



Wisconsin

22 Overall Rank

C Overall Grade

1848

| Wisconsin | Overall Rank | To Governor | To State Senate | To State Assembly | To Parties | To PACs |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Individual Giving | 15 | 19 | 46 | 48 | 1 | 1 |
| | | \$20,000/cycle | \$2,000/cycle | \$1,000/cycle | Unlimited | Unlimited |
| PAC Giving | 34 | 14 | 45 | 46 | 42 | |
| | | \$86,000/cycle | \$2,000/cycle | \$1,000/cycle | \$12,000/year | |
| Party Giving | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| | | Unlimited | Unlimited | Unlimited | | |
| Union Giving | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | | |
| | | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | | |
| Corporate Giving | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | | |
| | | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | | |

Inflation Adjustment: No

The Wisconsin Supreme Court recently ruled that the state’s campaign finance and election enforcement agency, the Government Accountability Board, had infringed on the free association and political speech rights of groups and citizens in Wisconsin through the improper and heavy-handed use of investigative powers. In the wake of that scandal, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted sweeping changes to the state’s largely unconstitutional and mostly incomprehensible campaign finance regime in late 2015. In an effort to make the state’s regulations less restrictive on political speech, the new law contains many positive changes, including dismantling the Government Accountability Board in favor of a new bipartisan agen-

cy and a long overdue increase for the state’s outdated contribution limits. Residents of the Badger State should applaud their elected officials for those efforts. As a result, Wisconsin has gone from being one of the worst states for political speech to the middle of the pack – a welcome improvement, even as more work remains.

One simple way for Wisconsin to improve even further would be to index the state’s limits to inflation. Indexing is a simple, uncontroversial measure used by a majority of states that merely prevents the erosion of free speech rights with the passage of time.