

ARKANSAS BUSINESS

www.arkansasbusiness.com

Vol. 22, No. 51 • December 26, 2005-January 8, 2006 • 1 Dollar

WHISPERS

ARKANSAS BUSINESS 3

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

(Continued on Page 4)

DECEMBER 26, 2005

WHISPERS

(Continued From Page 3)

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.