



NEWS RELEASE

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The top 25 special interest groups in New Jersey spent a combined \$251 million on campaign expenditures and lobbying between 1999 and 2012, according to a new analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

The groups spent nearly \$145 million through political action committees and \$107 million on lobbying.

Table 1
Top Special Interest Group
Spending Between 1999 and 2012

Rank	Group	Type	PAC Spending	Lobbying	Total
1	New Jersey Education Association	Union	\$16,010,216	\$21,444,462	\$37,454,678
2	IBEW and affiliates†	Union	\$22,850,224†	\$ 163,027	\$23,013,251†
3	NJ State Laborers and affiliates	Union	\$21,453,950	\$ 979,386	\$22,433,336
4	Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters NJ and affiliates	Union	\$15,971,183	\$ 462,445	\$16,433,628
5	NJ Association of Realtors	Trade Association	\$10,526,600	\$ 3,949,093	\$14,475,693
6	Plumbers and Pipefitters affiliates†	Union	\$12,892,710†	\$ 29,145	\$12,921,865†
7	Verizon	Regulated Industry	\$ 1,070,129	\$10,847,529	\$11,917,658
8	NJ Hospital Association	Professional	\$ 2,083,925	\$ 8,159,174	\$10,243,099
9	NJ Builders Association	Trade Association	\$ 3,040,111	\$ 7,164,260	\$10,204,371
10	Communications Workers of America and affiliates	Union	\$ 7,890,703	\$ 1,477,136	\$ 9,367,839
11	NJ Business and Industry Association and affiliate NJ Organization for a Better State	Ideological	\$ 4,824,911	\$ 3,331,555	\$ 8,156,466
12	AARP	Ideological	None	\$ 8,137,792	\$ 8,137,792
13	AFSCME	Union	\$ 7,020,171	\$ 170,530	\$ 7,190,701
14	NJ Association for Justice (Formerly ATLA)	Professional	\$ 4,975,893	\$ 1,039,440	\$ 6,015,333
15	NJ State League of Municipalities	Professional	None	\$ 5,909,744	\$ 5,909,744
16	PSE&G	Regulated Industry	\$ 562,518	\$ 5,090,733	\$ 5,653,251
17	Prudential Companies	Regulated Industry	\$ 199,723	\$ 5,168,851	\$ 5,368,573
18	Atlantic City Electric	Regulated Industry	\$ 70,479	\$ 5,006,950	\$ 5,077,429
19	NJ Dental Association	Professional	\$ 3,019,294	\$ 2,013,092	\$ 5,032,386
20	First Energy/ JCP&L	Regulated Industry	\$ 247,590	\$ 4,682,507	\$ 4,930,098
21	Medical Society of New Jersey	Professional	\$ 3,923,610	\$ 934,827	\$ 4,858,437
22	NAIOP NJ Chapter	Trade Association	\$ 2,375,594	\$ 2,297,469	\$ 4,673,063
23	International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825	Union	\$ 3,565,911	\$ 972,291	\$ 4,538,202
24	AT&T	Regulated Industry	\$ 313,580	\$ 3,752,960	\$ 4,066,540
25	Cablevision	Regulated Industry	\$ 489,602	\$ 3,431,087	\$ 3,920,689

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“Each year, decisions are made by government officials that impact the interests of special interest groups and the people they represent. These groups range from funeral directors, to teachers, to realtors. They spend millions annually to exercise their First Amendment rights and to promote the interests of their constituents,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

Unions dominated the top 25, spending a total of \$133 million- 53 percent of all spending. Eight of the top 25 special interest groups were unions, including the top four spenders. While they are major contributors to political campaigns, unions generally do not make huge outlays on lobbying.

Table 2
Top PAC Spending and Lobbying
by Special Interest Group Type

Type	PAC Spending	Lobbying	Total
Union	\$106,974,878	\$ 25,698,421	\$132,673,299
Regulated Industry	\$ 2,953,622	\$ 37,980,617	\$ 40,934,239
Trade Association	\$ 18,026,230	\$ 21,569,996	\$ 39,596,226
Professional	\$ 11,918,797	\$ 9,897,104	\$ 21,815,901
Ideological	\$ 4,824,911	\$ 11,469,347	\$ 16,294,258
Total	\$144,698,437	\$106,615,486	\$251,313,923

While unions overall were the top spenders and the top PAC spenders, regulated industries invested the most in lobbying- nearly \$38 million. Regulated industries include gas and electric utilities, water companies, cable companies and other companies that are substantially regulated by the state.

Under state law, these groups are prohibited from making direct contributions to candidates. Instead, their employees must set up political action committees to make contributions to campaigns. They generally are not major campaign spenders.

Among the top 25, the number one spender over the 13-year period was the New Jersey Education Association, a union that represents 195,501 teachers and other school employees. NJEA spent \$37.4 million- nearly \$11 million more than the next highest group, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).

NJEA’s totals are skewed by the fact that it spent \$18.1 million on lobbying just in 2010 and 2011- far more than its historical norm. It made the huge investment mostly on a massive media campaign in opposition to several proposed legislative changes to the state educational system and to promote the union’s image. Without the unusually large expenditure, it would have ranked third.

**Table 3
NJEA PAC and Lobbying Expenditures 1999-2012**

Year	NJEA School Elections Committee*	NJEA PAC Spending	Lobbying	Total
1999	\$ 150,983	\$ 551,183	\$ 156,696	\$ 858,862
2000	\$ 155,160	\$ 336,980	\$ 181,331	\$ 673,471
2001	\$ 189,239	\$ 1,056,534	\$ 173,341	\$ 1,419,114
2002	\$ 524,414	\$ 354,692	\$ 283,989	\$ 1,163,095
2003	\$ 228,123	\$ 703,296	\$ 272,367	\$ 1,203,785
2004	\$ 203,125	\$ 450,586	\$ 262,713	\$ 916,424
2005	\$ 340,364	\$ 691,058	\$ 249,750	\$ 1,281,172
2006	\$ 378,099	\$ 519,097	\$ 342,271	\$ 1,239,467
2007	\$ 276,188	\$ 1,215,626	\$ 317,488	\$ 1,809,302
2008	\$ 504,798	\$ 531,653	\$ 305,463	\$ 1,341,914
2009	\$ 744,512	\$ 1,539,196	\$ 360,505	\$ 2,644,213
2010	\$ 478,759	\$ 675,967	\$ 6,869,256	\$ 8,023,982
2011	\$ 767,712	\$ 1,526,013	\$11,259,886	\$13,553,611
2012	\$ 24,605	\$ 892,255	\$ 409,407	\$ 1,326,267
Totals	\$4,966,081	\$11,044,135	\$21,444,462	\$37,454,678

*Net total after adjusting for transfers back to NJEA

Other studies have found that New Jersey's teacher union is not alone in dominating the special interest landscape in a state.

A March 2010 analysis by the California Fair Political Practices Commission found that the California Teachers Association spent nearly \$212 million during the previous decade on campaigns and lobbying- nearly \$105 million more than the next biggest spender (California State Council of Service Employees).

In a separate analysis, ELEC also did a detailed review of PAC spending just for 2012. ELEC has done similar studies starting with 2009 PAC spending. The analysis found that PACs gave just \$8.9 million to New Jersey state, county and local campaigns during a year when neither the Governor's seat nor the Legislature were up for reelection. (**See Table 8 in Appendix to see Top 25 PAC Spenders in 2012.**)

That figure was down 50 percent from the \$18 million spent in 2011, when all 120 legislators ran for reelection.

Table 4
Total Contributions Made by Political Action Committees (PACs) in 2012 to New Jersey Candidates and Committees (Excludes Contributions to Federal Candidates)

Recipient	Amount	Percent
Legislative Leadership PACs and Individual Legislators	\$4,405,748	49%
Local (Excluding County Parties)	\$3,045,238	34%
County Parties	\$ 947,885	11%
State Parties	\$ 451,160	5%
Gubernatorial Candidates	\$ 79,250	1%
Total	\$8,929,281	100%

In 2011, individual legislators and legislative leadership PACs received \$12.1 million. In 2012, they got just \$4.4 million. County parties, who often are active in legislative elections, received more than \$1.8 million in 2011 versus less than \$950,000 in 2012.

“While 2012 was an important federal election year with the president, Congressional seats and a U.S. Senate seat all in contention, it was a relatively quiet year for state, county and local elections,” said Brindle. “PAC contributions for New Jersey races predictably were down.”

The \$8.9 million in PAC spending in New Jersey comprised just a third of the \$28.4 million in total PAC spending.

“Many PACs that file in New Jersey are national and may have spent all or most of their funds outside the state in 2012,” said Brindle. “Also, PAC spending on New Jersey federal elections were not included in ELEC’s totals since the agency has no jurisdiction over those campaigns.”

PAC spending in 2012 was well below the high of \$35.4 million in 2009.

Table 5
Total Contributions in 2012 by PACs Registered in New Jersey

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total Contributions From Registered PACs	\$33,023,400	\$25,422,329	\$35,445,360	\$28,198,556	\$34,313,085*	\$28,444,172**
% Change	14.0%	-23.0%	39.4%	-20.4%	22%	-17

*Includes \$1 million from mostly out of state PACs not registered in New Jersey. No comparable figure available for past years. **Includes \$212,387 from unregistered PACs.

For the second straight year, ELEC analyzed all 278 PACs that reported spending in 2012.

Union PACs gave the most to state and local campaigns in 2012- nearly \$5.1 million, or 57 percent. This continues a trend of heavy union involvement in recent state elections.

Table 6
PAC Spending in 2012- Just New Jersey

Type	Contributions	Percent
Union	\$5,097,036	57%
Professional or Trade Association	\$2,174,293	24%
Other Ongoing Committee	\$ 621,998	7%
Regulated Industries	\$ 387,318	4%
Ideological	\$ 348,776	4%
Business	\$ 299,859	3%
Grand Total	\$8,929,280	100%

Unions also dominated overall spending. Several are national PACs that participate in elections in several states. Only about one-quarter of the \$20.2 million in reported union PAC spending went to New Jersey non-federal campaigns in 2012.

Table 7
PAC Spending in 2012- Overall Spending by Type

Type	Contributions	Percent
Union	\$20,189,763	71%
Professional or Trade Association	\$ 4,360,823	15%
Business	\$ 1,397,322	5%
Other Ongoing Committee	\$ 1,083,920	4%
Ideological	\$ 749,263	3%
Regulated	\$ 663,082	2%
Grand Total	\$28,444,172	100%

Technically known in New Jersey as continuing political committees, PACs generally are required to file detailed reports with ELEC when, during a calendar year, they contribute in excess of \$4,900 to state and/or local candidates. They must file reports with ELEC each quarter that list their contributions and expenditures.

For purposes of this analysis, special interest PACs are defined as those that identified themselves as a business, labor union, professional association, ideological group, civic association, trade association, or other ongoing.

The list also includes PACs formed by employees of regulated industries such as banks and insurance companies, which cannot use corporate funds for campaign contributions.

In its long-term analysis of major special interest spending, ELEC began with 1999 because it was the earliest year for which PAC reports and lobbying information are available online.

This press release is a compilation of figures reported to the Commission, and is not intended to express any opinion concerning the accuracy or completeness of any filed report. Although the Commission has taken all reasonable precautions to prevent mathematical or typographical errors, they may occur.

Copies of individual PAC and lobbying reports are available on ELEC's website at www.elec.state.nj.us.

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**Appendix
Table 8
Top 25 PAC Contributors in 2012
to New Jersey Candidates and Committees**

Name	Type	Gubernatorial	Legislative	State Parties	County Parties	Local	Total
Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters NJ PEC	Union		\$112,500	\$ 45,000	\$210,700	\$467,750	\$835,950
New Jersey Education Association	Union		\$271,575	\$ 25,000	\$ 90,400	\$ 42,940	\$429,915
NJ For the People (CWA affiliate) (3)	Other Ongoing					\$383,742	\$383,742
IBEW 351(1)	Union		\$166,500	\$ 5,000	\$122,000	\$ 67,876	\$361,376
IBEW 164 (1)	Union		\$ 77,625	\$ 35,000	\$ 84,700	\$ 91,357	\$288,682
Realtors PAC†	Professional	\$3,800	\$214,875	\$ 21,000		\$ 42,900	\$282,575
Local 322 Committee for Political Education (Plumbers and Pipefitters)	Union		\$105,200		\$ 44,000	\$124,877	\$274,077
Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 9	Union		\$113,110	\$ 5,500	\$ 19,150	\$ 91,360	\$229,120
NJ Dental Association	Professional	\$3,800	\$171,725	\$ 10,000		\$ 29,200	\$214,725
NJ State Laborers PAC	Union	\$3,800	\$ 94,025	\$ 5,000	\$ 46,000	\$ 54,450	\$203,275
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825	Union	\$3,800	\$ 67,200	\$ 20,000	\$ 16,300	\$ 73,016	\$180,316
NJ Apartment Association	Trade Association	\$3,800	\$124,540	\$ 6,500		\$ 12,700	\$147,540
Developers PAC	Professional		\$114,700	\$ 10,000			\$124,700
Association for Justice (formerly ATLA)	Professional	\$3,800	\$ 91,850	\$ 21,500			\$117,150
Drive (Teamsters)	Union		\$ (500)	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$105,190	\$114,690
Plumbers Local 14	Union		\$ 57,250		\$4,900	\$ 47,725	\$109,875
1199/SEIU NY State Political Action Fund (2)	Union		\$ 42,800	\$ 10,000		\$ 43,150	\$ 95,950
CWA NJ PEC (3)	Union		\$ 21,250	\$ 2,500		\$ 71,660	\$ 95,410
NJ Optometric PAC	Professional		\$ 88,825	\$ 4,000		\$ 2,000	\$ 94,825
BAC Administrative District Council of NJ PAC (5)	Union		\$ 33,750	\$ 6,000	\$ 11,600	\$ 39,310	\$ 90,660
Medical Action Committee	Professional		\$ 85,100	\$ 750			\$ 85,850
JebPac	Regulated Industries		\$ 77,575			\$ 7,200	\$ 84,775
CAR PAC	Trade Association		\$ 80,002			\$ 3,302	\$ 83,302
NJ Funeral Directors PAC	Professional		\$ 80,950				\$ 80,950
IBEW COPE- Trenton (1)	Union		\$ 37,850	\$ 8,500	\$ 3,000	\$ 31,240	\$ 80,590

- (1) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- (2) Service Employees International Union
- (3) Communications Workers of America
- (4) International Union Of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers

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