## Finances from page A1

donations came from political action committees, including a \$5,000 contribution from Raczkowski's own Leadership

Rezkowski's own Lendership PAC, which amassed more than \$120,000 in contributions according to a report filed in May of this year.

The Leadership PAC, he said, was established to lend financial support to other Republican candidates and ensure a continued majority in the Legislature. While the re-olection committee's next report isn't due until yelly 28, Rackowski said he will soon post donor information on his own website, www.Citizens First2000.com. He sees money as a secondary issue, but acknowledges it is a competitive issue.

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Neither Borregard nor Vagnozzi feels it should be.
Both oppose funding from special interest groups, although Vagnozzi has agreed to take

Vagnozzi has agreed to take those donations because Raczkowski has refused to stop. "I would do away with all PACs," Borregard said. "I would favor a voluntary public financ-ing morram."

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"I would be happier if all con-tributions came from individu-als," Vagnozzi agreed. "I think the whole solution is public funding of campaigns, but with-out any additional funding."

Raczkowski, on the other hand, sees nothing wrong with accepting PAC donations. He said he refused two which were

said he refused two which were sent while lawmakers were deciding an issue for which their organizations lobbied. He believes most people belong to a "special interest group," whether it's a civic organization, a union or even the city of Farm-izaten Hills. ington Hills.

"We have a lot of people in our community who are very active in these organizations and groups that want to see the right

thing happen in government, and support people that they believe truly do bring about positive changes, Raezkowski said.

Since his first election committee was formed-four years ago, Raezkowski's PAC contribution list has grown significantly. The first statement, filed with the Secretary of State before the 1996 primary election, showed \$5,850 from six PACs and nearly \$12,000 from 137 individual donors.

In a report from that year's general election campaign, the number of PAC contributors tripled, providing about half of the \$9.665 Raczkowski's committhe \$9,666 Raczkowski's commit-tee received. In a 2000 disclosure, which listed donations from December 1999 through January 2000, 'Raczkowski reported only 10 contributions from individual deners, amount-ing to less than \$2,000, and 86 PAC donations, totaling about \$28,000.

ing to less than \$2,000, and \$6 FAC donations, totaling about \$28,000.

PAC delibers also account for a lot of Reckowski's Lendership yend, which also includes many individual contributions from outside the Fermington/Hamigton/Farmington/Hills area he represents. Denora come from Bloomfield Hills, Novi, Rochester Hills, Troy, Royal Oak, Commerc Township, Brighton, Grosse Pointe, Lake Orion and Oak Park, among others.

"Let's be honest," he said. "A lot of people in our community and in southeast Michigan would love to see the Speaker of the House from the Farmington Hills area because they're sick and tired of riding over pot-hole covered roads. They're tired of their legislators ... working hard for them but not being able to change a tremendous amount.

change a tremendous amount."

A committee on which
Raczkowski serves decides which Republican candidates to sup-

port. He said people who con-tribute to the fund want to keep a Republican majority in the House: They contribute to his PAC because they don't know which candidates to support in other rone.

which candidates to support in other races.

Racktowski bluntly points out that neither of the challengers would have much political power. Borregard would be the lone Referm Party representative in the House; Vagnozzi would be a junior member of the minority party.

## Breeding ground

Breeding ground

Borregard believes people would be 'horrified' if they spent time going through lists of PAC donations, which come from groups representing energy, telecommunications, health and other industries. Problems arise, he believes, when candidates speak out about issues after accepting special interest money. As an example, Borregard points to a public service announcement by Rackowski and Rop. Nancy Cassis, R.Novi, urging teens to stay away from stechol.

alcohol.

At the same time, both have accepted donations from the liquor industry.

"One problem more than anything else with this whole PAC thing is that it breeds hypocrisy," Borregard said.

He said Raczkowski's reliance

on special interest dollars in his campaign fund means people who vote for him are voting for those corporate interests.

"He's owned by the corporations," Borregard charged. They pay him more money to sit there in Lansing than we do.

Raczkowski bristles at the idea that he's bought and paid for and points out PACs are only individually driven because corporations are prohibited from contributing. The people who organize them make the decisions as to how their funds are spent, and they see him as a person who works hard and listens to what he has to say.

"You believe you can buy access to me, that's such a falsehood," he said. "I had a constituent almost three weeks ago, on a Saturday night, at 1:30, call me up regarding a power of attorney ... Twe never received a campaign contribution from that individual, nor would I solicit one. Im his employee, and that's how I treat this job."

Raczkowski also notes the long and varied list of organizations on his campaign its and said he has a record of voting for and against their interests.

When he first announced his candidacy, Vognozzi sent a letter asking Raczkowski to agree to a ban on PAC money and Ilimit expenditures to \$25,000, as well

as file monthly reports. After formally announcing his candidacy, Raczkowski indicated he would file reports as the law required, Vagnozzi said.

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are, they might joked.
When Vagnozzi served on the Farmington Hills City Council and as mayor, he watched lobbyists from various special interests working the Capitol behind the scenes.

## Charges and denials

He sees increasing willingness on the part of legislators to accept PAC donations. Vagnozzi charges Raczkowski used his Leadership PAC to sup-port Republican candidates in some tight races, which helped

swing a Republican majority. Raczkowski was then elected House majority leader. But Raczkowski flatly denies his contributions came with

But Raczkowski flatly denies his contributions came with strings.

He also denies more recent contributions to more than a dozen political races have anything to do with his wanting to become Speaker of the House.

"If he can prove anything..." I'll resign tomorrow and stand outside on 10 (Mile Road) and Grand River in a chicken suit saying I was wrong," Raczkowski said. "That's not the case, and for him to insinuate something like that is political garbage."

If Vagnozzi is truly opposed to PAC contributions, then he shouldn't accept any no matter what, Raczkowski added.

"If he's got a ban against PAC money, have a ban against PAC money, have a ban gainst PAC money, he said. "It's a political game."







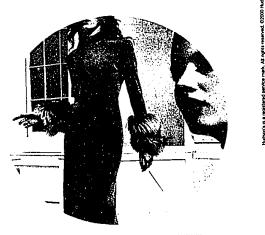
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