



NEWS RELEASE

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In 2012, county committees representing both parties reported their worst fundraising in more than a decade. Totals of both parties have trended upward ever since that year and the latest quarterly fundraising numbers reconfirm that trend. One thing should not be forgotten, however- today's totals still pale in comparison to early numbers in the last decade.

A new ELEC analysis provides one explanation for the recent surge- declared and potential contenders for the 2017 gubernatorial election have contributed \$2.1 million to county parties since 2012, said Jeff Brindle, Executive Director of the Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC). It also found nearly 70 percent of the contributions were made since the last gubernatorial election in 2013.

TABLE 1
CONTRIBUTIONS BY POTENTIAL 2017
GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES TO COUNTY PARTIES

PARTY	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (THROUGH JUNE 30)	TOTALS 2012-2016	TOTALS 2012-2013	TOTALS 2014 TO DATE	% SINCE 2014
Democrats	\$ 52,567	\$164,574	\$443,000	\$687,600	\$61,250	\$1,408,991	\$217,141	\$1,191,850	85%
Republicans	\$ 73,584	\$328,416	\$126,303	\$100,680	\$37,007	\$ 665,990	\$402,000	\$ 263,990	40%
Totals	\$126,151	\$492,990	\$569,303	\$788,280	\$98,257	\$2,074,981	\$619,141	\$1,455,840	70%

The possible Democratic field has funneled \$1.4 million into Democratic party war chests since 2012- nearly 6.3 percent of all Democratic county party fundraising since that year. Most of the money- 85 percent- was provided since 2014. On the Republican side, the \$665,990 in GOP contributions made up nearly 5 percent of total county coffers since 2012. Just 40 percent of those checks arrived since 2014.

“There are many reasons people make campaign contributions. But in the past, we have seen potential candidates give more to county parties before a gubernatorial election. A similar pattern seems to be happening now, at least on the Democratic side,” Brindle said.

It is not uncommon for candidates, especially legislative leaders, to work with county officials on various campaigns. But Brindle said it also makes sense that would-be candidates need to build support among county party leaders since party officials influence the ballot position during primary elections.

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County party officials this month jointly reported the best second quarter fundraising total since 2009 along with the largest cash reserve since that same year.

In a year without gubernatorial or legislative elections, county parties combined have raised \$2.8 million during the first six months of 2016. In 2009, they raised about the same amount. Both gubernatorial and legislative candidates were running in 2009.

County party committees also reported a combined total of \$2.1 million in cash reserves- also the most since at least 2009.

TABLE 2
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF COUNTY
PARTIES THROUGH SECOND QUARTER
2009-2016

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	STATE ELECTION?
2009	\$2,829,837	\$3,044,906	\$1,713,660	Governor, Assembly
2010	\$2,070,581	\$2,327,162	\$1,746,121	No
2011	\$2,617,165	\$2,374,567	\$1,444,408	Senate, Assembly
2012	\$2,115,739	\$2,186,873	\$1,036,375	No
2013	\$2,647,728	\$2,560,856	\$1,627,287	Governor, Senate, Assembly
2014	\$2,379,387	\$2,316,264	\$1,492,059	No
2015	\$2,597,718	\$2,365,487	\$1,706,465	Assembly
2016	\$2,811,365	\$2,409,239	\$2,088,607	No

ELEC looked deeper into fundraising trends to try to explain why county fundraising has ticked upward.

For purposes of analysis, ELEC included the one announced candidate (Phil Murphy) and 14 other Democrats and Republicans who have openly expressed an interest in a run or who are considered contenders and haven't ruled it out.

So far this year, contributions from potential gubernatorial candidates are small though six months remain.

The most substantial contributions were made during the past two years. Democrats gave the most.

Last year, contributions by Democrats made up 11.3 percent of all contributions received by county parties. In 2014, the percentage among Democrats was 9 percent.

“Both were big increases from the two previous years. And they have given the party committees a boost,” said Brindle.

TABLE 3
CONTRIBUTIONS BY POTENTIAL DEMOCRATIC
GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES 2012-2016 TO COUNTY PARTIES*

POTENTIAL CANDIDATES	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (THROUGH JUNE 30)	TOTAL
Former Ambassador and Goldman Sachs Partner Phil Murphy	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 201,500	\$ 299,000	\$ 18,350	\$ 518,850
Senate President Stephen Sweeney	\$ 9,167	\$ 106,667	\$ 149,500	\$ 224,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 490,334
Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 49,100	\$ 124,000	\$ 28,000	\$ 206,100
Senator Ray Lesniak	\$ 21,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 21,200	\$ 1,400	\$ 5,300	\$ 68,900
Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter	\$ 4,500	\$ 15,500	\$ 6,600	\$ 28,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 57,600
Assemblyman John Wisniewski	\$ 12,000	\$ 10,117	\$ 12,500	\$ 10,700	\$ 6,100	\$ 51,417
Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo	\$ 5,500	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,500
State Investment Council Chairman Tom Byrne	\$ 200	\$ 6,000	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,700
Montclair Councilman Robert Russo	\$ 200	\$ 290	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 590
Totals	\$ 52,567	\$ 164,574	\$ 443,000	\$ 687,600	\$ 61,250	\$ 1,408,991
Democratic County Party Fundraising Total	\$3,934,301	\$5,889,643	\$4,943,216	\$6,075,026	\$1,596,778	\$22,438,964
Percent of Total Party Fundraising	1.3%	2.8%	9.0%	11.3%	3.8%	6.3%

*In cases where candidates used joint committees to donate to county parties, the amount was divided by the number of joint committee members.

Some statewide candidates in the past also gave significant sums to county parties.

One of the most notable examples came in the last decade, when two wealthy men who self-financed their gubernatorial campaigns ran in 2005.

Former Goldman Sachs partner Jon Corzine became US Senator in 2000, then won election as governor in 2005. He gave \$4.8 million to county parties before, during and after that election. His Republican opponent in 2005, health insurance executive and former state pension director Doug Forrester, ran unsuccessfully for US Senate in 2002, then ran for governor against Corzine in 2005. He also contributed a sizeable amount to Republican county parties prior to the election (\$326,105). The total windfall for the county parties from just two men- \$5.1 million.

TABLE 4
CONTRIBUTIONS BY JON CORZINE AND DOUG
FORRESTER TO COUNTY PARTIES

YEAR	CORZINE	FORRESTER	ANNUAL TOTALS
1999	\$ 121,500		\$ 121,500
2000	\$ 891,075		\$ 891,075
2001	\$ 741,545		\$ 741,545
2002	\$ 386,850	\$ 55,950	\$ 442,800
2003	\$ 437,850	\$ 76,025	\$ 513,875
2004	\$ 524,000	\$125,100	\$ 649,100
2005	\$ 450,000	\$ 69,030	\$ 519,030
2006	\$ 493,000		\$ 493,000
2007	\$ 450,000		\$ 450,000
2008	\$ 264,000		\$ 264,000
Grand Total	\$4,759,820	\$326,105	\$5,085,925

While potential candidates for the 2017 Republican gubernatorial nomination gave a respectable sum since 2012 (\$665,990), the bulk of their contributions came in 2013. It should be noted that Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, a potential candidate, cannot make contributions to county parties because she has no individual fundraising committee apart from the governor’s campaign committee.

**TABLE 5
 CONTRIBUTIONS BY POTENTIAL REPUBLICAN
 GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES 2012-2016 TO COUNTY PARTIES***

POTENTIAL CANDIDATES	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (THROUGH JUNE 30)	TOTAL
Assembly Minority Leader Jon Bramnick	\$ 21,445	\$ 180,733	\$ 65,400	\$ 58,905	\$ 4,300	\$ 330,783
Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean	\$ 28,200	\$ 105,383	\$ 34,700	\$ 32,900	\$ 1,350	\$ 202,533
Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli	\$ 23,939	\$ 42,300	\$ 23,503	\$ 8,875	\$ 31,537	\$ 129,974
Evesham Mayor Randy Brown	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,700
Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Businessman Joseph Rullo	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ 73,584	\$ 328,416	\$ 126,303	\$ 100,680	\$ 37,007	\$ 665,990
GOP County Fundraising Total	\$2,472,838	\$4,019,208	\$2,690,708	\$3,086,851	\$1,214,687	\$13,484,292
Percent of Total Party Fundraising	3%	8.2%	4.7%	3.3%	3%	4.9%

*In cases where candidates used joint committees to donate to county parties, the amount was divided by the number of joint committee members.

Brindle noted that despite the evident windfall from some gubernatorial candidates, county fundraising pales compared to the early 2000s. Tight restrictions on public contractor contributions took a big bite out of their fundraising after 2005, and Corzine and Forrester ended their contributions.

“Democratic county committees raised \$6.1 million in 2015, a healthy jump from when party coffers bottomed out at \$3.9 million in 2012. But last year’s receipts are miniscule compared to the \$18.8 million Democratic committees received 2003, their peak years,” said Brindle.

“Likewise, Republican fundraising has grown from \$2.5 million in 2012 to \$3.1 million last year. However, GOP county committees raised \$8.4 million in 2001, their top year,” he said.

Brindle has recommended legislation that might help strengthen parties by boosting their coffers. The proposal would eliminate the quagmire of state, county and municipal pay-to-play laws by combining them into a single state law. It would raise the basic contribution limit for contractors from \$300 to \$1,000 but require disclosure of more contracts. Legislators from both parties have introduced bills to achieve these changes.

Looking solely at the first six months this year, Democrats raised and spent more money than Republicans and also reported larger cash-on-hand. Republicans reported a larger net worth, meaning cash-on-hand adjusted by debts owed to or by the committee.

Both Democrats and Republicans raised and spent more than they did four years ago. Both reported an increase in cash reserves though Democrats showed the largest percentage gain.

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY COUNTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30-
2012 VERSUS 2016

	RAISED-2016	SPENT-2016**	CASH-ON-HAND-2016	NET WORTH-2016*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 1,596,678	\$ 1,440,208	\$ 1,286,379	\$ 973,719
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 1,214,687	\$ 969,031	\$ 802,228	\$ 1,689,000
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	\$ 2,811,365	\$ 2,409,239	\$ 2,088,607	\$ 2,662,719
	RAISED-2012	SPENT-2012**	CASH-ON-HAND-2012	NET WORTH-2012*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 1,145,486	\$ 1,387,514	\$ 616,727	\$ 141,005
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 970,253	\$ 799,358	\$ 419,647	\$ 780,993
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	\$ 2,115,739	\$ 2,186,873	\$ 1,036,375	\$ 921,997
Difference 2016 versus 2012				
Democratic County Party Committees	39%	4%	109%	591%
Republican County Party Committees	25%	21%	91%	116%
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	33%	10%	102%	189%

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

**Spending may exceed fundraising due to reserves carried over from previous year.

Among Democratic county committees, Bergen, Camden, Essex, and Passaic reported cash-on-hand and net worth above \$100,000. Burlington and Hudson Counties reported a negative net worth after adjusting for debts.

TABLE 7
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
DEMOCRATIC COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2016

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
Atlantic	\$ 14,468	\$ 15,396	\$ 13,663	\$ 13,663
Bergen	\$ 270,031	\$ 134,382	\$ 202,190	\$114,192
Burlington	\$ 19,695	\$ 19,024	\$ 2,458	\$(83,509)
Camden	\$ 189,601	\$ 221,087	\$ 178,841	\$178,841
Cape May	\$ 2,070	\$ 4,388	\$ 2,473	\$ 2,473
Cumberland	\$ 23,800	\$ 23,687	\$ 5,301	\$ 5,301
Essex	\$ 219,846	\$ 166,994	\$ 104,241	\$104,241
Gloucester	\$ 156,785	\$ 122,825	\$ 51,206	\$ 44,043
Hudson	\$ 143,834	\$ 116,069	\$ 90,115	\$(49,030)
Hunterdon	\$ 7,095	\$ 8,962	\$ 5,914	\$ 5,914
Mercer	\$ 900	\$ 31,744	\$ 18,105	\$ 18,105
Middlesex	\$ 129,655	\$ 221,299	\$ 18,193	\$ 18,193
Monmouth	\$ 121,125	\$ 97,231	\$ 39,124	\$ 39,124
Morris**	\$ 20,722	\$ 18,126	\$ 13,327	\$ 13,327
Ocean	\$ 27,280	\$ 12,991	\$ 25,778	\$ 41,945
Passaic	\$ 159,974	\$ 132,583	\$ 369,497	\$369,497
Salem	\$ 14,780	\$ 3,058	\$ 38,002	\$ 38,002
Somerset	\$ 25,504	\$ 11,360	\$ 11,290	\$ 11,290
Sussex	\$ 13,509	\$ 18,920	\$ 5,743	\$ 5,743
Union	\$ 35,491	\$ 55,989	\$ 90,880	\$ 82,326
Warren**	\$ 513	\$ 4,093	\$ 38	\$ 38
DEMOCRATS-TOTAL	\$1,596,678	\$1,440,208	\$1,286,379	\$973,719

**First quarter numbers
 NA means not available.

Among Republican county committees, Somerset reported a cash-on-hand of more than \$100,000. Somerset and Burlington reported a net worth above \$100,000. Bergen reported a negative net worth after adjusting for debts.

TABLE 8
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
REPUBLICAN COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2016

COUNTY	RECEIPTS	EXPENDITURES	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
Atlantic	\$ 12,601	\$ 10,942	\$ 3,194	\$ 3,194
Bergen	\$ 80,368	\$ 90,455	\$ 89	\$ (10,588)
Burlington	\$ 471,303	\$458,595	\$ 30,513	\$ 928,379
Camden	\$ 9,089	\$ 4,683	\$ 9,709	\$ 9,709
Cape May	\$ 85,210	\$ 13,486	\$ 74,975	\$ 74,975
Cumberland	\$ 28,480	\$ 10,712	\$ 46,328	\$ 46,328
Essex	\$ 6,500	\$ 11,827	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Gloucester	\$ 8,201	\$ 11,031	\$ 5,355	\$ 5,355
Hudson*	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 36,040	\$ 36,681	\$ 9,508	\$ 9,508
Mercer	\$ 9,690	\$ 5,368	\$ 9,879	\$ 9,879
Middlesex	\$ 26,945	\$ 13,664	\$ 27,012	\$ 27,012
Monmouth	\$ 38,073	\$ 36,295	\$ 8,520	\$ 8,520
Morris	\$ 59,170	\$ 48,298	\$ 33,735	\$ 33,664
Ocean	\$ 61,840	\$ 44,758	\$ 27,443	\$ 27,443
Passaic**	\$ 18,013	\$ 14,514	\$ 3,851	\$ 3,851
Salem	\$ 23,785	\$ 24,824	\$ 7,929	\$ 7,929
Somerset	\$ 177,779	\$ 80,775	\$436,925	\$ 436,579
Sussex	\$ 24,230	\$ 16,351	\$ 18,564	\$ 18,564
Union	\$ 25,225	\$ 21,749	\$ 46,113	\$ 46,113
Warren	\$ 12,145	\$ 14,023	\$ 1,236	\$ 1,236
REPUBLICANS-TOTAL	\$1,214,687	\$969,031	\$802,228	\$1,689,000

*Does not expect to spend more than \$5,500 this year. **First quarter numbers

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon August 2, 2016. They have yet to be verified by ELEC staff, and should be considered preliminary.

Interested parties are encouraged to review individual reports at ELEC's website (www.elec.state.nj.us).