



Koch brother gives \$100 million to Hurricane Sandy-stressed hospital

By Kat Long, 4/14/13

David Koch, New York City's wealthiest resident and executive vice president of Koch Industries, Inc., has given \$100 million to New York-Presbyterian Hospital, the largest single donation in the hospital's history.

New York-Presbyterian was one of several New York City hospitals affected by Superstorm Sandy last October. As NYU's Langone Medical Center and Bellevue Hospital flooded and lost power, others, including New York-Presbyterian, took in the extra patients. Robert E. Kelly, president of New York-Presbyterian, told *Newsday* that his doctors saw twice as many trauma patients, 25 percent more emergency-room patients, and an increase in psychiatric patients after Superstorm Sandy — patients that would normally have been treated at downtown hospitals. So many New York-Presbyterian workers faced their own Sandy-related hardships that the hospital formed an employee relief fund.

Koch's \$100 million must have seemed like salvation for the hospital's strained resources. The donation will fund a new state-of-the-art outpatient facility that will bear his name when it is completed in 2018. "In his 25 years of service to the Board of Trustees at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, David Koch has consistently and repeatedly demonstrated his commitment and support to the hospital and its patients," said John Mack, chair of the board of trustees, in a statement.

The gift comes not without irony. Koch, in his leadership role at Koch Industries, Inc., oversees an industrial conglomerate with a portfolio of petroleum refining, fuel pipelines, coal supply and trading, oil and gas exploration, and petrochemicals and polymers. These industries produce the fossil fuels and petrochemical products that are the primary cause of climate change, which made Superstorm Sandy worse.

Koch is also bankrolling [PDF] a multimillion-dollar misinformation campaign against climate change science, funding think tanks and lobbying groups that deny the impacts of climate change and fossil fuel's role in creating it. In one example, Koch gave \$800,000 to the Manhattan Institute, a conservative-libertarian think tank in New York City. After Superstorm Sandy, Manhattan Institute scholar Robert Bryce penned an op-ed claiming "the most hopeful sound of [Sandy] recovery is the joyous racket that comes from an internal-combustion engine burning fossil fuels."

New York-Presbyterian declined to comment on whether the hospital is comfortable accepting millions of dollars from a donor whose companies create the conditions for future superstorms.