# Top oil firms spending millions lobbying to block climate change policies, says report

**Ad campaigns hide investment in a huge expansion of oil and gas extraction, says InfluenceMap**

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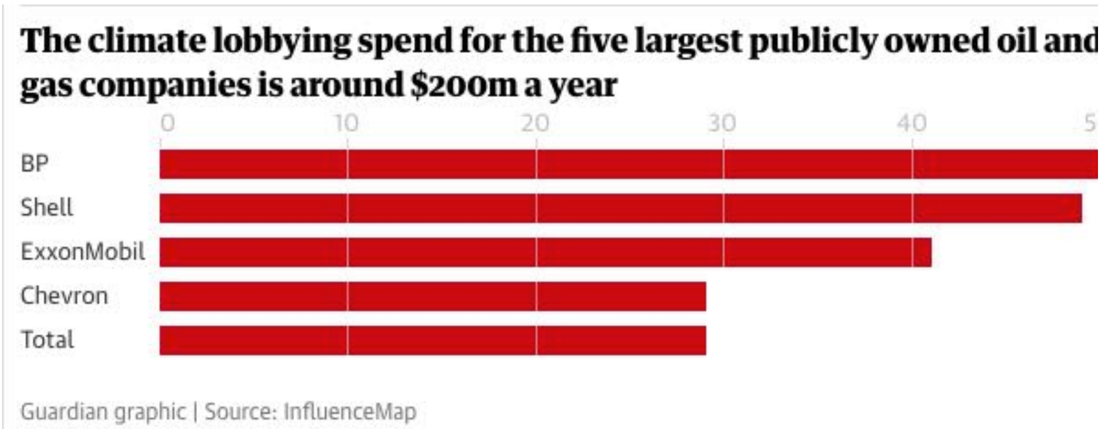


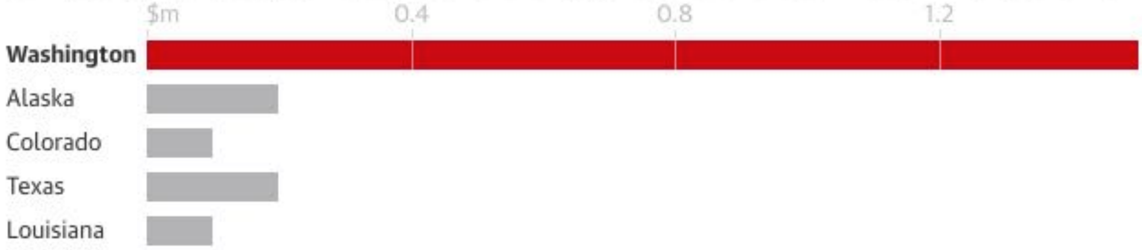

The largest five stock market listed oil and gas companies spend nearly $200m (£153m) a year lobbying to delay, control or block policies to tackle climate change, according to a new report.

Chevron, BP and ExxonMobil were the main companies leading the field in direct lobbying to push against a climate policy to tackle global warming, the report said.

Increasingly they are using social media to successfully push their agenda to weaken and oppose any meaningful legislation to tackle global warming.

In the run-up to the US midterm elections last year $2m was spent on targeted Facebook and Instagram ads by global oil giants and their industry bodies, promoting the benefits of increased fossil fuel production, according to the report published on Friday by InfluenceMap.

## Washington state was one of the five states most targeted by oil company funded political advertising around the US midterm elections




Guardian graphic | Source: InfluenceMap

Separately, BP donated $13m to a campaign, also supported by Chevron, that successfully stopped a carbon tax in Washington state – $1m of which was spent on social media ads, the research shows.

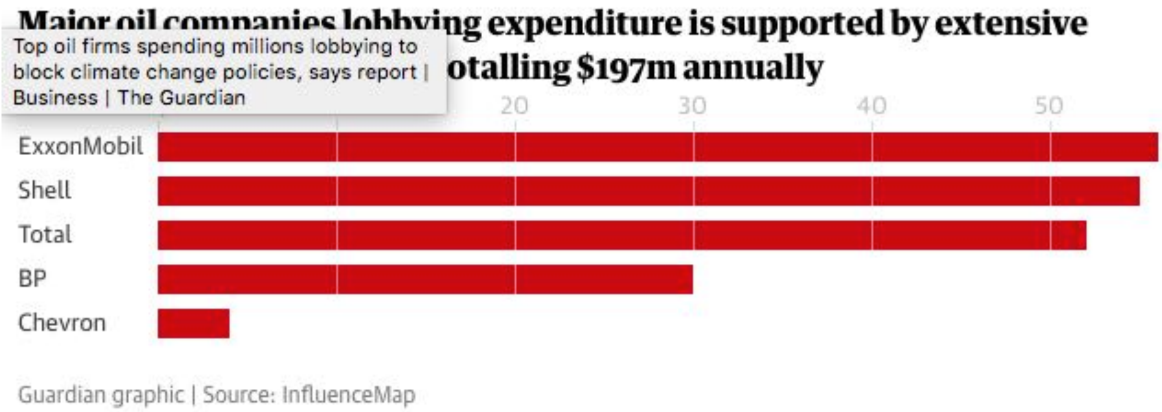
Edward Collins, the report's author, analysed corporate spending on lobbying, briefing and advertising, and assessed what proportion was dedicated to climate issues.

He said: "Oil majors' climate branding sounds increasingly hollow and their credibility is on the line. They publicly support climate action while lobbying against binding policy. They advocate low-carbon solutions but such investments are dwarfed by spending on expanding their fossil fuel business."

After the Paris climate agreement in 2015 the large integrated oil and gas companies said they supported a price on carbon and formed groups like the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative which promote voluntary measures.

But, the report states, there is a glaring gap between their words and their actions.

The five publicly listed oil majors – ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, BP and Total – now spend about $195m a year on branding campaigns suggesting they support action against climate change.




But the report said these campaigns were misleading the public about the extent of the oil companies' actions because while publicly endorsing the need to act, they are massively increasing investment in a huge expansion of oil and gas extraction. In 2019 their spending will increase to $115bn, with just 3% of that directed at low carbon projects.

Shell said in a statement: "We firmly reject the premise of this report. We are very clear about our support for the Paris agreement, and the steps that we are taking to help meet society's needs for more and cleaner energy.

"We make no apology for talking to policymakers and regulators around the world to make our voice heard on crucial topics such as climate change and how to address it."

Chevron said it disagreed with the report's findings. "Chevron is taking prudent, cost-effective actions and is committed to working with policymakers to design balanced and transparent greenhouse gas emissions reductions policies that address environmental goals and ensure consumers have access to affordable, reliable and ever cleaner energy."

The successful lobbying and direct opposition to policy measures to tackle global warming have hindered governments globally in their efforts to implement policies after the Paris agreement to meet climate targets and keep warming below 1.5C.