



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:

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Legislative candidates have set aside *\$13.7 million in reserves as they head toward this fall's general election, when all 120 seats are up for reelection, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

Reports submitted by candidates 20 days after the June 7 primary election show that Democrats, who control both legislative houses, have the most funds in the bank- *more than \$9 million. Republicans have more than \$4 million in reserve. The combined totals are *\$1.5 million higher than the candidates reported May 9, which is 29 days before the primary election.

Table 1
Current Fundraising Reserves
of Legislative Candidates

Party	Cash-On-Hand On May 9	*Cash-on-Hand on June 27	*Difference - \$	*Difference -%
Democrats	\$ 8,247,345	\$ 9,474,450	\$ 1,227,105	15%
Republicans	\$ 3,965,403	\$ 4,223,915	\$ 258,512	7%
Grand Total	*\$ 12,212,748	\$ 13,698,365	\$ 1,485,617	12%

The combined total appears to be the second largest cash-on-hand total ever and could even be the largest.

The initial reports filed by candidates for the 2007 general election showed about \$13.8 million in cash-on-hand. However, that total included \$1.9 million in public funds from a pilot legislative public financing program that has been discontinued. It also was reported 29 days before the election after summer fundraising had taken place. So this could be the most legislative candidates have raised on their own at this early point.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said with little serious competition in the primary elections, it is not surprising that many candidates, particularly incumbents, were able to build bigger war chests for the fall.

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“Now the real battle begins,” said Brindle. “This is the first time in four years that all 120 seats are up for reelection. The stakes are high this fall. Control of the Legislature and the policy agenda are in play this November.”

Incumbents hold a huge edge over challengers at this point with nearly *eight times more cash reserves. Typically, however, challengers collect the bulk of their money during the general election.

Table 2
Cash-on-Hand Totals of Incumbents
Compared to Challengers

Status	*Cash-on-Hand
Incumbents	\$ 12,134,618
Challengers	\$ 1,563,747
Grand Total	\$ 13,698,365

“Historically incumbents enjoy a reelection rate of more than 90 percent, which gives them a built-in advantage in raising money,” Brindle said. “They usually are far better known than a challenger, which also gives them a leg up. And they have two or four years to build their war chests,” Brindle said.

Among the ten candidates with the largest cash-on-hand reserves, seven are State Senators and three are State Assembly members. All are incumbents, though Assemblyman Vincent Polistina is running for State Senate.

Table 3
Top Ten Legislative Candidates
Ranked by Cash-on-Hand

Candidate	Cash-On-Hand on June 27
Senator Richard J. Codey	\$ 1,133,029
Senator Stephen M. Sweeney	\$ 930,470
Senator Shirley K. Turner	\$ 568,256
*Senator Paul Sarlo	\$ 563,581
Senator Bob Smith	\$ 437,881
Senator Joe Kyrillos, Jr.	\$ 405,841
Assemblyman Vincent Polistina	\$ 349,651
Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr.	\$ 340,902
Senator Donald Norcross	\$ 336,904
Assemblyman Louis D. Greenwald	\$ 304,478

Reports filed by legislative candidates are available online on ELEC’s website at www.elec.state.nj.us.

A downloadable summary of data from those reports is available in both spreadsheet and PDF formats at <http://www.elec.state.nj.us/publicinformation/statistics.htm>.