

# The Money Trail

The amount of money flowing from the pharmaceutical industry into the coffers of the Bush Republican machine is immense.

They bought and paid for the 2004 re-election and made sure that Bush would do everything in his power to protect their interests during the storm that they knew was coming over death and disability from drug side-effects.

The following tables show in black and white some of the costs incurred in putting profit before human lives. The figures are extracted from lobbying disclosure forms for 2003.

<b>Drug Companies and Their Support Organizations Amounts (\$)</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America <i>(the industry's trade association)</i>	16,000,000
Merck & Co. Inc	7,400,000
Bristol Myers Squibb	5,300,000
GlaxoSmithKline	5,000,000
Eli Lilly	4,800,000
Johnson & Johnson	4,300,000
Biotechnology Industry Association	4,300,000
Abbot Laboratories	3,700,000
Pfizer	3,700,000
Hoffman-LaRoche	3,200,000
Wyeth	3,100,000
Novartis	3,000,000
Procter & Gamble	2,800,000
Amgen	2,700,000
Aventis	2,600,000
Baxter Healthcare	2,100,000
Schering-Plough	1,900,000
Bayer	1,500,000
Genzyme	1,500,000
Genentech	1,200,000
Healthcare Leadership Council	1,000,000
Purdue Pharma	1,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 86,300,000</b>

In return for this largesse, the drug companies had a huge victory in the Medicare bill in 2004. Boston University estimated that the industry would receive new profits of \$139 billion over the 8 years following the enactment of this bill. Not a bad return on an investment of \$86.3 million dollars.

*And it didn't stop there.*

In the first six months of 2004, the pharmaceutical industry support system went into overdrive to ensure that Bush had the money he needed in order to steal the election. The trade associations, industry associations and the like poured money into the republican coffers, as the following table illustrates.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>
US Chamber of Commerce	20,060,000
US Chamber Institute for Legal Reform	10,000,000
American Medical Association	9,240,000
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America	8,040,000
American Hospital Association	6,060,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 53,400,000</b>

The US Chamber of Commerce is one of the chief proponents of the medical liability reform programme that will top Bush's agenda for the new presidential term.

Liability lawsuits resulting from death and disability caused by drug side effects can run into billions of dollars for just one drug (Vioxx for example). Spending a few million to ensure the law is changed so that the relatives of dead people and those disabled by drugs like Vioxx have no recourse against the drug makers is a small price for the financial interests behind the pharmaceutical industry to pay in order to ensure their survival.