CITIZEN INTELLIGENCE ARCHIVE

Senate Race File #009 — Nebraska

Session 2 Update | August 2026

SESSION 2 UPDATE — AIPAC RESEARCH COMPLETE + NEW CONDUCT FLAG (OSBORN)

AIPAC FINDINGS: No AIPAC or pro-Israel PAC money found for either Ricketts or Osborn — a clean result on this specific flag for both. Notably, Osborn received and publicly touted an endorsement from A New Policy PAC, a group Jewish Insider and others describe as anti-Israel — the mirror-image case to AIPAC funding, and worth noting for balance rather than omitting.

NEW FINDING — NOT IN SESSION 1: Multiple outlets (Nebraska Public Media, Fox News, and a formal FEC complaint from the watchdog group Americans for Public Trust) report that Osborn's campaign and a PAC he founded, the Working Class Heroes Fund, have paid roughly $370,000–$434,000 to Osborn's own family members — his wife, daughter, and sister-in-law — for campaign roles and consulting work. A separate complaint from the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission chair alleges the PAC used an improper "soft money" account to pay staff. *Evidence tier: testimony/complaint pending verification — these are formal FEC complaints under review, not yet adjudicated findings. Osborn's campaign has called the complaints politically motivated "nuisance" filings tied to Ricketts allies.* This is a self-funding/family-payment pattern, not an AIPAC or billionaire-donor pattern — it's a distinct category worth its own line in the money test, not folded into either existing flag.

Nebraska is one of the most unusual Senate races of 2026. The real contest is between billionaire Republican incumbent Pete Ricketts and independent working-class union mechanic Dan Osborn — the Nebraska Democratic Party's nominee, Cindy Burbank, is expected to step aside to let Osborn run one-on-one against Ricketts. Osborn must submit signatures by August 3, 2026 to qualify for the general election ballot.

PETE RICKETTS (R)

Republican incumbent | Appointed 2023 | Former Nebraska Governor 2015–2023 | Age 61 | Son of TD Ameritrade founder Joe Ricketts

Pete Ricketts did not win this Senate seat. He was appointed by the governor after Ben Sasse resigned, then won a 2024 special election to serve out the rest of Sasse's term. His family founded TD Ameritrade and co-owns the Chicago Cubs.

THE FACTS — VOTING RECORD

Healthcare & Medicaid

As governor, Ricketts opposed Medicaid expansion under the ACA for years. Nebraska voters eventually passed Medicaid expansion by ballot initiative in 2018 over Ricketts' objections.

Abortion

Ricketts and his family spent millions trying to keep Nebraska's strict 12-week abortion ban in place, including $4+ million into PACs opposing a 2024 ballot measure to expand access.

THE FACTS — FOLLOW THE MONEY

SOURCE	NOTES	FLAG
Pro-Israel PAC money	No AIPAC or pro-Israel PAC contributions found in itemized FEC/ ProPublica records. His documented PAC donors include the Health & Fitness Association PAC and the National Association of Broadcasters PAC — no pro-Israel organizations of any kind appear.	**NO EVIDENCE FOUND — genuinely clean on this specific flag**
Ricketts family self-funding	Family spent $8.8M in the 2024 cycle alone — 9% of all Nebraska political spending. Total family investment: $18.6M+ over 12 years in Nebraska politics.	■ **FLAGGED**
Joe & Marlene Ricketts (parents)	36th-largest political donors in the country in 2024 cycle. Combined $28.9M.	■ **FLAGGED**
American Excellence PAC (Ricketts' own leadership PAC)	Sent $5,000 to Ken Paxton's Texas Senate campaign in June 2026 — notable timing, shortly after a controversial plea deal in Paxton's office was linked to a convicted offender relocating to Nebraska. This is outbound spending, not a funding source for Ricketts himself, but relevant character context.	■ **WATCH — outbound, not incoming**

AIPAC MONEY: **NO EVIDENCE FOUND** — clean on this specific flag.

BILLIONAIRE FUNDING: **FLAGGED** — Ricketts IS the billionaire family. Unchanged from Session 1.

> **ARCHITECT ANALYSIS — PETE RICKETTS (updated):** The billionaire-capture case remains the defining story here and is unchanged — AIPAC simply isn't part of his funding picture. The $5,000 his own leadership PAC sent to Paxton is a minor but telling data point about which national Republicans he chooses to prop up.

DAN OSBORN (I)

Independent | Former Union President BCTGM Local 50G | Navy veteran | Industrial mechanic | Age ~50 | Omaha, Nebraska

Dan Osborn ran as an independent in 2024 against Senator Deb Fischer — and nearly won, losing by only 7 points in a state Trump won by 20. He has said he will not caucus with either party if elected.

THE FACTS — RECORD & POSITIONS

What He Stands For

Lowering taxes for small businesses and the middle class. Ending "never-ending foreign wars." Workers' rights and union protections. True independence — no party caucus.

Israel Policy — New Detail

Osborn accepted and publicly touted an endorsement from A New Policy PAC, a group founded by a former State Department official who resigned in protest over U.S. support for Israel after October 7. The group's advocacy arm has accused Israel of genocide and calls for cutting U.S. aid to Israel — positions well outside what Osborn had previously said publicly. When asked directly about the endorsement,

Osborn told Jewish Insider he opposes antisemitism and a nuclear Iran, but voiced concern about American involvement in Middle East conflicts. In a 2024 debate, he had previously expressed support for Israel's response to the October 7 attacks while raising concerns about civilian casualties. His position reads as genuinely evolving/inconsistent rather than fixed in either direction.

THE FACTS — FOLLOW THE MONEY

SOURCE	NOTES	FLAG
Pro-Israel / anti-Israel PAC money	No AIPAC money found — confirmed clean on the specific AIPAC flag. Separately, endorsed by A New Policy PAC (anti-Israel), though no dollar figure is attached to that endorsement.	**NO AIPAC EVIDENCE FOUND**
Family payments — NEW	Multiple outlets and a formal FEC complaint allege $370,000– $434,000 in campaign and PAC payments to Osborn's wife, daughter, sister-in-law, and himself across his 2024 and 2026 campaigns, including via a "soft money" account not meant to fund federal campaign activity. Osborn's campaign disputes the characterization and calls the complaints politically motivated.	**■ NEW FLAG — pending FEC review, not yet adjudicated**
Individual small donors	$3.7M of $3.86M total from individual contributors. Largest donor states: California ($369,818) and Nebraska ($329,630) are close, meaning his top donor state is not his home state.	**■ WATCH**
National Democratic infrastructure	Donations from Sen. Elizabeth Warren's campaign, PACs of former Sens. Bob Kerrey and Jon Tester, Rep. Jamie Raskin's leadership PAC, and Senate Majority PAC (Schumer-aligned) support in 2024. ActBlue is a significant processing platform for his fundraising.	**■ WATCH — in tension with independence framing**
AIPAC / party PACs	No AIPAC funding found. No traditional party PAC money — he is independent.	**CLEAN**

AIPAC MONEY: **NO EVIDENCE FOUND** — clean on this specific flag.

DARK MONEY: **WATCH** — Progressive megadonors and ActBlue raise questions about claimed independence, as Session 1 noted.

NEW — FAMILY PAYMENTS: FLAGGED, PENDING FEC REVIEW — $370K–$434K in alleged payments to family members requires its own line item; this is separate from the AIPAC and billionaire-money tests and shouldn't be folded into either.

> **ARCHITECT ANALYSIS — DAN OSBORN (updated):** Clean on AIPAC, but Session 2 surfaces a genuinely new and serious complication that Session 1 didn't have: formal complaints alleging Osborn has funneled a substantial sum to his own family through his campaign and a PAC he controls. This is exactly the kind of self-dealing concern the framework's five pillars and money test exist to catch — it just doesn't fit neatly into either the AIPAC or billionaire-funding boxes, which is why it needs its own line. The claims are contested and not yet resolved by the FEC, so this profile presents them as pending allegations, consistent with the archive's evidence-tier standard — not as settled fact, but also not omitted given multiple independent outlets are reporting the same underlying FEC filings.

STATUS: SESSION 2 COMPLETE on AIPAC for both candidates (clean). NEW conduct flag added for Osborn pending FEC resolution — recommend tracking this story going into publication, as an FEC ruling could land before or after your release date. Osborn's August 3 signature deadline to appear on the general-election ballot is unresolved as of this writing — confirm before launch. Nebraska Democratic nominee Cindy Burbank is expected to step aside for Osborn.

CHANGELOG (Session 2, August 2026):
— Ricketts AIPAC status: PENDING → NO EVIDENCE FOUND (confirmed via direct FEC/ProPublica search)
— Osborn AIPAC status: PENDING → NO EVIDENCE FOUND; added new context on his A New Policy PAC (anti-Israel) endorsement for balance
— NEW: added family-payment conduct flag for Osborn ($370K–$434K alleged, per FEC complaints and multiple outlets; pending review, contested by campaign)
— Added note on Cindy Burbank's expected withdrawal in Osborn's favor
— Added minor context: Ricketts' own leadership PAC gave $5,000 to Ken Paxton's Texas campaign

"I don't tell you how to vote. I give you the X-ray. You decide."

— Uma | PixelMagic / MindTraveler | People Over Party