. 20, 2009, the date of Obama's inauguration, debt held by the public was about \$6.3 trillion and total debt stood at roughly \$10.6 trillion, according to the U.S. Department of the Treasury's "Debt to the Penny" calculator.

A year later, debt held by the public was about \$7.8 trillion and total debt was about \$12.3 trillion.

Those figures represent over-the-year increases of about 24 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

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