



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:
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Between November 2nd and Election Day, \$1.3 million was spent by independent groups supporting or opposing state and local ballot questions.

According to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission, independent groups spent almost \$28 million on ballot initiatives this election.

“By leaps and bounds outside groups set an all-time record for spending on New Jersey ballot questions,” said Jeff Brindle, Executive Director of the Commission.

Adjusting for inflation spending by independent groups has increased by 400 percent over the previous record set in 1976. Adjusted for inflation spending on ballot initiatives in 1976 amounted to \$5.6 million.

Brindle said that “the outside spending in this election is a harbinger of things to come next year.”

He said “without reforms that strengthen political parties and require registration and disclosure by independent groups, outside organizations will submerge next year’s gubernatorial and legislative elections in a sea of dark money.”

In 2013 independent spending reached \$41 million.

Groups pro and con the casino question dominated spending this year. Approximately \$24.6 million was spent by outside groups for or against gambling outside of Atlantic City.

An additional \$2.4 million was spent on ballot question two involving the Transportation Trust Fund.

Altogether, \$884,460 was spent independently on public referenda in various communities throughout the state.

Brindle said that the report shows that anonymous group spending is continuing to spread to local contests.

**TABLE 1
SPENDING ON CASINO BALLOT QUESTION
THROUGH ELECTION DAY, 2016**

GROUP	TOTAL
Trenton's Bad Bet	\$14,477,892
Our Turn NJ	\$ 8,572,506
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
North Jersey Gaming Advocates	\$ 474,974
DGMB Casino LLC	\$ 25,594
Statewide Public Question #1 Total	\$24,550,966
 	
Engineers Labor Employee Cooperative	\$ 1,373,276
Forward New Jersey	\$ 1,001,049
Statewide Public Question #2 Total	\$ 2,374,325
 	
TOTAL STATE	\$26,925,291
 	
OTHER PUBLIC QUESTION/INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE COMMITTEES	
Schools for Our Students	\$ 12,239
Keep Jersey City Elections Local	\$ 20,867
NJ Urban Communities for Growth	\$ 26,433
Aqua New Jersey	\$ 93,504
NJEA School Elections Committee	\$ 115,338
Better Education for NJ Kids Inc.	\$ 252,762
Garden State Forward	\$ 338,584
Yes For Better Schools	\$ 10,302
Friends of Memorial Field	\$ 8,110
New Democratic Leadership for Scotch Plains	\$ 6,321
 	
TOTAL LOCAL	\$ 884,460
TOTAL STATE AND LOCAL	\$27,809,751

**TABLE 2
SIX 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	Failed	2016	\$24,550,966	--
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
Two in Favor	Transportation Trust Fund	Passed	2016	\$ 2,374,325	--
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

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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