

# Vermont



21 Overall Rank

C Overall Grade

Vermont	Overall Rank	To Governor	To State Senate	To State House	To Parties	To PACs
Individual Giving	32	15	21	15	32	32
		\$4,000/cycle	\$1,500/cycle	\$1,000/cycle	\$10,000/cycle	\$4,000/cycle
PAC Giving	32	17	22	19	32	
		\$4,000/cycle	\$1,500/cycle	\$1,000/cycle	\$10,000/cycle	
Party Giving	1	1	1	1		
		Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited		
Union Giving	10	9	11	11		
		\$4,000/cycle	\$1,500/cycle	\$1,000/cycle		
Corporate Giving	8	7	9	9		
		\$4,000/cycle	\$1,500/cycle	\$1,000/cycle		

Inflation Adjustment: Yes

Vermont’s middling ranking in the Index belies its relatively low limits that wouldn’t pass muster in a larger state. However, thanks to Vermont’s especially small population and the relative ease for Vermonters to speak without requiring significant financial means, it nonetheless performs better than most in the Index.

In the past, Vermont has shown a degree of intransigence with regard to political speech. In 2006, Vermont fought for its previous, absurdly low limits all the way to the Supreme Court. In that case, *Randall*

*v. Sorrell*, the state’s contribution limits were ruled an unconstitutional violation of the First Amendment for being too low – a first for any state in the country. Eight years later, in 2014, the General Assembly passed legislation raising many of the state’s limits, albeit modestly, and indexing them to inflation to prevent a future *Sorrell*-like court challenge. Hopefully, the General Assembly’s decision is a sign that the Green Mountain State has turned over a new leaf when it comes to free political speech. No matter the case, Vermonters would benefit if the state’s limits climbed even higher in the future.