



NEWS RELEASE

Respond to:
P.O. Box 185
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0185

(609) 292-8700 or Toll Free Within NJ 1-888-313-ELEC (3532)

CONTACT: JEFF BRINDLE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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The so-called Big Six ended the first three quarters of the year with the best fund-raising totals since 2012 when comparing other recent years without statewide, non-federal elections, according to new reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The two major parties and four legislative leadership committees have raised a combined \$3.8 million so far this year. That figure is less than 34 percent of the \$5.8 million raised last year, when both the governor’s seat and both legislative houses were in contention.

It is typical for fund-raising to taper off between elections. Even so, the amount raised so far this year is 75 percent more than the \$2.2 million raised at this point in 2016, and 57 percent more than the \$2.4 million collected in 2014. Those years also lacked statewide, non-federal elections.

Table 1
Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six”
January 1 through September 30, 2018

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH	STATEWIDE ELECTION (NON-FEDERAL)
2007	\$9,322,604	\$6,713,165	\$7,368,421	\$7,095,891	Senate and Assembly
2008	\$4,457,887	\$3,508,376	\$1,519,083	\$1,134,427	
2009	\$6,309,496	\$5,098,191	\$3,073,241	\$2,746,784	Governor and Assembly
2010	\$3,160,458	\$2,859,927	\$1,664,237	\$1,457,787	
2011	\$6,913,921	\$5,025,694	\$3,428,259	\$3,123,885	Senate and Assembly
2012	\$4,083,910	\$3,971,806	\$1,331,432	\$1,192,473	
2013	\$7,203,008	\$5,917,331	\$2,970,203	\$2,884,025	Governor and Both Houses
2014	\$2,444,799	\$1,887,661	\$1,388,946	\$ 765,268	
2015	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849	Assembly only
2016	\$2,195,300	\$1,985,370	\$1,188,706	\$1,039,918	
2017	\$5,835,574	\$5,354,876	\$2,317,953	\$2,233,450	Governor and Both Houses
2018	\$3,846,796	\$3,293,435	\$1,298,934	\$1,214,430	

While the two state parties are participating in this year’s congressional elections, they use both federal and state accounts to raise funds and pay for expenses. This analysis includes only the campaign finance activity reported for their state accounts.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said it is a good sign that the Big Six committees are doing better compared to recent off-election years. But their fundraising still is down drastically since the early 2000s. Party coffers have declined steadily since tight restrictions on contributions by public contractors took effect around 2005, and court rulings prompted special interest groups to spend more money independently instead of funneling it through parties.

Bi-partisan legislation pending in the Legislature recommended by ELEC could strengthen the state’s political parties by allowing them to accept larger contributions, freeing them from pay-to-play restrictions and mandating that independent spenders fully disclose their campaign finance activities just like parties and candidates.

“As parties weaken, independent groups that are far less accountable and transparent are taking over the electoral process in New Jersey and nationally,” Brindle said. “ELEC’s legislative fixes may not be the perfect cure but they will help reverse this trend.”

With the inauguration of Democrat Phil Murphy in January after eight years of rule by Republican Governor Chris Christie, Democratic fund-raising has out-paced Republicans this year. Democrats, who also control both legislative houses, have raised and spent nearly five times more money through September 30, 2018, and reported more than twice as much cash in the bank.

Table 2
Fundraising by “Big Six” Committees
January 1 through September 30, 2018

ACTIVITY FIRST THREE QUARTERS 2018				
REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 280,285	\$ 292,259	\$ 90,816	\$ 90,816
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 242,084	\$ 145,897	\$ 163,372	\$ 163,372
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 150,800	\$ 133,701	\$ 107,418	\$ 107,418
SUB TOTAL- REPUBLICANS	\$ 673,169	\$ 571,857	\$ 361,606	\$ 361,606
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$2,260,211	\$2,076,697	\$ 569,710	\$ 535,646
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 241,488	\$ 159,373	\$ 154,336	\$ 134,335
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 671,928	\$ 485,508	\$ 213,282	\$ 182,843
SUB-TOTAL- DEMOCRATS	\$3,173,627	\$2,721,578	\$ 937,328	\$ 852,824
TOTAL- BOTH PARTIES				
	\$3,846,796	\$3,293,435	\$1,298,934	\$1,214,430

A side-by-side look at comparable numbers four years ago shows Democratic fundraising, spending and cash-on-hand all are up. All Republican totals are down during that same period.

Table 3
Fundraising by “Big Six” Committees
through September 30-
2018 versus 2014

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
2014	\$ 1,565,717	\$ 1,040,757	\$ 1,034,270	\$ 473,571
2018	\$ 673,169	\$ 571,857	\$ 361,606	\$ 361,606
Difference-Dollars	\$ (892,548)	\$ (468,900)	\$ (672,664)	\$ (111,965)
Difference-%	-57%	-45%	-65%	-24%
DEMOCRATS				
2014	\$ 879,082	\$ 846,904	\$ 354,676	\$ 291,697
2018	\$3,173,627	\$2,721,578	\$ 937,328	\$ 852,824
Difference-Dollars	\$2,294,545	\$1,874,674	\$ 582,652	\$ 561,127
Difference-%	261%	221%	164%	192%
BOTH PARTIES				
2014	\$2,444,799	\$1,887,661	\$1,388,946	\$ 765,268
2018	\$3,846,796	\$3,293,435	\$1,298,934	\$1,214,430
Difference-Dollars	\$1,401,997	\$1,405,774	\$ (90,012)	\$ 449,162
Difference-%	57%	74%	-6%	59%

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).

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