



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:
October 19, 2020
Revisions in bold italics- 11.24.23

Big Six Committees Bounce Back from Weak Second Quarter But Year-To-Date Fund-raising Still Lags

Fund-raising by the two state parties and four legislative leadership committees significantly improved during the third quarter but year-to-date receipts still are the third lowest since 2007, according to disclosure reports submitted to the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

“Big Six” fund-raising jumped 135 percent to \$1.2 million for the three months ending September 30. At least three committees- Assembly Republican Victory, Senate Republican Majority and Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee- held events during the period, according to GovNetNJ.com, a legislative bill-tracking service that also lists dates of fund-raisers.

By contrast, combined Big Six fund-raising during the second quarter was down 36 percent to \$525,108 after the eruption of the COVID-19 crisis. GovNetNJ.com reported no Big Six events in April, May, or June. Several individual legislators cancelled or postponed events during the period.

**TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF QUARTERLY
FUND-RAISING FOR “BIG SIX”**

REPUBLICANS	FIRST QUARTER 2020	SECOND QUARTER 2020	THIRD QUARTER 2020
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 181,249	\$ 62,938	\$ 395,422
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 37,500	\$ 49,100	\$ 143,500
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 72,679	\$ 27,000	\$ 114,944
Sub Total- Republicans	\$ 291,428	\$ 139,038	\$ 653,866
DEMOCRATS			
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$ 370,195	\$ 202,630	\$ 319,610
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 31,811	\$ 105,190	\$ 90,156
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 125,950	\$ 78,250	\$ 171,042
Sub Total- Democrats	\$ 527,956	\$ 386,070	\$ 580,808
Total- Both Parties	\$ 819,384	\$ 525,108	\$1,234,674
	Difference-\$	\$ (294,276)	\$ 709,566
	Difference-%	-36%	135%

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“Despite the latest quarter-to-quarter rebound, the second quarter drop-off clearly has taken a toll,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

“Total year-to-date fund-raising of \$2.6 million ranks as the third lowest since 2007. The \$2.2 million in spending also is the third lowest during that 14-year-period while the \$1.1 million cash-on-hand is the smallest reserve,” Brindle said. “Party committees are not out of the woods yet.”

TABLE 2
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY “BIG SIX”
AT END OF THIRD QUARTER BY YEAR

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*	STATE ELECTIONS**
2007	\$9,322,604	\$6,713,165	\$7,368,421	\$7,095,891	S/A
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	G/A
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	S/A
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	G/S/A
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	A
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	G/S/A
2018	\$3,846,796	\$3,293,435	\$1,298,934	\$1,214,430	
2019	\$3,767,926	\$3,717,128	\$1,476,354	\$1,390,647	A ¹
2020	\$2,577,166	\$2,173,600	\$1,063,632	\$ 985,996	

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

**G=Gubernatorial; S=Senate; A=Assembly

Through September 30, 2020, Democrats for the year are ahead of Republicans in fund-raising, spending and cash reserves.

TABLE 3
FUND-RAISING BY “BIG SIX” COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 639,610	\$ 560,982	\$ 214,148	\$214,148
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 230,100	\$ 203,067	\$ 55,856	\$ 55,856
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 212,622	\$ 146,579	\$ 106,826	\$106,826
Sub Total-Republicans	\$1,082,332	\$ 910,628	\$ 376,830	\$376,830
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$ 892,435	\$ 746,196	\$ 180,258	\$166,289
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 227,157	\$ 199,769	\$ 416,962	\$383,734
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 375,242	\$ 317,007	\$ 89,582	\$ 59,143
Sub Total-Democrats	\$1,494,834	\$1,262,972	\$ 686,802	\$609,166
Total-Both Parties	\$2,577,166	\$2,173,600	\$1,063,632	\$985,996

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

¹ There was also a special legislative election for the first legislative district Senate seat.

While the COVID-19 crisis hopefully will pose a short-term fund-raising challenge to party leaders, Brindle said longer-term trends present a more nagging problem that requires ELEC-endorsed legislative reforms.

The recommendations include letting party committees accept bigger checks from regular donors as well as public contractors, while sharply limiting the amount public contractors can give to political action committees. Independent special interest groups also should be required to abide by the same disclosure rules as parties and candidates.

“The COVID-19 virus eventually will wane as a threat to political fund-raising. But parties will continue to languish without legislative action to make the election financing system more transparent and accountable while diminishing the influence of “dark money” independent groups,” Brindle said.

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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