



NEWS RELEASE

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Gubernatorial Candidates and Independent Committees Already Have Spent Nearly \$28 million for the General Election

The first snapshot of campaign finance activity for the 2021 gubernatorial campaign shows candidates have raised \$23.1 million and spent \$14.6 million for the general election, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

In addition, independent committees taking part in the race already have spent \$13.1 million for a combined total of \$27.7 million.

Table 1
General Election Campaign Finance
Activity Through October 4, 2021

| CANDIDATE | PARTY | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON-HAND |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Murphy, Phil | Democrat | \$13,010,068 | \$ 5,686,075 | \$ 7,323,993 |
| Ciattarelli, Jack | Republican | \$10,081,494 | \$ 8,914,274 | \$ 1,167,221 |
| Hoffman, Madelyn* | Green | \$ 1,874 | NA | NA |
| Mele, Gregg* | Libertarian | NA | NA | NA |
| Kuniansky, Joanne* | Socialist Workers Party | NA | NA | NA |
| TOTAL - CANDIDATES | | \$23,093,436 | \$14,600,349 | \$ 8,491,214 |
| Independent Committees - General | | \$ 8,307,924 | \$13,139,280 | \$ 3,310,462 |
| TOTAL - GENERAL | | \$31,401,360 | \$27,739,629 | \$11,801,676 |
| Pre-Primary/ Primary | | | | |
| Candidates | | | \$16,735,704 | |
| Independents | | | \$13,412,705 | |
| TOTAL - PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND GENERAL | | | \$57,888,038 | |

*Does not expect to spend more than \$5,800.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said that while candidates have spent more at this point than candidates in 2017, independent spending is considerably higher.

"Once again, gubernatorial elections are being held this year only in New Jersey and Virginia. So the Garden State is a major draw for these national political groups," Brindle said. "During the last decade, these and other independent committees have become a major force in federal, state and local campaigns."

Combined with spending during the primary and pre-primary, total spending for the election is \$57.9 million to date. That is more than the \$52.9 million spent at this point in the campaign in 2017, when Governor Phil Murphy first ran for election.

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The most expensive gubernatorial election was the \$87.8 million showdown between Democratic Governor Jon Corzine and Republican Doug Forrester in 2005. It was mostly financed by their personal fortunes and would cost more than \$123 million in today's dollars.

Among the candidates, Murphy, the incumbent, has raised \$13 million and spent \$5.7 million. He has \$7.3 million in reserve.

Former Assemblyman and Republican gubernatorial nominee Jack Ciattarelli has raised \$10.1 million and spent \$8.9 million. His cash-on-hand totals \$1.2 million.

Three third party contenders report minimal spending.

Among independent groups, Our NJ, a political committee formed by the Democratic Governors Association (DGA), has raised the most to date. This year, Murphy is DGA's finance chairman and past chairman.

It has raised \$5.5 million and already spent \$3.4 million, according to filings with ELEC.

In 2017, DGA was the only contributor to Our NJ. This year, it has donated \$1 million so far to the political committee. It also has donated \$300,000 to the Turnout Project, which has initially spent funds on legislative elections. DGA spent a total of \$3.2 million in New Jersey during the full 2017 election.

The biggest contributor to Our NJ is Garden State Forward, which has given \$2.5 million. The group is a federal 527 political organization run by the New Jersey Education Association, the state's largest teacher union and a key Murphy backer.

Table 2
Campaign Finance Activity by Independent Spending
Committees Related to Gubernatorial General Election

| GROUP | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON-HAND |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Garden State Forward (NJEA)* | | \$ 5,000,000 | |
| Our NJ | \$5,500,000 | \$ 3,401,020 | \$2,098,980 |
| Committee to Build the Economy | \$2,513,088 | \$ 1,525,240 | \$ 987,849 |
| Democratic Governors Association** | | \$ 1,300,000 | |
| Growing Economic Opportunities (Laborers)*** | | \$ 900,000 | |
| Carpenters Action Fund*** | | \$ 500,000 | |
| Republican Governors Association | NA | \$ 409,777 | NA |
| Fix NJ Now | \$ 294,836 | \$ 71,203 | \$ 223,633 |
| International Brotherhood of Teamsters | | \$ 32,040 | |
| Totals | \$8,307,924 | \$13,139,280 | \$3,310,462 |

*Gave \$2.5 million to Our NJ and \$2.5 million to Build the Economy

**Contributed \$1,000,000 to Our NJ and \$300,000 to Turnout Project

***Contributions to Our NJ

The Republican Governors Association so far has reported \$409,777 in spending.

It spent \$2.4 million in 2017 trying to defeat Murphy, and \$7.5 million in 2009 when it helped Chris Christie unseat incumbent Democratic Governor Jon Corzine.

A political committee called Committee to Build the Economy spent \$6.5 million helping Murphy win the 2017 election. It was funded mostly with money from unions. So far, its major contributor is Garden State Forward, which has given \$2.5 million.

Fix NJ Now, a pro-Ciattarelli political committee, supported him in the primary and is continuing to independently raise and spend funds on his behalf. So far, it has raised \$294,836 and spent \$71,203.

Much of the candidate spending has been financed thus far with public dollars under the state's Gubernatorial Public Financing Program. It was the nation's first such program in the 1970s.

So far, the two candidates have received \$15.1 million for the general election. They are eligible for \$21 million. Murphy has received \$8.8 million in public money up until now while Ciattarelli has gotten \$6.3 million.

The next public disclosure of gubernatorial campaign finance activity will occur October 28.

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