



NEWS RELEASE

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PRESS ADVISORY

More than \$16.7 million in campaign donations received by local candidates in last fall's general elections can now be easily searched on the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission website.

Jeff Brindle, Executive Director of the Commission, encouraged members of the public, media members and candidates to take advantage of the new local contributor database, which is available at www.elec.state.nj.us/publicinformation/searchdatabase.htm.

Brindle said expanding disclosure to include local candidates helps fulfill ELEC's central mission, to make it as convenient as possible for citizens to track the flow of campaign cash to their elected officials.

Such disclosure also can help enforce Pay-to-Play laws by ensuring that public contractors abide by contribution limits intended to thwart corruption. In April, reports filed directly by public contractors that list their donations also will be viewable on ELEC's website.

"Hopefully, the availability of this information will help citizens become more actively engaged in their communities. Enlightened citizens make the best citizens," said Brindle.

He added that making the local contribution data readily accessible "fulfills a top priority of mine initiated last July."

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All candidates for elected office in New Jersey who raise more than minimal amounts of donations are supposed to file reports that list their donations. Facsimiles of these reports can be called up on ELEC's website and printed out.

Until last fall, people also could do quick computer lookups of donations to gubernatorial candidates, legislators, and state and county party committees.

In November, Brindle announced that ELEC, for the first time, was including within its searchable database \$5.5 million of primary donations to local candidates. This group includes candidates for municipal offices such as mayor and council, along with candidates for county positions such as executive, freeholder, or clerk. With the latest additions, contributions from the general election are now available for these candidates. Donations to last year's May and June municipal runoff candidates also will be available shortly.

The expanded database makes the flow of local campaign cash easier to trace. For instance, if someone wants to see if a company made a donation to a particular mayoral candidate or even several candidates, they now can enter the firm's name and find out instantly. Or the same person could find ALL donations contributed to a particular candidate. List of donations can be sorted by names, dates or amounts.

ELEC staff can help with searches or answer other questions. To reach them, call the toll-free hotline at 1-888-313-3532 (within New Jersey only) or by dialing 609-292-8700.

Not all local donations are yet available within ELEC's searchable database. In the future, the Commission also hopes to include political contributions to municipal party committees, school boards, and fire commissioners. Until then, facsimiles of reports filed by these groups can be obtained through ELEC's website.

In the recent general elections, individual county and municipal candidates collected nearly \$16.7 million from campaign donors. Those same candidates reported spending \$15.3 million. Totals used in the release include donations under \$300, which are not included in the local donor database.

An analysis of the local contributions by Commission staff found that general election fundraising topped \$200,000 in 5 **municipalities**:

Location	Receipts	Disbursements
Hoboken City	\$1,207,031	\$993,428
Brick Township	\$360,872	\$282,969
Gloucester Township	\$313,633	\$294,460
Edison Township	\$291,917	\$291,917
Toms River (Dover Township)	\$206,066	\$216,126

Candidate fundraising topped \$100,000 in 16 other municipalities: Hamilton Township (Mercer), Parsippany-Troy Hills Township, Point Pleasant Borough, Morristown Town, Medford Township, Atlantic City, Cherry Hill Township, Old Bridge Township, Westfield Town, Berkeley Township, Camden City, Woodbridge Township, Jackson Township, Secaucus Town, Deptford Township and Marlboro Township.

Fundraising by candidates for county offices also topped \$200,000 in 12 **counties**:

Location	Receipts	Disbursements
Bergen County	\$1,333,324	\$1,331,987
Middlesex County	\$812,610	\$811,429
Burlington County	\$624,735	\$619,116
Union County	\$472,075	\$464,955
Camden County	\$418,797	\$332,293
Passaic County	\$395,259	\$370,066
Gloucester County	\$388,205	\$383,290
Atlantic County	\$369,288	\$374,892
Cumberland County	\$359,127	\$347,967
Essex County	\$280,314	\$69,056
Ocean County	\$270,013	\$262,011
Salem County	\$226,520	\$200,391

Fundraising topped \$100,000 in four other counties; Monmouth, Somerset, Morris and Mercer.

Local fundraising could be even more active in the coming year with a county executive race looming in Bergen County, and elections set in several major cities, including Bayonne, Clifton, Trenton, Newark and Paterson.

Additional background about local fundraising is available by reviewing “Local Campaign Financing: An Analysis of Trends in Communities Large and Small,” a report prepared by then-deputy director Brindle in December 2005 and available at:

<http://www.elec.state.nj.us/pdf/whitepapers/white18.pdf>).

In that 59-page “white paper” analysis, Brindle reviewed 50 communities and found that between 1994 and 2004, municipal candidates just in those communities had raised \$162 million and spent \$144 million. During the same period, general election fundraising grew 98 percent while spending soared 120 percent.

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