



## **The Dino Rossi – BIAW Alliance *A Powerful and Fruitful Relationship***

The BIAW will go to great lengths – including violating campaign laws and keeping large portions of insurance refunds intended for its members as worker safety incentives– to get Dino Rossi elected governor.

Why such passionate candidate support despite the heavy cost?

BIAW and Rossi know from their longtime relationship that they can rely on each other. Rossi has received millions of dollars in campaign funding and attack advertising support from the building association in the last five years. In return, the real estate investor and former state senator has supported the BIAW’s arch-conservative agenda at virtually every opportunity.

In fact, while Rossi was in the state Senate and a leader on the powerful budget-writing Senate Ways and Means Committee, he voted 99 percent in sync with the BIAW legislative agenda.

A Rossi win is a big win for the building industry – and for a shared agenda that has historically been bad news for the environment and good news for irresponsible development.

### **The Lengths the BIAW Will to Raise Money for Rossi**

By July 2007 the BIAW had already amassed a “campaign war chest” of nearly \$3.5 million in contributions to defeat Governor Christine Gregoire, more than a year before her bid for re-election. Today the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission recommended that the BIAW be charged with campaign violations in relation to how this money was raised and spent.

The BIAW generated this war chest by skimming more than \$11 million from refunds intended for companies participating in the state’s workman’s comp/Retro program. In 2007, more than 6000 BIAW members chose to participate in Retro. These BIAW members together paid the state \$179 million in workman's comp premiums.

They also paid almost \$3 million in up-front management fees to BIAW for administering the Retro – or 1.5 percent of the members' total premium that year. The BIAW then took a 20 percent “administrative fee” off the top of the more than \$40 million refund the state sent back to plan members through BIAW. These fees provided \$11 million to the BIAW’s election “war chest.”

### **Big Spending on Pro-Rossi and Gregoire Attack Ads**

As of early September, the BIAW had paid nearly \$7 million from its Retro-funded war chest to various BIAW-controlled Political Action Committees (PACs). To date in this election cycle, BIAW-controlled PACs have:

- Spent over \$2 million, including \$1.25 million on tv and radio ads in the Governor’s race.

- Spent \$160,000 on 61 billboards plastered across eastern Washington admonishing voters: "Don't Let Seattle Steal This Election."
- Spent \$40,000 in other billboards and ads promoting Rossi for governor

### **History Shows BIAW Will Get Return on its Rossi Investment**

The BIAW and Rossi have built their reputations on conservative stances – both want less government, fewer environmental restrictions and more development across Washington. Following are just a few of the reasons the BIAW is betting on Rossi and resorting to “sleazy political tactics” (Seattle Times, March 2005) to get him elected.

**1) Not only do Rossi and BIAW share extremely conservative political values, Rossi voted with the BIAW 99% of the time.**

- *“The BIAW says Rossi backed its legislation an astounding 99 percent of the time in his seven years in the state Senate. In the same period, Rossi only voted for legislation backed by the Washington Conservation Voters 36 percent of the time. The environmental group has endorsed Gregoire.” – Seattle Weekly, 10/13/04*

**2) The BIAW is not shy about stating its belief that Rossi is their key to resisting Washington’s leadership to reduce global warming.**

- On the Senate Ways and Means Committee, Dino Rossi attempted to block SB 6718, legislation designed to combat global climate change and shift Washington’s energy consumption toward cleaner sources. [SB 6718, 2/12/2002]
- In the BIAW’s newsletter, they list the actions they’re taking to fight the state’s efforts to address global warming. They highlight “Endorsing Dino Rossi for Governor.” – Building Insight Magazine, March 2008
- In March 2008, Rossi questioned the scientific validity of the global warming crisis and refused to tell reporters if he believed global warming was real. The BIAW’s March newsletter made light of the issue in a test to readers. In that issue editors told readers that the correct answer to the multiple choice question “*What is the main cause of global warming?*” was “*b) orbital eccentricities of Earth and variations in the Sun’s output.*” – Building Insight Magazine, March 2008

**3) The BIAW is counting on Rossi to weaken the Growth Management Act.**

Both the BIAW & Dino Rossi have adamantly opposed efforts to limit irresponsible development and protect open space, including:

**HB 2542—1998:** Allowing rural counties to remove themselves and their cities from planning requirements under the growth management act.

✓ Rossi voted YEA

✓ BIAW testified PRO in the Senate

**HB 1576—1997:** Modifying buildable lands under growth management.

✓ Rossi voted YEA

✓ BIAW testified PRO in the Senate--Jodi Walker and Dick Ducharme, Building Industry Association of Washington (pro)

**HB 1474—1997:** Increasing categorical exemptions from SEPA.

✓ Rossi voted YEA

✓ BIAW testified PRO in the Senate--Jodi Walker, Building Industry Association of Washington (pro)

**SB 5308—2003:** Restricting growth management hearings board review of plan and regulation compliance to adoption actions only.

✓ Rossi voted YES

✓ BIAW testified PRO in the Senate [\_\_\_\_ in the Seattle what?]-Kris Tefft, BIAW (pro)

4) Rossi will help defend the BIAW from efforts to protect consumers from shoddy home building.

- Rossi voted twice against a bill that would have protected consumers in dealings with building contractors by suspending the license of a contractor with unpaid judgments and increasing the minimum surety bond that contractors must post. [SSB 5232 (1999), 3/10/99 and 3/15/99]
- One of the BIAW's top legislative priorities in the last session was blocking Senator Brian Weinstein's "Homeowner Bill of Rights," which was designed to ensure that homeowners were protected from shoddy building practices. In their March 2008 newsletter, BIAW president Brad Spears called defeating the bill "one of the BIAW's greatest successes of all time."

5) The BIAW believes in return on investment.

- The BIAW spent close to \$1 million supporting Rossi's failed bid for governor in 2004 and has raised and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for his 2008 campaign.
- When Dino Rossi was first elected to the state senate in 1996, the BIAW was a major campaign supporter.
- The BIAW is the single largest financial supporter of Dino Rossi's political career.

**6) Rossi has close personal relationships with BIAW lobbyists.**

- Lobbyists for the BIAW entered into a business deal with Dino Rossi to purchase an apartment building in 1997, while Rossi was serving as a state senator.

“A year into his first four-year term, Rossi said, three investors approached him about buying an apartment building. The group included two government lobbyists: David Ducharme and his father, Richard Ducharme, who represented the Building Industry Association of Washington while he invested with Rossi.” - Seattle Times, 10/25/2004

- Rossi also co-founded a local bank with BIAW’s leading lobbyists.

“Rossi said he has known the elder Ducharme since the early 1990s. Both Ducharmes also are co-investors in a bank in Bellevue that Rossi provided \$10,000 to help start four years ago.” – Seattle Times, 10/25/2004