http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/executive-money-s443.jpg



Matt Rothschild of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign continues his report on money in politics with the Secretary of State race.

MADISON - Candidates and special interest groups spent a record $1.16 million in the race for Wisconsin secretary of state in 2022, a Wisconsin Democracy Campaign review shows.

The race drew seven candidates, including three Republicans, two Democrats, and two minor party candidates, who spent a combined $872,324. The leading spender was Republican challenger Amy Loudenbeck, who dropped $501,356. She survived the GOP primary to face incumbent Democrat Doug La Follette, who spent $229,689 and won reelection.

Five groups spent a total of $288,824 in the race.

One group, Election Integrity PAC , spent $192,868 to support one of the Republican candidates who lost in the Aug. 9 primary to Loudenbeck.

The four remaining groups – Voces de la Frontera , Blue Sky Waukesha , NextGen Climate Action , and BLOC

PAC – spent a total of $95,956 to support La Follette or his Democratic primary opponent.

Spending in the 2022 contest eclipsed spending by candidates and groups in previous secretary of state races by a lot. In 2018, the four candidates spent a total of $26,782 with no spending by outside groups. In 2014, eight candidates spent a combined $122,126 with no outside spending. And in 2010, the candidates spent $1,126 and one electioneering group dropped $71.

Allies of former President Trump, who has falsely claimed the 2020 presidential election was stolen from him due to voter fraud, sought to put pro-Trump supporters in key election posts running up to the 2024 presidential election. Trump has announced he will be a presidential candidate in 2024.

Secretary of State races in Wisconsin and throughout the country drew more candidates and outside spending in 2022 than most previous elections because that office oversees or certifies election results in numerous states, but not Wisconsin.

During the campaign, Loudenbeck said she would welcome the office having a larger role in administering elections in Wisconsin.