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OPENSECRETS NEWS

# Trump AG nominee William Barr is a longtime GOP donor

By [Karl Evers-Hillstrom](#) | [January 15, 2019 9:58 am](#)





Attorney General nominee William Barr (Alex Wong/Getty Images)

Attorney General nominee William Barr, set to testify Tuesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee, has provided consistent financial support to Republican candidates and causes for nearly 25 years and recently contributed to members of the committee tasked with advancing his nomination.

Together, Barr and his wife Christine have given nearly \$730,000 to federal Republican candidates and conservative groups since 1994, according to data from the Center for Responsive Politics. The couple gave a total of \$4,000 to Democratic candidates since then.

A significant chunk of the Barrs' political giving came recently. The Barrs gave \$87,700 to GOP candidates and groups during the 2018 election cycle, including \$40,000 to the [National Republican Congressional Committee](#) and \$21,000 to the [National Republican Senatorial Committee](#).

Barr gave to Republican candidates who are now members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, including [Ted Cruz](#) (\$3,000), [Marsha Blackburn](#) (\$2,000) and [Josh Hawley](#) (\$2,000).

The Barrs were more active than ever in 2016, contributing \$155,645 to conservative causes. Barr gave a maximum \$2,700 contribution to Donald Trump's campaign, but it's clear when looking through the numbers Trump wasn't his preferred candidate. That honor goes to Jeb Bush, as Barr gave \$44,145 to [Right to Rise PAC](#), an outside group supporting Bush's doomed campaign.

On Tuesday, Barr [will tell the committee](#) he plans to let special counsel Robert Mueller finish the job. But he has drawn scrutiny for his criticism of Mueller's team.

Though he didn't go as far as Trump to call them "17 Angry Dems," Barr criticized the team for its number of Clinton donors during a [July 2017 interview](#) with the Washington Post, saying he "would have liked to see him have more balance on this group."

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"In my view, prosecutors who make political contributions are identifying fairly strongly with a political party," Barr said.

The lawyers that now make up Mueller's team have given a decent chunk of money to Democrats. Prosecutor Jeannie Rhee and her husband Christopher make up the largest chunk of Democratic giving at nearly \$30,000. Mueller himself has given to just one federal candidate, contributing a total of \$450 to Republican Bill Weld's unsuccessful 1996 Senate campaign against incumbent [Sen. John Kerry](#) (D-Mass.).

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## About The Author



Karl joined the Center for Responsive Politics in October 2018. As CRP's money-in-politics reporter, he writes and edits stories for the news section and helps manage a team of diligent writers. A native of Brooklyn, New York, Karl graduated from State University of New York at New Paltz in 2016 with a B.A. in journalism. He previously worked at The Globe, a regional newspaper based in Worthington, Minnesota. His email is kevers@crp.org.

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1300 L St NW, Suite 200

Washington, DC 20005

TEL (202) 857-0044

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If confirmed by the Senate, Barr would be leaving behind large sums of money at his previous jobs. He made nearly \$2.5 million over the last year between his counsel position at Chicago law firm [Kirkland & Ellis](#) and director positions at [Time Warner](#), [Dominion Energy](#) and [Och-Ziff Capital Management](#). Barr agreed in an [ethics waiver](#) to leave those positions should he take over the Justice Department.

Barr would join a [cabinet](#) already full of longtime GOP donors. Though Barr has given more to GOP candidates and causes than Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin (\$474,200), he would be dwarfed by Small Business Administration chief [Linda McMahon](#) (\$15 million), Education Secretary [Betsy DeVos](#) (\$8.2 million) and Commerce Secretary [Wilbur Ross](#) (\$961,879).

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