



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: JEFF BRINDLE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Legislative candidates have amassed more than \$12 million in campaign reserves as the two major parties vie for control of the 120-seat Legislature for the first time in four years, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

Reports submitted 29 days before the June 7 primary show that Democrats, who control both legislative houses, have \$8.2 million in reserve while Republicans have \$4 million set aside. Despite some contested primaries, much of that funding is likely to be carried over into the fall general elections.

Table 1
Current Fundraising Reserves of Legislative Candidates

PARTY	CASH-ON-HAND ON MAY 6
Democrats	\$ 8,247,345
Republicans	\$ 3,965,403
Grand Total	\$ 12,212,748

The reports also show that while fundraising is up slightly for both parties, the rate of growth has been dampened by pay-to-play laws and other factors, such as the weak economy.

Fundraising between January and early May, which is the period during which challengers joined incumbents in seeking campaign dollars, was just 2 percent higher than the same period in 2007. That was the last year in which the Senate and Assembly ran together.

Democrats raised \$3.7 million during the period while Republicans raised \$1.9 million.

“While fundraising was up, the increase was slight even though contribution limits are now higher than four years ago due to inflation adjustments,” said Jeff Brindle, the Commission’s Executive Director.

“This seems to show the impact of pay-to-play laws on fundraising after those laws took effect in 2006. In the prior election cycle, fundraising had increased by 38 percent,” Brindle said. “Fundraising actually dropped in 2007, and is up only slightly this year.”

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Table 2
Fundraising by Legislative Candidates
January through May

PARTY	JANUARY – MAY 2011	%	JANUARY – MAY 2007	%	JANUARY – MAY 2003	%	JANUARY – MAY 2001
Democrats	\$ 3,686,991	3%	\$ 3,590,811	13%	\$ 3,184,158	91%	\$ 1,669,290
Republicans	\$ 1,867,076	2%	\$ 1,835,447	-32%	\$ 2,700,980	5%	\$ 2,582,517
Both Parties	\$ 5,554,067	2%	\$ 5,426,258	-8%	\$ 5,885,138	38%	\$ 4,251,807

A similar pattern is seen with totals that include fundraising by incumbents since the last elections.

“Legislative candidates report raising nearly \$29 million since 2007 for this year’s campaigns- a 17 percent increase. That’s a slower pace than between earlier elections,” Brindle said.

Table 3
Fundraising by Legislative Candidates
During Four Years between Elections

PARTY	2011	%	2007	%	2003	%	2001
Democrats	\$ 19,099,091	12%	\$ 17,047,528	61%	\$ 10,608,960	78%	\$ 5,963,588
Republicans	\$ 9,614,590	28%	\$ 7,518,806	-16%	\$ 8,965,799	-9%	\$ 9,852,241
Both Parties	\$ 28,713,681	17%	\$ 24,566,334	26%	\$ 19,574,759	24%	\$ 15,815,829

“Had fundraising continued at the same pace as in 2003 before the existence of pay-to-play restrictions, candidates would have raised nearly \$30.4 million this year,” Brindle said.

He noted that the current fundraising total is inflated somewhat because it includes more than \$8 million rolled over from the previous campaign. Some funds are carried over between all legislative campaigns because many incumbents can afford to salt away cash for the next elections.

For the period since January, candidates spent nearly twice as much as they did ten years ago. The total reflects the fact that Democrats have spent nearly three times as much while Republican spending was down slightly.

Table 4
Spending by Legislative Candidates
January through May

PARTY	JANUARY – MAY 2011	%	JANUARY – MAY 2007	%	JANUARY – MAY 2003	%	JANUARY – MAY 2001
Democrats	\$ 2,875,534	45%	\$ 1,985,702	34%	\$ 1,478,118	83%	\$ 805,734
Republicans	\$ 1,008,625	-20%	\$ 1,258,060	-6%	\$ 1,342,526	7%	\$ 1,252,625
Both Parties	\$ 3,884,159	20%	\$ 3,243,763	15%	\$ 2,820,644	37%	\$ 2,058,360

Spending also was up since the last combined Senate/Assembly election was held four years ago. Both Democratic and Republican spending was up compared to four years ago. Democratic spending was far higher than in 2001; Republican spending is down slightly compared to ten years ago.

Table 5
Spending by Legislative Candidates
Since Previous Senate Elections

PARTY	2011	%	2007	%	2003	%	2001
Democrats	\$ 11,078,244	19%	\$ 9,318,370	103%	\$ 4,579,918	35%	\$ 3,391,072
Republicans	\$ 5,614,214	15%	\$ 4,868,470	6%	\$ 4,582,512	-20%	\$ 5,739,779
Both Parties	\$ 16,692,458	18%	\$ 14,186,840	55%	\$ 9,162,430	0%	\$ 9,130,851

Cash-on-hand totals are up for both parties versus 2007. Republican reserves increased by a larger margin since four years ago, though they remain below 2001 reserves. Democratic reserves have barely budged since 2007, but they are nearly three times larger than a decade ago.

Table 6
Cash-on-Hand
Legislative Candidates

PARTY	2011	%	2007	%	2003	%	2001
Democrats	\$ 8,247,345	2%	\$ 8,075,514	29%	\$ 6,281,194	117%	\$ 2,898,177
Republicans	\$ 3,965,403	17%	\$ 3,376,161	-26%	\$ 4,578,526	-5%	\$ 4,795,363
Both Parties	\$ 12,212,748	7%	\$ 11,451,675	5%	\$ 10,859,720	41%	\$ 7,693,540

Among the ten candidates with the largest cash-on-hand reserves, nine are state Senators while one is a state Assemblyman.

Table 7
Top Ten Legislative Candidates
Ranked by Cash-on-Hand

CANDIDATE	CASH-ON-HAND ON MAY 6
Senator Richard J. Codey	\$ 1,152,100
Senator Stephen M. Sweeney	\$ 951,431
Senator Paul A. Sarlo	\$ 580,442
Senator Shirley K. Turner	\$ 533,380
Senator Bob Smith	\$ 440,947
Senator Joe Kyrillos, Jr.	\$ 412,185
Senator Donald W. Norcross	\$ 330,417
Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr.	\$ 319,127
Assemblyman Louis D. Greenwald	\$ 289,855
Senator Nicholas P. Scutari	\$ 277,929

Reports filed by legislative candidates are available online today at 10 a.m. on ELEC's website at www.elec.state.nj.us.

A downloadable summary of data from those reports is available in both spreadsheet and PDF formats at <http://www.elec.state.nj.us/publicinformation/statistics.htm>.

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