

Nonprofits and Foundations Likely to Come Under Fire as Senate Committee Explores 'Dark Money' in Politics



Drew Angerer, Getty Images

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) in the Hart Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill in Washington.

A Senate hearing on Wednesday is likely to produce fireworks as Republicans and Democrats square off over the role that foundations and nonprofits are playing in elections.

The Senate Finance subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight

offers no [description](#) of the hearing beyond the title “Laws and Enforcement Governing the Political Activities of Tax Exempt Entities.” Even the witnesses who will testify are uncertain of its focus. It appears likely that subcommittee chairman Sheldon Whitehouse wants to raise concerns about “dark money” flowing through 501(c)(4) nonprofits, but Republicans plan to widen the scope of the hearing to highlight what they see as illegal political activities by 501(c)(3) charities and foundations.