



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:
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Almost \$27 million has been spent by independent groups supporting or opposing state and local ballot questions, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

“The overwhelming majority of spending derives from groups in favor or opposed to casinos operating outside of Atlantic City,” said Jeff Brindle, Executive Director of the Commission.

More than \$24 million has been spent by groups favoring and opposing casinos in the northern part of the State.

A political committee named Trenton’s Bad Bet, established to defeat the casino ballot question, has thus far spent \$14.4 million.

According to reports filed as of November 2nd, Our Turn New Jersey, in support of the public question, spent \$8.6 million attempting to secure passage of the referendum.

Brindle said that the spending on the casino question alone sets an all-time record for spending on ballot questions.

“The \$24 million spent on the casino question dwarfs the inflation adjusted \$5.6 million spent in 1976 allowing casinos in Atlantic City,” said Brindle.

In addition to the casino referendum, over \$1.9 million has been spent in support of the statewide public question involving the Transportation Trust Fund.

Engineers Labor Employee Cooperative thus far has spent \$1,250,523 favoring passage of the ballot question with Forward New Jersey adding \$667,769 to the cause.

In total, an additional \$541,532 has been spent on a variety of local referendums.

“The spending on statewide and local ballot questions by independent groups follows a recent trend witnessed in state and local elections,” Brindle said. “This increased spending by outside groups in state and local elections threatens the historic role played by political parties and the ability of candidates to control their own campaigns.”

In the gubernatorial and legislative elections of 2013, over \$41 million was spent by outside groups. They accounted for one-third of all spending in the Assembly election of 2015, most significantly in a few targeted districts.

**TABLE 1
SPENDING ON CASINO BALLOT QUESTION
THROUGH NOVEMBER 2, 2016**

GROUP	TOTAL
Trenton’s Bad Bet	\$14,427,555
Our Turn NJ	\$ 8,614,665
Hotel Restaurant and Club Employees and Bartenders Union Local 6 UNITE HERE	\$ 500,000
New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, AFL-CIO	\$ 500,000
DGMB Casino LLC	\$ 25,594
Statewide Public Question #1 Total	\$24,067,814
Statewide Public Question #2	
Engineers Labor Employee Cooperative	\$ 1,250,523
Forward New Jersey	\$ 667,769
Statewide Public Question #2 Total	\$ 1,918,292
TOTAL STATE	
	\$25,986,106
OTHER PUBLIC QUESTION/INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE COMMITTEES	
Better Education for NJ Kids, Inc.	\$ 207,239
Keep Jersey City Elections Local	\$ 11,717
Schools for Our Students	\$ 925
NJ Urban Communities for Growth	\$ 25,187
Aqua New Jersey	\$ 30,769
NJEA School Elections Committee	\$ 32,531
Garden State Forward	\$ 233,164
TOTAL LOCAL	
	\$ 541,532
TOTAL STATE AND LOCAL	
	\$26,527,638

**TABLE 2
FIVE MOST EXPENSIVE NEW JERSEY
BALLOT QUESTIONS BY SPENDING**

COMMITTEE	REFERENDUM	OUTCOME	YEAR	UNADJUSTED FOR INFLATION	INFLATION ADJUSTED*
Multiple for and against	Allow two new casinos in North Jersey	Pending	2016	\$24,067,814	--
Committee to Rebuild Atlantic City and its opposition	Allow casinos in Atlantic City	Passed	1976	\$ 1,351,865	\$ 5,631,195
Multiple for and against	Increase state minimum wage	Passed	2013	\$ 3,167,928	\$ 3,223,139
Pro- and anti-casino interests	Allow casinos in four New Jersey locations	Failed	1974	\$ 612,500	\$ 2,944,684
New Jersey Committee for Simulcasting	Allow simulcasting at state race tracks	Passed	1985	\$ 1,006,918	\$ 2,217,999

*All numbers in 2015 dollars.

Copies of reports involving the ballot question are available on ELEC's website (www.elec.nj.state.us). Those who need assistance finding them can call ELEC's help desk at (609) 292-8700 or Toll Free within NJ at 1-888-313-3532.

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