



NEWS RELEASE

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With 80 state Assembly seats in contention this fall, the “Big Six” fundraising committees have amassed a combined reserve of \$1.6 million, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

**TABLE 1
FUNDRAISING BY “BIG SIX” COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31 2015**

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT**	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$258,552	\$ 452,579	\$ 359,522	\$ (153,209)
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 27,024	\$ 19,028	\$ 226,084	\$ 226,084
Assembly Republican Victory	\$141,448	\$ 152,561	\$ 211,716	\$ 211,716
Sub Total-Republicans	\$427,024	\$ 624,168	\$ 797,322	\$ 284,591
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$218,006	\$ 204,838	\$ 188,819	\$ 122,576
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 17,404	\$ 45,669	\$ 151,509	\$ 131,509
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$311,060	\$ 142,376	\$ 485,900	\$ 455,461
Sub Total-Democrats	\$546,470	\$ 392,883	\$ 826,228	\$ 709,546
Total-Both Parties	\$973,494	\$1,017,051	\$1,623,550	\$ 994,137

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

**Some spending totals exceed fundraising totals because of reserves carried over from last year.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said the cash total is the smallest first quarter reserve for a legislative election year since at least 2007.

“While there still is plenty of time to raise money, the Big Six committees had bigger cash balances at this point in four previous election years,” said Brindle. “It seems to further confirm our belief that party committee fundraising has been in a steady decline due to several trends.”

Brindle said that by enacting several recommendations set forth by ELEC, this trend may begin to be reversed.

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These include combining the myriad of so-called “pay-to-play” contribution restrictions into a single law, allowing public contractors to make larger contributions particularly to parties, adjusting other contribution limits for inflation, and making independent special interest groups abide by the same disclosure laws as parties and candidates.

Brindle noted that the 2015 election is unusual because it is the first time since 1999 that Assembly contests are alone on the fall ballot.

“In all other election years since 1999, Assembly candidates ran with either gubernatorial candidates, Senate candidates, or both,” he said.

Brindle said a comparison of inflation adjusted figures for 1999 compared to 2015 hints at the broader issues pinching party coffers.

“With inflation adjustments, party totals for 1999 all are higher than this year,” he said. “Even without adjusting for inflation, the parties had larger cash reserves and net worth totals 16 years ago.”

TABLE 2
“BIG SIX” 1ST QUARTER CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY
1999 VERSUS 2015

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
1999 (Unadjusted for Inflation)	\$ 946,425	\$ 882,967	\$2,518,684	\$2,432,574
1999 (Adjusted for Inflation)	\$1,344,354	\$1,254,214	\$3,577,676	\$3,455,361
2015	\$ 973,494	\$1,017,051	\$1,623,550	\$ 994,137

“What this means is that parties, because of the broader trends we have noted, haven’t been able to even keep up with inflation. If they had, they probably would be spending more this year,” Brindle said.

Looking at combined first quarter totals dating back to 2007, fundraising and cash-on-hand figures- two key indicators of campaign finance activity- were lower only in non-election years.

One trend that runs against the grain- parties during the first three months of this year spent more than they did in each of the four previous election years.

TABLE 3
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY “BIG SIX”
AT END OF 1ST QUARTER BY YEAR

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH	STATE ELECTIONS
2007	\$1,667,146	\$ 880,509	\$5,365,847	\$5,181,835	Senate and Assembly
2008	\$1,799,469	\$1,010,346	\$1,166,446	\$ 180,217	
2009	\$1,741,580	\$ 754,923	\$2,844,159	\$2,649,177	Governor and Assembly
2010	\$ 885,123	\$ 694,309	\$1,474,272	\$1,290,437	
2011	\$1,738,239	\$ 777,847	\$2,500,926	\$2,191,738	Senate and Assembly
2012	\$1,293,649	\$1,617,192	\$ 704,601	\$ 503,541	
2013	\$1,464,033	\$ 583,756	\$2,564,802	\$2,421,411	Governor and Both Houses
2014	\$ 600,526	\$ 694,221	\$ 750,904	\$ 443,050	
2015	\$ 973,494	\$1,017,051	\$1,623,550	\$ 994,137	Assembly

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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