



NEWS RELEASE

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The 2015 Assembly election has left the “Big Six” fundraising committees with the third lowest combined cash reserves since 2007, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

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

YEAR	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
2016	\$ 673,048	\$ 555,175	\$1,097,091	\$ 415,590	

The two state parties and four legislative leadership PACs reported \$1,097,091 in cash-on-hand for the first quarter of 2016. Only in 2012 and 2014 did they report lower totals. Both those years also followed statewide elections. When cash reserves are adjusted for debts owed to or by committees, it leaves a “net worth” total of \$415,590. Dating back to 2007, that figure is the lowest Big Six net worth figure except for 2008.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said last year’s election clearly had an impact on the finances of both political parties.

“But the latest numbers also offer further evidence that longer term trends are making it harder for the party committees to raise money. For instance, the parties combined reported \$5.4 million in reserves at the same point in 2007. That’s five times the current cash-on-hand,” he said.

Brindle said the long-term trends that have squeezed party coffers include tight limits on contributions by public contractors and a growing tendency for special interest groups to spend independently on campaigns instead of sending checks directly to the Big Six.

“We are working right now with members of both parties on legislation that could strengthen the finances of party committees, which are more accountable and transparent than many of the independent groups that now dominate state elections,” he said.

Recommendations include combining the maze 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 higher to offset inflation, and making independent special interest groups comply with the same disclosure laws as parties and candidates.

During the first quarter, Democratic committees raised and spend more money than Republican committees and reported a larger net worth. Republicans reported more cash-on-hand.

**TABLE 2
FUNDRAISING BY “BIG SIX” COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2016**

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT**	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 56,713	\$ 84,944	\$ 154,611	\$(369,986)
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 75,300	\$ 20,968	\$ 421,114	\$ 421,114
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 86,254	\$ 34,801	\$ 142,803	\$ 142,803
Sub Total-Republicans	\$218,267	\$140,713	\$ 718,528	\$ 193,931
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$199,502	\$206,877	\$ 46,715	\$(59,751)
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 32,800	\$ 63,699	\$ 209,582	\$ 189,582
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$222,479	\$143,886	\$ 122,266	\$ 91,828
Sub Total-Democrats	\$454,781	\$414,462	\$ 378,563	\$ 221,659
Total-Both Parties	\$673,048	\$555,175	\$1,097,091	\$ 415,590

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

**Some spending totals exceed fundraising totals because the committee dipped into reserve or incurred debt.

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/elecnj).