

# David Koch Died at 79, Leaving a Legacy of Shaping “Conservative” Politics

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David Koch, born in 1940, died at the age of 79 from long term prostate cancer. He and his brother, Charles Koch, made most of their fortune from oil and gas, chemicals, paper, ranching and investing. The Koch family is reportedly worth \$99-billion, and Koch Industries is the second-largest privately held company in the US. The Koch Brothers have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars into “conservative” political campaigns.

David Koch aligned with conservative and libertarian values in his opposition to Obamacare, global warming policies, and collective bargaining for unions. He advocated lowering taxes and lowering government spending, especially Social Security and Medicare.

David Koch was both “liberal” and “libertarian” in his support for gay rights, drug legalization, and open borders. The Kochs support Van Jones’ Cut50 project, which aims to halve the prison population over the next decade. They also support censorship, under the banner of eradicating ‘hate speech,’ that targets conservatives. The Kochs reportedly contributed to the Citizens United campaign that lifted the ceiling on corporate campaign donations. They have funded the Tea Party, the Cato Institute, and the Heartland Institute.

The Koch brothers did not support Trump.

Koch Industries was founded by Fred Koch in 1940 and is majority owned by his sons,

better known as the Koch Brothers—David and Charles— with each owning 42% of the company. David, 79, stepped down from his role with the company in 2018 due to ill health, while Charles, 83, remains Chairman and CEO.

## Fred Koch: Father and Founder

At the age of 27, a chemical engineer by the name of Fred Koch developed a new and more efficient process for turning **crude oil** into gasoline. An MIT graduate, Fred had invented a new method of refining gasoline from viscous and common heavy oil. After a string of lawsuits from Universal Oil Products, which had patented and was licensing a similar technique, Fred brought his innovation to the Soviet Union 1929. He returned to America shortly after to start a family.

A little more than a decade after making his discovery, Koch used the improved process to start an oil **refinery** business of his own. The company was initially called Wood River Oil and Refining Company, then later became Rock Island Oil and Refining Company before finally being renamed Koch Industries.

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Additional sources:

<https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2019-08-23/david-kochs-legacy-dark-money-network>

<https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/08/david-koch-conservative-regard-high-culture/>