

Larry Owen's Bid for Ingham County Judgeship Raises Questions About Past Fundraising Practices, Says Michigan Chamber

Most teenagers use their savings for their first car, a Florida trip for spring break, or future college expenses, but not Eric Hughey. This East Lansing student contributed \$3,200 in November, 2003, to Larry Owen's gubernatorial committee five years after Owen's unsuccessful 1998 campaign, observed the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

Larry Owen, who is selling his \$1.785 million home in Clinton County, in order to move into Ingham County to run for Circuit Court Judge still has over \$31,000 in debts from his unsuccessful 1998 gubernatorial campaign. In addition, Owen has a 26-year-old debt of more than \$24,000 from his unsuccessful 1978 State Senate campaign in campaign finance reports filed earlier this year with the Secretary of State.

Eric Hughey is not the only person in the Hughey family to "max out" to Larry Owen's gubernatorial committee last year, noted Robert LaBrant, Senior Vice President at the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. "Hughey's sister Jennifer, an MSU college student, found enough in disposal income to contribute \$3,200 in March, 2003, to the Owen gubernatorial committee."

"In 2002, retirees Phyllis and Donald Hughey each contributed \$700 to the Owen Committee," LaBrant added. "In 2001, Phyllis and Donald Hughey contributed \$900 each to the Owen Committee. In 2000 Phyllis and Donald Hughey each contributed still another \$3,200 to the Owen Committee."

"As a candidate for judge, and as an attorney, Larry Owen no doubt is aware that the Michigan Campaign Finance Act prohibits a person from making a contribution to another person with the agreement or arrangement that the person receiving the contribution will then transfer that contribution to a particular candidate committee [MCL 169.244(1)]," observed LaBrant.

"Larry Owen has long been credited as one of Michigan's top political fund-raisers. During these past four years (2000-2003), Owen has further reinforced that reputation. Who else could coax two retirees, a medical assistant, a retail salesman, a nurse, and even two students to max-out (\$3,400 or more) from their own personal funds for a failed gubernatorial campaign. It must be charisma," concluded LaBrant.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization which represents more than 6,300 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

Owen for Governor (Account #506769) Post 1998 Election Contributors

	1999	Occupation
Mark Brewer	\$200	Attorney
Edward Bruley	\$200	Congressional Aide
Phil Hart Democratic Club	\$700	
Martha Sowerby	\$100	
United Steel Workers PAC	\$500	
Local 271 BEW PAC	\$1,000	
Christine Koch	\$100	
	\$2,800	
	2000	
Phyllis Hughey	\$3,200	Retired
Donald Hughey	\$3,200	Retired
Kenda Deschermeier	\$1,700	Medical Assistant
Carla Zlowton	\$1,700	Nurse
	\$9,800	
	2001	
Phyllis Hughey	\$900	Retired
Donald Hughey	\$900	Retired
	\$1,800	
	2002	
Phyllis Hughey	\$700	Retired
Donald Hughey	\$700	Retired

Kenda Deschermeier	\$1,600	Medical Assistant
Carla Zlowton	\$1,600	Nurse

\$4,600

2003

Jennifer Hughey	\$3,200	Student
Eric Hughey	\$3,200	Student
Michael Deschermeier	\$3,000	Salesman
Eric Ross	\$1,500	State Employee

\$10,900

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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