

Andy Barr widens fundraising lead

BY TOM LOFTUS
Kentucky Lantern

Maximizing the advantages of an influential congressional incumbent in the majority party, U.S. Rep. Andy Barr boosted his already sizable fundraising lead against former Attorney General Daniel Cameron over the last three months in Kentucky's race for the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate in 2026.

Andy Barr for Senate reported more than \$1.4 million in total receipts during the quarter to the Federal Election Commission this week, with a balance on hand of \$6.1 million as of June 30.

Cameron reported only \$385,600 in receipts for the quarter and \$532,00 on hand.

A third major candidate, Nate Morris, a wealthy businessman who has never held public office and is already running television ads statewide, did not have to file a campaign finance report for the quarter because he did not register his campaign with the election commission until July 1.

Other candidates could join the race to win the May 2026 primary election to succeed U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell, the former Senate Republican leader who is serving his seventh term and announced early this year he would not seek reelection.

BANKING, FINANCIAL SERVICES PACS PONY UP FOR BARR

Barr's campaign bragged of his massive fundraising lead in a press release late Tuesday that said in part, "This fundraising surge,

powered by grassroots conservatives across Kentucky, proves we are the campaign best positioned with the momentum to win and deliver for Kentuckians."

But Barr's reports indicate his fundraising is mostly powered by his experience raising campaign cash during seven terms in Washington representing Kentucky's 6th Congressional District and by his committee assignments. Barr is a senior member of the House Financial Services Committee and chair of its Financial Institutions and Monetary Policy Subcommittee.

Political action committees representing banks and other financial services corporations and associations put up much of the \$1,093,500 from traditional PACs that Barr's campaign raised in the first six months of 2025.

During the same six months, Cameron reported raising just \$1,000 from PACs.

Stephen Voss, an associate professor of political science at the University of Kentucky, said earlier this year that most experienced members of Congress, regardless of political affiliation, can expect a steady flow of donations from traditional PACs. "Andy Barr has been influential in the banking and finance sector for years now, and PACs tend to reward longterm relationships," Voss said.

Traditional PACs — organizations representing corporations, associations, labor unions, political organizations and other groups — are limited by law to giving no more than \$5,000 per election. The limit is

effectively \$10,000 because a PAC can give \$5,000 designated to a candidate's primary election and \$5,000 designated to the general election.

Barr's campaign committee also got a headstart over Cameron because he was able to roll over nearly \$3.7 million from the committee that raised money for his U.S. House elections to his Senate campaign. And about 40% of that money was originally contributed to Barr by PACs.

Moreover, his campaign fund has received more than \$815,000 in transfers from a different Barr political committee called Friends of Andy Barr, which is a so-called joint fundraising committee that raises money for Barr-related political committees — and part of that money comes from PACs

TOO EARLY TO WRITE OFF CAMERON; BARR'S FUNDRAISING JUST 'ASTONISHINGLY HIGH'

The Kentucky Lantern asked Barr's campaign via email whether PAC contributions are the major reason for Barr's fundraising momentum. The campaign responded with a statement saying in part, "Our momentum is fueled by dozens of major endorsements from federal, state, local, and grassroots leaders. We have \$6.1 million on hand, while one opponent has \$532K..."

Cameron's campaign did not immediately reply to an email from the Lantern.

Voss, the political scientist, said Wednesday it's too early to write Cameron off based on a single quarter's fundraising. "It is false to



U.S. Rep. Andy Barr speaks to the media. (Kentucky Lantern photo)

suggest that these numbers indicate Cameron is in trouble ... or that he lacks the resources to mount a serious campaign for United States Senate."

The campaign is still in its early phase and that the amount raised to date by Cameron is not unusually low, Voss said.

"It's not that Cameron's fundraising has been weak. It hasn't. It's that Barr's has been astonishingly high," Voss said.

Cameron holds high name recognition across Kentucky because of his successful 2019 campaign for Kentucky attorney general, his four years serving in that job, and his competitive race against Democrat Andy Beshear for governor in 2023.

Earlier this year his campaign released a poll show-



Former Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron speaks during the Fancy Farm Picnic in 2023. (Kentucky Lantern photo)

ing him with a lead in the race for the GOP Senate nomination.

The candidate who wins Republican President Donald Trump's endorsement — if he makes one in this race — is expected to have a huge advantage. Each of the three candidates is claiming to be Trump's strongest supporter and the most ca-

pable of helping implement Trump's agenda.

Kentucky House Democratic Floor Leader Pamela Stevenson, the only Kentucky Democrat who has announced for U.S. Senate, reported raising \$150,000 during the quarter and had almost \$49,000 on hand as of June 30.

Lawmaker to file geoengineering bill next session

BY TOM LATEK
Kentucky Today

Violators who commit criminal atmospheric pollution would be charged with a Class D felony and be required to pay a civil penalty of no less than \$500,000 under legislation Representative John Hodgson, R-Fishersville, plans to file when lawmakers convene the 2026 Regular Session in January.

Hodgson's current draft would ban geoengineering, with language similar to House Bill 22 that he filed during the 2025 Regular Session.

This legislation seeks to protect against the potentially harmful effects of geoengineering and assert Kentucky's 10th Amendment sovereignty to avoid federal or international sanctioned geoengineering over Kentucky. Several other states are pursuing similar measures, with Tennessee passing legislation to that effect in 2024.

"The idea governments can 'play God' and intentionally manipulate the climate of our planet to achieve their political goals is some seriously arrogant and crazy talk, with unknown and potentially catastrophic consequences," said Hodgson.

Geoengineering is the intentional dispersal of chemicals and pollutants

into the atmosphere, including but not limited to weather modification, solar radiation modification (SRM), stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI), and cloud seeding.

Concerns about weather modification are not a new phenomenon. From 1967 to 1972, during the Vietnam War, the U.S. attempted to use weather modification against the North Vietnamese in Operation Popeye. Several years later, in 1980, the U.S. government signed a treaty to not use weather modification as a weapon of war, highlighting longstanding awareness of the potential dangers of the practice by the U.S. government.

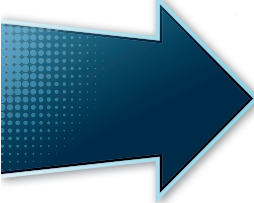
While the use of SRM and SAI are still in discussion, cloud seeding, the practice of adding atmospheric contaminants into the air to change the amount or type of precipitation, has been used by several states out west since 1946 to increase rainfall. Some suspect this practice has contributed to natural disasters, although the facts are still in dispute. Currently, there are no commercial "rainmaking" operations in Kentucky, and this proposed legislation seeks to keep it that way, at least until the effects of this practice are fully understood.

"Even the science of cloud seeding, which has been practiced for 80 years

out west, is not controllable or predictable. We don't need those experiments over the farmland of Kentucky," Hodgson added.



See What's Taking Shape Locally



Your local newspaper keeps you informed about important local events and community developments. Subscribe today, and stay in the loop!

New Businesses • Real Estate
Jobs Market • Public Notices
Local Government
Community Health
Dining & Entertainment
Events & Activities • Local Shopping
and so much more

The Advocate-Messenger
YOUR TOWN. YOUR NEWS. 150 YEARS AND COUNTING

Subscribe Today By Phone or Online
859-236-2551 | www.amnews.com

The Advocate Messenger

FALL SPORTS GUIDE

MAGAZINE

COMING SOON