



NEWS RELEASE

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Updates Bold Italics- December 10, 2021

2021 Gubernatorial Primary Spending Relatively Modest by Historical Standards

Gubernatorial candidates spent ***\$16,735,704*** on the June 8 primary election, the fifth lowest total in 20 years based on inflation-adjusted numbers, according to reports filed 20 days after the election with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

“Measured in today’s dollars, the 2021 primary pales by comparison to most recent gubernatorial primaries,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

“Spending during years when incumbents are running for reelection, such as 2009, 2013 and 2021, typically tends to be smaller. These elections generally draw fewer candidates- five this year versus 11 in 2017 when there was an open seat. Spending also is down because incumbents seeking reelection usually face little or no primary challenge,” said Brindle. Murphy this year had no primary opponent.

Table 1
Spending by Candidates in
Gubernatorial Primaries-2001-2021

Year	Candidates Only	Inflation Adjusted
2005	\$28,461,596	\$39,230,514
2017	\$34,494,741	\$37,882,718
2001	\$23,019,458	\$35,009,734
2009	\$14,807,441	\$18,579,961
2021	<i>\$16,735,704</i>	<i>\$16,735,704</i>
2013	\$ 9,677,478	\$11,182,874

Adding pre-primary independent spending often done by potential gubernatorial candidates and/or independent spending during the primary election, 2021 still ranked among the less costly primaries in two decades, placing fourth out of six.

Table 2
Total Gubernatorial Primary Spending-2001-2021

Year	Candidates Only	Independent Spending	Total	Inflation Adjusted
2017	\$34,494,741	\$ 9,123,371	\$43,618,112	\$47,902,161
2001	\$23,019,458	\$ 4,899,191	\$27,918,649	\$42,460,795
2005	\$28,461,596		\$28,461,596	\$39,230,514
2021	<i>\$16,735,704</i>	<i>\$13,412,705</i>	<i>\$30,148,409</i>	<i>\$30,148,409</i>
2013	\$ 9,677,478	\$13,011,027	\$22,688,505	\$26,217,852
2009	\$14,807,441		\$14,807,441	\$18,579,961

The two candidates who won their party nominations- Democratic Governor Phil Murphy and former Republican Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli- were the two biggest spenders.

Murphy spent \$7.7 million while Ciattarelli spent \$7 million.

Table 3
Pre-Primary and Primary Campaign Finance Activity
of Gubernatorial Candidates Through September 2, 2021
(Ranked By Cumulative Spending)

Candidate	Party	Cumulative Raised	Cumulative Spent	Cash On Hand
Murphy, Phil	D	\$ 7,966,075	\$ 7,752,229	\$213,846
Ciattarelli, Jack	R	\$ 7,125,870	\$ 7,054,692	\$ 69,178
Singh, Hirsh	R	\$ 1,028,051	\$ 1,026,620	\$ 1,431
Rizzo, Phil	R	\$ 678,619	\$ 655,282	\$ 23,337
Steinhardt, Douglas**	R	\$ 246,881	\$ 246,881	\$ 0
Levine, Brian***	R	NA	NA	NA
TOTAL- PRIMARY CANDIDATES		\$17,045,495	\$16,735,704	\$303,792
TOTAL- INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES			\$13,412,705	
TOTAL			\$30,148,409	

**Withdrew from race. Totals from April quarterly report.

***Expected to spend less than \$5,800 on primary election.

Under a nationally regarded program begun in the 1970s, New Jersey gubernatorial candidates who raise more than a threshold- \$490,000 in 2021- can qualify for two dollars of public financing for every one dollar raised from private sources. Public funding for the 2021 primary was limited to \$4,600,000.

This year, only Murphy and Ciattarelli qualified for public funding. Murphy raised more than enough to qualify for the full \$4.6 million, but his campaign accepted just \$4.1 million. Ciattarelli also qualified for the maximum \$4.6 million primary disbursement.

Adjusting for inflation, the \$8.7 million total was the third most public funds given out for a gubernatorial primary election in two decades.

Table 4
Public Funds Disbursed in Gubernatorial
Primary Elections- 2001-2021

Year	Public Funds Disbursed	Inflation Adjusted
2001	\$11,100,000	\$15,299,869
2005	\$6,488,678	\$8,943,777
2021	\$8,700,000	\$8,700,000
2017	\$6,706,116	\$7,364,772
2009	\$5,809,979	\$7,290,198
2013	\$1,821,199	\$2,104,499

Based on disclosure reports made public to date, independent spending related to the primary campaign totals *\$13,412,705*.

Table 5
Spending By Independent Committees
To Support Gubernatorial Candidates

Formed By Or Affiliated With	Independent Committees	Raised	Spent
Primary/ Pre-Primary			
Murphy, Phil	New Direction for New Jersey	\$13,691,195	<i>\$13,226,216</i>
Ciattarelli, Jack	Fix NJ Now	\$ 370,325	\$ 186,489
Murphy, Phil	Our New Jersey (Democratic Governors Association)**	\$ 0	\$ 0
Ciattarelli, Jack	Defenders of Liberty**	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Total- Independent Committees	\$14,061,520	<i>\$13,412,705</i>

**Committee has registered with ELEC but has spent no funds yet.

Reports filed by gubernatorial candidates and independent committees are available online 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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