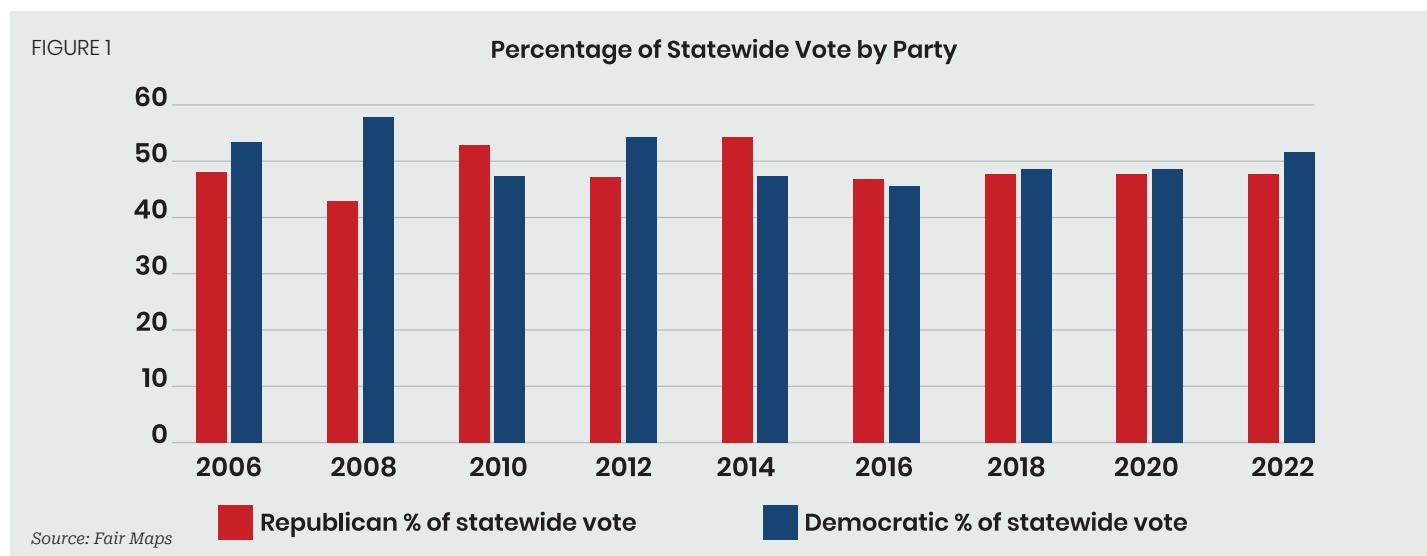


CAMPAIGN SPENDING IN SWING STATE WISCONSIN

BY JOE MURRAY

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A handful of swing states usually decide U.S. presidential elections. And according to the University of Virginia Center for Politics, the 2024 presidential election could be decided by four states rated as toss-ups where either side could win: Arizona, Georgia, Nevada and Wisconsin.

Wisconsin has been and continues to be a highly competitive battleground state in presidential elections and other top-of-the-ticket races for U.S. Senate, governor, attorney general and state Supreme Court, where tens of millions of dollars are pouring into the Badger State in the form of political advertising and individual contributions to the candidates.

Because Wisconsin is a toss-up state, record-breaking election spending places Wisconsin nationally near the top as a state with some of the most expensive gubernatorial, senate and presidential elections. The most recent statewide election in Wisconsin, which was the Wisconsin Supreme Court race

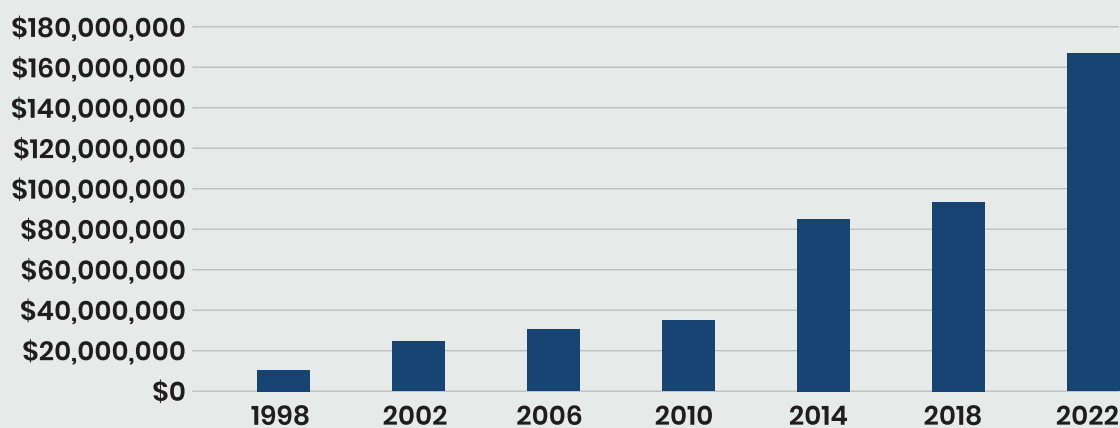
between liberal Janet Protasiewicz and conservative Dan Kelly in April 2023, was the most expensive state judicial election in U.S. history. Combined spending among candidates and outside special interest groups topped \$50 million, shattering the previous record of \$15 million for a 2004 Illinois Supreme Court race.

If an election cycle is trending toward a blue or red wave, Wisconsin generally follows the trend. But more often, Election Day reveals highly competitive and tight results. As shown in Figure 1, the statewide vote totals from 2016 to 2022 were almost all within one point or less.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 illustrate the rapid acceleration of campaign spending in Wisconsin in the last 12 years.

FIGURE 2

Candidate and Special Interest Group Spending in General Election Races for Governor



Source: Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

Candidate and Special Interest Group Spending in General Election Races for U.S. Senate

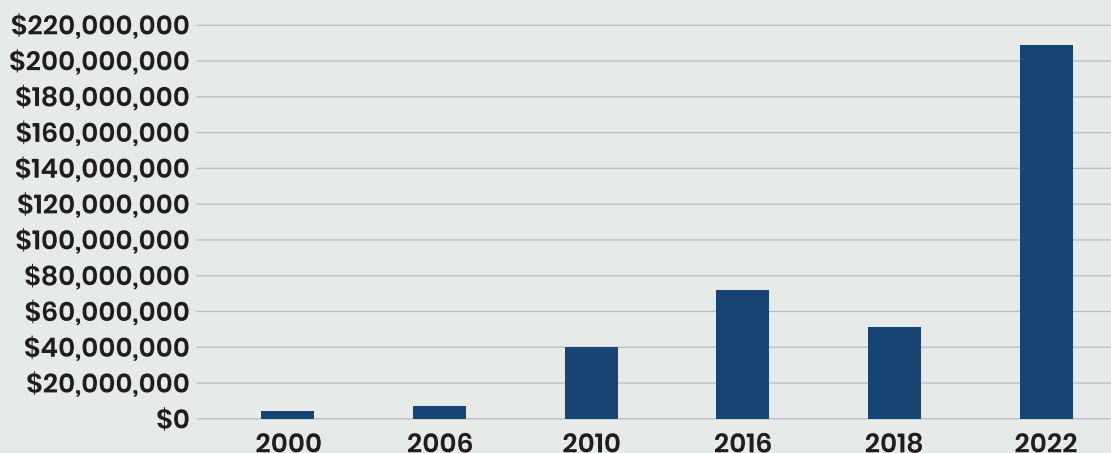
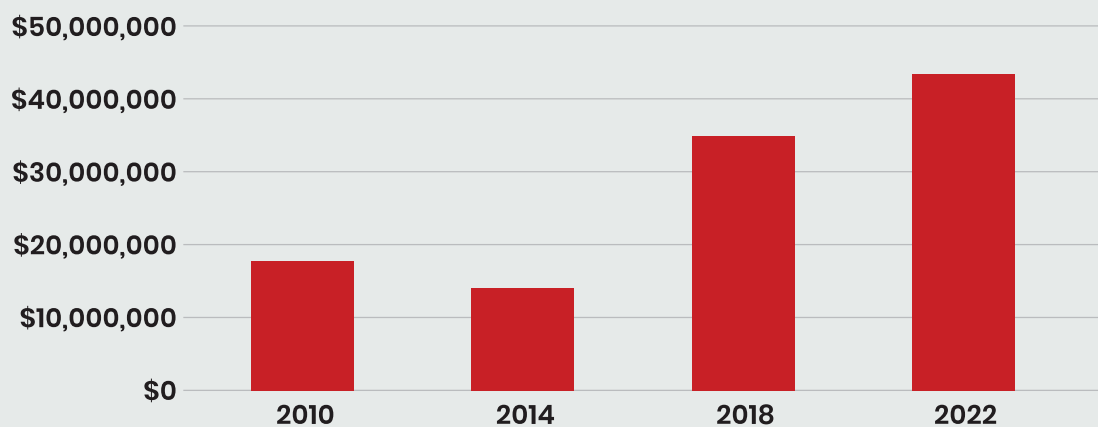


FIGURE 4

Total Spending by Legislative Committees and Outside Special Interests in Legislative Races



Source: Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

In 2024, Wisconsin will be a hotly contested battleground state in the presidential election, and campaign spending will be off the charts. In addition, Tammy Baldwin will be running for a third six-year term for the U.S. Senate, and the legislature

will likely be running in new districts drawn or selected by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The bars in these spending charts will only go in one direction: north.