



NEWS RELEASE

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Through Third Quarter, Big Six Totals Lag Other Recent Election Years

The so-called Big Six political fund-raising committees have raised \$3.8 million so far this year while spending \$3.7 million, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The two state parties and four legislative leadership committees also had a combined \$1.5 million socked away in cash reserves.

With all 80 Assembly seats up for reelection this year plus a special election for the first legislative district state Senate spot, the numbers are below par for state election years dating back to 2007.

Table 1
Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six”
January 1 through September 30, 2019

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH	STATEWIDE ELECTIONS (NON-FEDERAL)
2007	\$9,322,604	\$6,713,165	\$7,368,421	\$7,095,891	Senate and Assembly
2008	\$4,457,887	\$3,508,376	\$1,519,083	\$1,134,427	
2009	\$6,309,496	\$5,098,191	\$3,073,241	\$2,746,784	Governor and Assembly
2010	\$3,160,458	\$2,859,927	\$1,664,237	\$1,457,787	
2011	\$6,913,921	\$5,025,694	\$3,428,259	\$3,123,885	Senate and Assembly
2012	\$4,083,910	\$3,971,806	\$1,331,432	\$1,192,473	
2013	\$7,203,008	\$5,917,331	\$2,970,203	\$2,884,025	Governor and Both Houses
2014	\$2,444,799	\$1,887,661	\$1,388,946	\$ 765,268	
2015	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849	Assembly only
2016	\$2,195,300	\$1,985,370	\$1,188,706	\$1,039,918	
2017	\$5,835,574	\$5,354,876	\$2,317,953	\$2,233,450	Governor and Both Houses
2018	\$3,846,796	\$3,293,435	\$1,298,934	\$1,214,430	
2019	<i>\$3,767,926</i>	<i>\$3,717,128</i>	<i>\$1,476,354</i>	<i>\$1,390,647</i>	Assembly Only*

*Also, one special Senate election

“The latest Big Six numbers are another sign of the nagging fundraising woes faced by parties within the state. Combined fundraising for the same six committees was 2.5 times greater in 2007, or more than \$9 million,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

Through September 30, Democrats have raised and spent more than Republicans and report larger joint coffers.

Table 2
Fundraising by “Big Six” Committees
January 1 through September 30, 2019

ACTIVITY FIRST THREE QUARTERS 2019				
REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 802,100	\$ 595,872	\$ 324,030	\$ 324,030
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 439,250	\$ 346,223	\$ 59,943	\$ 59,543
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 439,250	\$ 346,223	\$ 280,059	\$ 259,303
SUB TOTAL- REPUBLICANS	\$1,443,442	\$1,256,495	\$568,018	\$562,168
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$ 876,249	\$ 852,103	\$ 126,827	\$ 97,409
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 392,525	\$ 209,088	\$ 489,418	\$ 469,418
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$1,055,710	\$1,399,442	\$292,091	\$261,652
SUB-TOTAL- DEMOCRATS	\$2,324,484	\$2,460,633	\$908,336	\$828,479
TOTAL- BOTH PARTIES	\$3,767,926	\$3,717,128	\$1,476,354	\$1,390,647

While the fundraising totals of both parties are smaller than a decade ago, Democratic fundraising has improved since 2015 while Republican numbers are down.

Table 3
Fundraising by “Big Six” Committees
through September 30
2019 versus 2015

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH
2015	\$2,043,497	\$1,776,238	\$1,261,726	\$ 714,128
2019	\$1,443,442	\$1,256,495	\$568,018	\$562,168
Difference-Dollars	\$(600,055)	\$(519,743)	\$(693,708)	\$(151,960)
Difference-%	-29%	-29%	-55%	-21%
DEMOCRATS				
2015	\$1,853,042	\$1,802,780	\$722,903	\$ 632,721
2019	\$2,324,484	\$2,460,633	\$908,336	\$828,479
Difference-Dollars	\$ 471,442	\$657,853	\$185,433	\$195,758
Difference-%	25%	36%	26%	31%
BOTH PARTIES				
2015	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849
2019	\$3,767,926	\$3,717,128	\$1,476,354	\$1,390,647
Difference-Dollars	\$(128,613)	\$138,110	\$(508,275)	\$43,798
Difference-%	-3%	4%	-26%	3%

Brindle said party fundraising has declined steadily since tight restrictions on contributions by public contractors took effect around 2005.

Special interest groups also have been more inclined to participate in elections on their own instead of mailing checks to candidates and parties after federal court rulings swept away contribution limits for independent spending committees.

Bi-partisan legislation recommended by ELEC and pending in the Legislature could help fortify the state's political parties by allowing them to accept larger contributions and free them from pay-to-play restrictions.

“The decline of the parties has increased the clout of independent groups, which are far less accountable and transparent. These groups now dominate the electoral process in New Jersey and nationally,” Brindle said. “ELEC’s legislative fixes should help reverse this trend.”

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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