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# ELECtronic

# NEWSLETTER

March 2025

Issue 182

An Election Law Enforcement Commission Newsletter "Furthering the interest of an informed Citizenry"

#### **Profile - Aurea Vazquez-Alexander, ELEC Compliance Director**



Aurea Vazquez-Alexander, Compliance Director

Aurea Vazquez-Alexander worked about half her career in government and half in the private sector.

She has been a policy counsel to the New Jersey State Senate, three governors, and several Fortune 500 companies.

Vazquez-Alexander now serves as director of ELEC's Compliance Section.

Her new job brings the daunting task of overseeing the dispersal of tens of millions of dollars in public funds to candidates for governor in a year with the largest number of contenders since 1981.

Perhaps the main challenge for Vazquez-Alexander and her staff is to disseminate the funds as quickly as possible to candidates who urgently need them while ensuring that the candidates have provided documentation legally required to receive public matching funds.

"We recognize the urgency to distribute the funds but maintaining the integrity of the Gubernatorial Public Financing Program and the confidence of the public is paramount," she said.

Under the Public Financing Program, which began in the 1970s, candidates who raise at least \$580,000 can receive up to \$5.5 million for the June 10 primary election if they agree to an overall limit to their spending.

In recently joining ELEC's staff, Vazquez-Alexander once again has returned to her native state.

Before moving at the age of three to Boston with her father Miguel, a math teacher, and her mother Rosario, a nurse, she was born in Newark at Columbus Hospital. She has always felt rooted and connected to her home state of New Jersey by visiting family every year while growing up.

"Although we're known for our grit, we'll also give you the shirt off our back and that strong sense of community is what makes me proud to be from New Jersey," she said.

Her mother, who engaged in community activism when she wasn't delivering hundreds of babies at Boston City Hospital, was a huge inspiration.

For instance, she had no hesitation to walk up to Boston Mayor Ray Flynn during a neighborhood visit to politely but firmly insist on faster garbage pickup to reduce a plague of litter endangering local children.

Vazquez-Alexander said she hopes she inherited this sense of fearlessness from her mother along with her optimism and kindness.

Tragically, Rosario Vasquez died at 52 due to non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

#### Profile - Aurea Vazquez-Alexander, ELEC Compliance Director (continued)

Vazquez-Alexander and her older siblings suddenly had to assume more responsibility for raising their large family, which includes seven natural born and eight adopted siblings. She said the experience taught her more about leadership, service to others and determination than any classroom or textbook could.

She moved back to New Jersey in 1998. While working for Legal Services of New Jersey in Camden, she often appeared before Judge Lee Laskin, a former Republican state senator. He saw that she had a strong interest in public policy and suggested she seek a job with the Legislature.

She eventually was hired by Senate Democrats and specialized in health care law as Committee Advisor to Senator Joseph Vitale, long-time chairman of the Health, Human Services and Seniors Citizens Committee. She said she enjoyed working with members of both parties, including Republican Senator John Matheussen, who preceded Vitale as chairman.

"It was the best job I ever had hands down," she said. "The lessons I learned in bipartisan cooperation and leadership served as a framework for finding common ground through my career."

Vazquez-Alexander went on to become policy counsel within the New Jersey Governor's office. She advised Governors James Mc-Greevey, Richard Codey and Jon Corzine on health and human services policy. "I am very familiar with the inner workings of government. I know the kind of impact I've had in the behind-the-scenes roles," she said.

"I appreciate the detail that goes into getting stuff done. And I enjoy doing that," she said.

After leaving state government, she undertook a series of compliance roles with various corporations and a hospital, including Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Shire, Takeda and Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston.

As Director of Compliance, Vazquez-Alexander oversees the section of ELEC that has the most interaction with candidates, treasurers and the public. Even though she knows the agency provides very good public service, she will be striving to make it even better.

"Our Compliance Section has a record of providing great customer services. I want to continue to build on our strong reputation as a resource for the regulated community," she said.

"Education- that's the crux of what I do. In an evolving campaign finance landscape, Compliance plays a key role in synthesizing complex information and educating the public, I'm excited to lead the Compliance Section into the next chapter of ELEC's story," she said.

FACTS ABOUT AUREA VAZQUEZ-ALEXANDER
Born in Newark, NJ
Raised in Boston
Speaks French Canadian and Spanish
Once attended a lunch with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
She has visited all 50 statehouses
Law degree from Suffolk University Law School
Bachelor of Arts degree from Boston College
FAVORITES
Baseball team- Boston Red Sox (she has a World Series ring)
Favorite athlete- Red Sox Hall of Fame first baseman David "Big Papi" Ortiz ("I've met him several times while working as a Fenway Park tour guide. When the stakes were at the highest, Big Papi led and always rose to the occasion.")
Film- Field of Dreams
Television show- Game of Thrones
Musicians- U2, John Coltrane, Aerosmith

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#### **Primary Debate Sponsorship Applications Due by March 17**

Potential sponsors of the upcoming gubernatorial primary debates must submit their applications by March 17, 2025, according to Amanda Haines, ELEC's Executive Director.

"The deadline is quickly approaching so we wanted to send out this reminder," she said.

Potential sponsors must submit to ELEC a completed copy of "Application to Sponsor Gubernatorial Election Debate(s)" (Form DS). It is available at:

https://www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/gub\_man\_forms.htm

The form is used to obtain information such as whether the sponsor has overseen previous debates, will rebroadcast debates, will withhold any candidate endorsements until all debates it will sponsor have been completed, will broadcast the debate in a foreign language, and will use a facility that accommodates persons with physical disabilities.

Forms must be submitted no later than March 17, 2025.

Gubernatorial candidates participating in the public financing program are required to participate in two candidate debates for each election and must complete the Candidate Certification for Public Financing and Debate Participation. (Form G-1A).

Candidates who are not participating in the public financing program also can participate in these debates. They must submit to the Commission reports showing they have raised and spent the applicable threshold amount (\$580,000 in 2025) along with Form G-1A no later than March 24, 2025.

ELEC's role in gubernatorial debates is limited to picking sponsors, ensuring they meet the requirements of the law, and resolving any differences that may arise between the sponsors.

By statute, the earliest a primary debate can be held this year is April 3, 2025. The latest date is May 30, 2025. The primary election is set for June 10, 2025.

#### **County Parties End 2024 on a Fundraising High Note**

County political party committees ended 2024 with their best fundraising during a federal election year and flushest combined reserves in more than a decade, according to quarterly reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC). Through December 31, 2024, the 42 parties together reported \$13 million in fundraising, \$12.3 million in spending, and \$4.6 million in cash-on-hand.

Table 01 · Fund-raising by County Party Committees Through December 31, 2024

PERIOD	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON HAND
2024 (Federal Election Year)	\$13,052,944	\$12,299,707	\$4,625,482
Versus Average All Elections Since 2009	27%	23%	56%
Versus Average for Federal Election Years Since 2009	42%	37%	56%
Versus Average for State Election Years Since 2009	13%	10%	56%

"County parties are in their best financial shape entering a state election year since at least 2009," said Joe Donohue, ELEC's Deputy Director. "They have never raised more than \$10 million in a federal election year during that period."

Campaign finance activity by county parties typically is higher during state election years.

Year-end fundraising, spending and cash totals were all higher in 2024 than even the average for state election years.

Fundraising was 13 percent more, spending was 10 percent higher while the cash balance is 56 percent over the average for state election years.

Donohue said the improved finances of the party committees is more evidence of the impact of a 2023 campaign finance law.

Contribution limits for all party committees in New Jersey were raised when Governor Phil Murphy signed the law (P.L. 2023, Chapter 30) on April 3, 2023.

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#### County Parties End 2024 on a Fundraising High Note (continued)

The law doubled the maximum annual contribution to county party committees from \$37,500 to \$75,000-the first increase since 2005. In addition, the law created new "housekeeping" accounts. A donor can give \$75,000 to regular campaign accounts and \$37,500 to the new housekeeping accounts for a total of \$112,500 each year.

Those higher limits were further increased on January 1, 2025 under inflation adjustments that take effect every two years under the law for non-gubernatorial contributions. Donors now can give a general contribution of \$79,000 plus \$39,500 to housekeeping accounts- a total of \$118,500 annually.

Housekeeping accounts are earmarked solely for expenses deemed administrative, including mortgages, rent, taxes, compliance costs, legal bills and collective bargaining outlays. Only the two state parties and the 42 county parties can create such accounts.

Table 02 · Annual Campaign Finance Activity By County Party Committees

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH ON HAND	STATE/FEDERAL
2009	\$13,854,662	\$13,306,296	\$2,794,158	State
2010	\$7,591,065	\$8,712,802	\$1,235,174	Federal
2011	\$8,449,211	\$8,545,440	\$1,113,770	State
2012	\$6,407,139	\$5,885,971	\$1,611,619	Federal
2013	\$9,908,851	\$10,069,188	\$1,448,541	State
2014	\$7,633,924	\$7,560,342	\$1,427,077	Federal
2015	\$9,161,877	\$8,883,225	\$1,724,814	State
2016	\$8,389,170	\$8,055,559	\$2,217,708	Federal
2017	\$14,564,574	\$14,114,921	\$3,132,815	State
2018	\$9,709,931	\$9,018,198	\$3,435,910	Federal
2019	\$8,191,320	\$8,821,224	\$2,504,889	State
2020	\$6,876,961	\$6,246,655	\$3,069,844	Federal
2021	\$14,296,990	\$13,234,794	\$4,170,046	State
2022	\$8,700,972	\$9,692,905	\$3,114,672	Federal
2023	\$12,868,223	\$12,075,641	\$3,907,188	State
2024	\$13,052,944	\$12,299,707	\$4,625,482	Federal

Democratic county committees raised and spent more funds than their GOP counterparts and reported larger cash reserves.

Table 03 · 2024 Campaign Finance Activity by Party Breakdown

PARTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Democrats	\$9,319,184	\$8,622,846	\$3,688,236	\$3,391,121
Republicans	\$3,733,760	\$3,676,861	\$937,245	\$1,349,235
Combined	\$13,052,944	\$12,299,707	\$4,625,482	\$4,740,357

<sup>\*</sup>Cash-on-hand plus or minus debts owed to or by committee.

Among Democratic county committees that have filed their quarterly reports, nine committees- Bergen, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, and Union - reported cash balances above \$100,000. Camden reported a negative net worth when debts are subtracted from cash-on-hand.

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#### County Parties End 2024 on a Fundraising High Note (continued)

Table 04 · Campaign Finance Activity of Democratic County Party Committees January 1 - December 31, 2024

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$152,845	\$143,919	\$11,273	\$11,273
Bergen	\$1,508,990	\$1,009,324	\$825,106	\$825,106
Burlington	\$471,767	\$477,564	\$48,797	\$42,422
Camden	\$487,991	\$683,346	\$86,958	\$(48,042)
Cape May*	\$38,719	\$23,283	\$33,140	\$33,140
Cumberland	\$43,470	\$45,779	\$16,341	\$16,341
Essex	\$797,046	\$824,009	\$222,469	\$222,469
Gloucester	\$694,316	\$671,552	\$235,898	\$217,739
Hudson	\$822,367	\$386,698	\$464,264	\$311,413
Hunterdon*	\$54,429	\$45,442	\$35,029	\$35,029
Mercer	\$128,599	\$85,135	\$384,180	\$384,180
Middlesex	\$1,306,832	\$1,451,662	\$213,788	\$213,788
Monmouth	\$373,001	\$282,579	\$92,333	\$92,333
Morris	\$202,662	\$242,926	\$17,925	\$17,924
Ocean	\$55,001	\$47,319	\$44,431	\$60,597
Passaic	\$1,098,860	\$1,158,233	\$183,512	\$183,512
Salem*	\$49,128	\$58,325	\$57,468	\$57,468
Somerset	\$485,115	\$480,331	\$232,229	\$232,229
Sussex	\$90,878	\$64,087	\$65,800	\$65,800
Union	\$452,014	\$437,781	\$413,878	\$413,878
Warren**	\$5,155	\$3,553	\$3,418	\$2,522
Democrats-Total	\$9,319,184	\$8,622,846	\$3,688,236	\$3,391,121

<sup>\*</sup>Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

As for Republican committees, Cape May reported a cash balance above \$100,000 at year's end. Burlington reported a net worth above \$100,000 when factoring in payments owed to the committee. Hudson reported a negative balance while Morris and Passaic reported a negative balance adjusting for outstanding debts.

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<sup>\*</sup>Third quarter totals \*\*Second quarter totals

## County Parties End 2024 on a Fundraising High Note (continued)

Table 05 · Campaign Finance Activity of Republican County Party Committees January 1 - December 31, 2024

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COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$253,207	\$293,656	\$31,851	\$31,851
Bergen	\$176,093	\$145,188	\$42,033	\$42,033
Burlington	\$129,561	\$120,804	\$25,767	\$535,183
Camden	\$61,116	\$40,970	\$28,272	\$28,240
Cape May	\$257,665	\$246,793	\$378,608	\$378,608
Cumberland	\$185,927	\$194,066	\$34,150	\$34,150
Essex	\$65,000	\$64,709	\$3,101	\$3,101
Gloucester	\$69,155	\$47,400	\$23,793	\$23,793
Hudson*	NA	\$725	\$(725)	\$(725)
Hunterdon	\$202,662	\$206,775	\$6,347	\$1,347
Mercer	\$38,882	\$22,068	\$23,072	\$23,072
Middlesex	\$74,387	\$74,961	\$19,760	\$19,527
Monmouth	\$448,293	\$469,376	\$86,845	\$86,845
Morris	\$190,227	\$210,111	\$3,383	\$(20,756)
Ocean	\$584,566	\$576,544	\$18,246	\$18,246
Passaic	\$306,465	\$306,960	\$18,438	\$(8,331)
Salem	\$94,882	\$87,502	\$45,890	\$45,890
Somerset	\$232,212	\$177,724	\$73,616	\$32,362
Sussex	\$100,815	\$86,239	\$25,914	\$25,914
Union	\$143,492	\$169,977	\$29,975	\$29,975
Warren	\$119,153	\$134,313	\$18,911	\$18,911
Republicans-Total	\$3,733,760	\$3,676,861	\$937,245	\$1,349,235

<sup>\*</sup>Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee. NA-not available \*First quarter total

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon January 31, 2025. Individual reports can be reviewed on ELEC's website (<a href="www.elec.state.nj.us">www.elec.state.nj.us</a>).

## **Key Dates - 2025 Gubernatorial Primary Election**

EVENT	DATE
First Date Candidates Can Seek Public Matching Funds (Twice Monthly Until March 31)	January 7, 2025
Quarterly Candidate Filings	January 15, 2025
Due Date for Debate Sponsor Applications	March 17, 2025
Deadline for Form G-1A Candidate Certification for Public Financing Debate Participation. Also, Due Date for Forms P-1 And/or P-2	March 24, 2025
Candidates Can Seek Public Matching Funds Every Tuesday Until Election	April 01, 2025
Due Date for Candidate Personal Financial Disclosure Forms	April 03, 2025
Earliest Date Debates Can Be Held	April 03, 2025
Deadline for Commission to Select Debate Sponsor.	April 14, 2025
Quarterly Candidate Filings	April 15, 2025
29-Day Preelection Reports	May 12, 2025
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts	May 28, 2025
Latest Date Debate Can Be Held	May 30, 2025
11-Day Preelection Reports	May 30, 2025
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts	June 03, 2025
2025 Primary Election	June 10, 2025
20-Day Postelection Reports	June 30, 2025
Quarterly Candidate Filings	July 15, 2025
Final Date Candidates Can Seek Public Matching Funds for Primary	November 05, 2025

## 2025 Contribution Limits for Non-Gubernatorial Candidates and Committees

ENTITIES MAKING CONTRIBU- TIONS	CANDIDATE COMMITTEE	POLITICAL COMMITTEE	CONTINUING POLITICAL COMMITTEE	LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE	STATE POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE	COUNTY POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE	MUNICIPAL POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE
Individual	\$5,500 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Corporation or Union	\$5,500 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Association or Group to:	\$5,500 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Candidate Committee	\$17,300 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Political Committee	\$17,300 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Continuing Political Committee	\$17,300 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Legislative Leadership Committee				No Limits			
State Political Party Committee				No Limits			
County Political Party	No limits, except those set forth in N.J.A.C. 19:25-11.7 for a County Political party Committee					ittee	
Municipal Political Party				No Limits			
National Political Party	\$17,300 per election	\$15,200 per election	\$15,200 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$152,000 per year	\$79,000 per year	\$15,200 per year
Housekeeping Accounts <sup>5</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$39,500 per year	\$39,500 per year	N/A

<sup>5</sup>Housekeeping account limits are equal to half the amount implemented for state or county political party committees. See N.J.S.A. 19:44A-10.2.

# **2025 Reporting Dates**

	INCLUSION DATES	REPORT DUE DATE				
Fire Commissioner - February 15, 2025						
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	Inception of campaign* - 01/14/2025	01/17/2025				
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	01/15/2025 - 02/01/2025	02/04/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	02/02/2025 - 03/04/2025	03/07/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 02/02/20	025 through 02/07/2025					
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 02/08/20	025 through 02/15/2025					
April School Board - April 15, 2025						
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	Inception of campaign* - 03/14/2025	03/17/2025				
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	03/15/2025- 04/01/2025	04/04/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	04/02/2025 - 05/02/2025	05/05/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 04/02/20	025 through 04/07/2025					
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 04/08/20	025 through 04/15/2025					
May Municipal - May 13, 2025						
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	Inception of campaign* - 04/11/2025	04/14/2025				
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	04/12/2025 - 04/29/2025	05/02/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	04/30/2025 - 05/30/2025	06/02/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 04/30/20	025 through 05/05/2025					
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 05/06/20	025 through 05/13/2025					
Runoff (June) ** - June 10, 2025						
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	No Report Required for this Period					
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	04/30/2025 - 05/27/2025	05/30/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	05/28/2025 - 06/27/2025	06/30/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 05/28/2025 through 06/02/2025						
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 06/03/2025 through 06/10/2025						
Primary (90-day start date: March 12, 202	5)*** - June 10, 2025					
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	Inception of campaign* - 05/09/2025	05/12/2025				
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	05/10/2025 - 05/27/2025	05/30/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	05/28/2025 - 06/27/2025	06/30/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 05/28/2025 through 06/02/2025						
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 06/03/2025 through 06/10/2025						
General (90-day start date: August 06, 2025)*** - November 04, 2025						
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	06/28/2025 - 10/03/2025	10/06/2025				
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	10/04/2025 - 10/21/2025	10/24/2025				
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	10/22/2025 - 11/21/2025	11/24/2025				
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 10/22/2025 through 10/27/2025						
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 10/28/2025 through 11/04/2025						
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## 2025 Reporting Dates (continued)

	INCLUSION DATES	REPORT DUE DATE					
Runoff (December)** - December 02, 2025							
29-day Preelection Reporting Date	No Report Required for this Period						
11-day Preelection Reporting Date	10/22/2025 - 11/18/2025	11/21/2025					
20-day Postelection Reporting Date	11/19/2025 - 12/19/2025	12/22/2025					
72-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 11/19/20	025 through 11/24/2025						
24-Hour Notice Reporting Starts on 11/25/20	025 through 12/02/2025						
PACs, PCFRs & Campaign Quarterly File	s						
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	01/01/2025 - 03/31/2025	04/15/2025					
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	04/01/2025 - 6/30/2025	07/15/2025					
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	07/01/2025 - 09/30/2025	10/15/2025					
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	10/01/2025 - 12/31/2025	01/15/2026					
Governmental Affairs Agents (Q-4)							
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	01/01/2025 - 03/31/2025	04/10/2025					
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	04/01/2025 - 06/30/2025	07/10/2025					
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	07/01/2025 - 9/30/2025	10/10/2025					
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	10/01/2025 - 12/31/2025	01/12/2026					

<sup>\*</sup>Inception Date of Campaign (first time filers) or from January 01, 2025 (Quarterly filers).

<sup>\*\*</sup>A candidate committee or joint candidates committee that is filing in a 2025 Runoff election is not required to file a 20-day postelection report for the corresponding prior election (May Municipal or General).

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Form PFD-1 is due on April 03, 2025 for Primary Election Candidates and June 13, 2025 for Independent General Election Candidates.

Note: A fourth quarter 2024 filing is needed for Primary 2025 candidates if they started their campaign prior to December 12, 2024. A second quarter 2025 filing is needed by Independent/Non-Partisan General Election candidates if they started their campaign prior to May 06, 2025.