

# ARKANSAS BUSINESS

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## WHISPERS

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### Money Talks

Payday lenders have opened their wallets to the tune of more than \$20,000.

The recipient?

The **Democratic Party of Arkansas.**

Remember when payday lenders showed their political support for

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**Mark Pryor** and his successful run for Arkansas attorney general back in 1998?

More than \$14,000 from payday lenders found its way into Pryor's campaign coffers back then.

Payday lenders considered Pryor a friend, although he said the contributions had no impact on his decision to take a neutral position on the Check Cashers Act of 1999.

That legislation gave payday lenders breathing room a veneer of legitimacy to try and cover judicial rulings that called their business practices usurious and unconstitutional.

Payday lenders haven't given any money to **Mike Beebe**, Pryor's successor and Democratic gubernatorial candidate. Nor have they shown any financial love for the **Republican Party of Arkansas.**

**Asa Hutchinson**, Republican candidate for governor, has spoken openly about his opposition to the usurious lending practices of payday lenders.

Beebe has taken an oh-so quiet "neutral" stance that bears a striking resemblance to Pryor's.

Where is the AG's consumer protection conscience in the matter?

Some say it left the building with **Winston Bryant**, Pryor's predecessor.