



NEWS RELEASE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE:
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Fundraising by county party officials is lagging behind the pace of three previous election years despite state assembly and county elections this fall, according to the latest reports filed with the Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

County parties combined have raised just under \$2.6 million during the first six months of 2015. That total is lower than comparable sums for 2009, 2011, and 2013, which were years that also featured statewide elections.

Despite the sluggish fundraising, the 42 county party committees reported a combined total of \$1.7 million in cash reserves. That is less than in 2009, but more than in 2011 or 2013. Candidates and parties always prefer to have as much cash as possible heading into an election.

TABLE 1
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF COUNTY
PARTIES THROUGH SECOND QUARTER
2009-2015

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

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said without further legislative reforms recommended by ELEC, party committees could be trading water indefinitely.

"State and county parties have faced increased financial difficulty as more special interests in recent years have spent their money independently instead of sending checks to the parties," he said. "Party committees also have been stung by tight limits on public contractor contributions and contribution limits that have not been raised for several years to offset inflation. ELEC reforms could offset these trends."

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Under those recommended legislative changes, which have bipartisan ELEC support, state pay-to-play laws would be streamlined into a single state law, a key loophole would be eliminated, and the contribution limit for contractors would be raised from \$300 to \$1,000.

ELEC has also recommended that state lawmakers expand disclosure rules so special interest groups who spend independently are required to publicly report their contributions and expenditures just like candidates and parties. Also, the Commission has recommended that all contribution limits be adjusted higher to offset inflation.

Comparing performance by party, Democrats raised and spent more money than Republicans during the first six months of the year, and also reported larger cash-on-hand.

Both Democrats and Republicans raised slightly less money than they did four years ago. Democrats spent slightly more during the first six months of the year compared to 2011, while Republicans spent less.

Both reported an increase in cash reserves though Republicans showed the largest percentage gain.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY COUNTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30-
2011 VERSUS 2015

	RAISED-2011	SPENT-2011**	CASH-ON-HAND-2011	NET WORTH-2011*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$1,421,500	\$1,286,291	\$ 882,112	\$ 518,522
Republican County Party Committees	\$1,215,483	\$1,098,559	\$ 565,006	\$ 749,961
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	\$2,636,982	\$2,384,849	\$1,447,118	\$1,268,483
	RAISED-2015	SPENT-2015**	CASH-ON-HAND-2015	NET WORTH-2015*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$1,415,710	\$1,442,714	\$ 934,320	\$ 745,908
Republican County Party Committees	\$1,182,008	\$ 922,774	\$ 772,145	\$1,564,030
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	\$2,597,718	\$2,365,487	\$1,706,465	\$2,309,939
Difference 2011 versus 2015				
Democratic County Party Committees	-0.4%	12%	6%	44%
Republican County Party Committees	-3%	-16%	37%	109%
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	-1%	-1%	18%	82%

*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 that have filed all of their reports, 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 3
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
DEMOCRATIC COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2015

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
Atlantic	\$ 16,532	\$ 12,729	\$ 38,391	\$ 38,391
Bergen	\$ 168,465	\$ 163,012	\$ 10,582	\$ 87,585
Burlington	\$ 20,805	\$ 10,395	\$ 10,837	\$ (75,130)
Camden	\$ 146,683	\$ 188,415	\$ 86,075	\$ 86,075
Cape May	\$ 5,045	\$ 710	\$ 8,526	\$ 8,526
Cumberland	\$ 18,300	\$ 31,963	\$ 3,061	\$ 3,061
Essex	\$ 180,695	\$ 171,135	\$ 60,928	\$ 60,928
Gloucester	\$ 78,973	\$ 95,219	\$ 67,326	\$ 39,319
Hudson	\$ 230,712	\$ 260,749	\$ 67,890	\$ (91,162)
Hunterdon	\$ 4,210	\$ 6,041	\$ 16,987	\$ 16,987
Mercer	\$ 966	\$ 15,155	\$ 48,606	\$ 48,606
Middlesex	\$ 100,414	\$ 126,940	\$ 281	\$ 281
Monmouth	\$ 126,452	\$ 88,329	\$ 26,204	\$ 26,204
Morris	\$ 25,205	\$ 19,995	\$ 11,925	\$ 11,925
Ocean	\$ 23,329	\$ 22,588	\$ 7,514	\$ 23,681
Passaic	\$ 170,639	\$ 90,516	\$ 397,151	\$ 397,151
Salem	\$ 600	\$ 3,513	\$ 9,464	\$ 9,464
Somerset**	\$ 14,895	\$ 13,252	\$ 2,210	\$ 2,210
Sussex	\$ 6,067	\$ 5,700	\$ 3,664	\$ 3,664
Union	\$ 72,954	\$ 109,567	\$ 59,717	\$ 51,163
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
DEMOCRATS-TOTAL	\$1,415,710	\$1,442,714	\$ 934,320	\$ 745,908

**First quarter numbers
 NA means not available.

Among Republican county committees that have filed all of their reports, Somerset reported a cash reserve larger than \$100,000. Somerset and Burlington both reported a net worth larger than \$100,000.

TABLE 4
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
REPUBLICAN COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2015

COUNTY	RECEIPTS	EXPENDITURES	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
Atlantic	\$ 39,912	\$ 80,320	\$ 2,935	\$ 2,935
Bergen	\$ 120,432	\$ 89,007	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,500
Burlington	\$ 368,671	\$ 325,071	\$ 53,753	\$ 850,528
Camden	\$ 10,003	\$ 5,814	\$ 23,503	\$ 23,503
Cape May	\$ 75,902	\$ 31,765	\$ 52,705	\$ 52,705
Cumberland	\$ 12,921	\$ 10,636	\$ 23,852	\$ 23,852
Essex	\$ 13,000	\$ 11,118	\$ 4,155	\$ 4,155
Gloucester	\$ 15,735	\$ 20,657	\$ 6,829	\$ 6,829
Hudson*				
Hunterdon	\$ 20,345	\$ 22,748	\$ 20,359	\$ 20,359
Mercer	\$ 9,067	\$ 6,942	\$ 5,235	\$ 5,235
Middlesex	\$ 22,733	\$ 6,985	\$ 39,064	\$ 39,064
Monmouth	\$ 60,478	\$ 60,279	\$ 25,080	\$ 20,526
Morris	\$ 75,345	\$ 44,587	\$ 45,465	\$ 45,403
Ocean	\$ 55,629	\$ 24,104	\$ 34,780	\$ 34,780
Passaic	\$ 34,394	\$ 34,962	\$ 1,821	\$ 1,821
Salem	\$ 25,210	\$ 38,096	\$ 19,580	\$ 19,580
Somerset	\$ 191,513	\$ 67,564	\$ 321,550	\$ 321,277
Sussex	\$ 6,855	\$ 8,844	\$ 2,590	\$ 2,590
Union	\$ 19,713	\$ 22,193	\$ 32,454	\$ 32,454
Warren	\$ 4,150	\$ 11,082	\$ 2,936	\$ 2,936
REPUBLICANS-TOTAL	\$1,182,008	\$ 922,774	\$ 772,145	\$1,564,030

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

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon July 27, 2015. 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).