



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:
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The so-called “Big Six” fundraising committees reported the weakest combined campaign finance activity in at least eight years, a sign that independent spending by special interest groups may be taking a toll on traditional fundraising committees, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

“It may be no coincidence that in the year after special interest groups spent a record \$41 million independently of parties and candidates, traditional fundraising committees are struggling,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

Reports filed by the two state parties and four legislative leadership committees revealed a combined reserve of just \$800,994. At this point last year, the cash-on-hand for both parties totaled \$3.2 million - nearly four times as much. Even compared to 2012, which was an off-election year, the total is low.

Big Six fundraising, spending and reserve totals all were the lowest in at least eight years.

TABLE 1
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY “BIG SIX”
AT END OF SECOND QUARTER BY YEAR

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
2007	\$5,776,859	\$2,328,316	\$8,015,277	\$7,911,808
2008	\$3,438,622	\$2,238,356	\$1,577,591	\$ 918,612
2009	\$3,653,103	\$1,811,223	\$3,682,236	\$3,548,060
2010	\$2,175,981	\$1,637,912	\$1,835,526	\$1,666,742
2011	\$3,684,467	\$1,915,020	\$3,329,478	\$3,051,770
2012	\$2,988,610	\$2,590,387	\$1,426,366	\$1,193,221
2013	\$3,382,737	\$1,874,081	\$3,189,889	\$3,093,711
2014	\$1,276,109	\$1,319,714	\$ 800,994	\$ 287,246

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

Brindle said the Big Six committees clearly are still recovering from the financial drain of last year’s elections, when the governor’s seat and all 120 legislative seats were in contention for the first time since 2001.

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“But independent special interest spending outside normal party channels, coupled with other factors, also may be making it harder for parties and leadership PACs to raise money,” Brindle said. “The other factors include tighter contribution restrictions on contractors, the economy, and fewer self-financed candidates who once made major contributions to party committees,” he added.

TABLE 2
FUNDRAISING BY “BIG SIX” COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2014

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT**	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 345,282	\$ 600,406	\$157,239	\$(293,530)
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 105,115	\$ 44,071	\$117,279	\$ 117,279
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 112,432	\$ 84,942	\$ 68,203	\$ 68,203
Sub Total-Republicans	\$ 562,829	\$ 729,419	\$342,721	\$(108,048)
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$ 167,023	\$ 186,584	\$139,461	\$ 126,920
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 127,704	\$ 175,089	\$ 38,252	\$ 18,252
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 418,553	\$ 228,622	\$280,560	\$ 250,122
Sub Total-Democrats	\$ 713,280	\$ 590,295	\$458,273	\$ 395,294
Total-Both Parties	\$1,276,109	\$1,319,714	\$800,994	\$ 287,246

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

**Some spending totals exceed fundraising because reserves were used to offset the extra spending.

Brindle once again called on the Legislature to enact pending legislation that would require independent groups to follow the same disclosure rules as parties and candidates, simplify the state’s pay-to-play restrictions on contractors while allowing them to contribute slightly more, and apply inflation adjustments to contribution limits that apply to other donors.

“ELEC has endorsed these changes on a bipartisan basis. They may help restore some balance to the political fundraising situation in New Jersey,” said Brindle.

State Parties and Legislative Leadership Committees are required to report their financial activity to the Commission on a quarterly basis. The reports are available on ELEC’s website at www.elec.state.nj.us. ELEC also can be accessed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/elecny).