



NEWS RELEASE

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County Parties Gear Up for Legislative and Local Elections with Healthy Coffers

Campaign fund-raising and war chests of county parties are running above decade-long averages as they prepare for legislative and local elections this year, according to reports filed for the first three months of 2023.

Fund-raising during the first quarter approached \$1.7 million while cash reserves at the period's end totaled nearly \$3.2 million. Both were up 25 percent over 2013-2023 averages.

At \$1.5 million, spending was 20 percent higher than the average for the same period.

Table 1
First Quarter Totals for County Party Committees 2013-2023

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND
2013	\$ 957,098	\$ 980,628	\$1,457,253
2014	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788
2015	\$1,080,157	\$1,118,813	\$1,437,520
2016	\$1,499,334	\$ 970,613	\$2,027,203
2017	\$1,195,248	\$1,250,534	\$2,086,933
2018	\$1,371,138	\$1,378,945	\$2,657,429
2019	\$1,648,413	\$1,654,402	\$3,341,448
2020	\$1,234,693	\$1,290,897	\$2,155,834
2021	\$ 695,644	\$ 897,135	\$2,657,845
2022	\$1,346,643	\$1,538,378	\$3,872,588
2023	\$1,675,860	\$1,552,863	\$3,193,619
2013-2023 Average	\$1,250,244	\$1,248,413	\$2,381,860
2023 Versus Average	25%	20%	25%

The reports include fund-raising through March 31, 2023. On April 3, 2023, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation (S-2866) that makes several changes to the main statute enforced by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

One change likely to impact county party finances raises from \$37,500 to \$75,000 the annual contribution limit that applies to those committees. The contribution limit has not been adjusted upward for 18 years.

The new law also allows public contractors to resume making political donations to all party committees, including counties, for the first time in more than a decade.

During the quarter, Democratic county party committees raised nearly twice as much as Republican committees and spent more than twice as much.

Democratic committees also have more than three times as much cash-on-hand as their GOP counterparts at the end of the quarter.

Table 2
First Quarter Snapshot of 2023 Campaign
Finance Activity by County Parties

PARTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Democrats	\$1,062,048	\$1,094,954	\$2,431,207	\$2,204,256
Republicans	\$ 613,812	\$ 457,909	\$ 762,412	\$1,238,040
Combined	\$1,675,860	\$1,552,863	\$3,193,619	\$3,442,296

*Cash-on-hand plus or minus debts owed to or by committee.

Among Democratic county party committees that have filed their reports, Bergen, Camden, Essex, Mercer, Passaic, Somerset and Union Counties all reported cash balances of more than \$100,000. Hudson County reported a negative cash balance when adjusting for outstanding debts.

Table 3
Campaign Finance Activity of
Democratic County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2023

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 20,826	\$ 21,374	\$ 20,976	\$ 17,513
Bergen	\$ 188,000	\$ 84,075	\$ 180,233	\$ 180,233
Burlington	\$ 30,065	\$ 14,558	\$ 42,426	\$ 36,051
Camden	\$ 109,790	\$ 147,530	\$ 239,324	\$ 239,324
Cape May	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cumberland	\$0	\$ 4,278	\$ 54,537	\$ 47,537
Essex	\$ 95,249	\$ 111,688	\$ 341,650	\$ 341,650
Gloucester	\$ 107,273	\$ 45,919	\$ 70,493	\$ 49,763
Hudson	\$ 13,900	\$ 27,728	\$ 12,354	\$ (193,195)
Hunterdon	\$ 9,525	\$ 6,181	\$ 22,938	\$ 22,938
Mercer	\$ 12,000	\$ 23,012	\$ 351,945	\$ 351,945
Middlesex	\$ 169,963	\$ 263,486	\$ 17,255	\$ 17,255
Monmouth	\$ 38,455	\$ 30,320	\$ 37,276	\$ 37,276
Morris	\$ 23,951	\$ 39,282	\$ 11,544	\$ 11,543
Ocean	\$ 11,986	\$ 6,089	\$ 26,858	\$ 43,025
Passaic	\$ 141,451	\$ 109,113	\$ 345,048	\$ 345,048
Salem	NA	NA	NA	NA
Somerset	\$ 22,285	\$ 47,099	\$ 225,294	\$ 225,294
Sussex	\$ 18,149	\$ 22,655	\$ 7,676	\$ 7,676
Union	\$ 49,180	\$ 90,568	\$ 423,380	\$ 423,380
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
Democrats-Total	\$1,062,048	\$1,094,954	\$2,431,207	\$2,204,256

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

Among Republican county party committees that have filed their reports, Cape May and Monmouth Counties reported cash balances above \$100,000. Bergen and Morris Counties had negative balances when adjusting for outstanding debts.

Table 4
Campaign Finance Activity of
Republican County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2023

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 93,702	\$ 45,601	\$ 86,026	\$ 86,026
Bergen	\$ 32,183	\$ 31,843	\$ 1,479	\$ (8,521)
Burlington	\$ 5,000	\$ 22,642	\$ 5,003	\$ 505,986
Camden	\$ 18,678	\$ 15,019	\$ 2,850	\$ 2,850
Cape May	\$ 25,975	\$ 13,334	\$203,761	\$ 203,760
Cumberland	\$ 27,380	\$ 11,595	\$ 19,055	\$ 19,055
Essex	\$-	\$ 5,000	\$ 22,681	\$ 22,681
Gloucester	\$ 24,365	\$ 23,066	\$ 4,487	\$ 4,487
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 23,325	\$ 24,586	\$ 22,877	\$ 22,877
Mercer	NA	NA	NA	NA
Middlesex	\$ 6,950	\$ 2,477	\$ 17,222	\$ 17,136
Monmouth	\$ 83,436	\$ 35,982	\$101,062	\$ 101,062
Morris	\$ 37,075	\$ 35,998	\$ 9,149	\$ (4,351)
Ocean	\$ 68,751	\$ 99,386	\$ 30,682	\$ 30,682
Passaic	\$ 63,427	\$ 42,198	\$ 24,427	\$ 22,658
Salem	\$ 18,370	\$ 10,940	\$ 36,968	\$ 36,968
Somerset	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sussex	\$ 15,295	\$ 11,088	\$ 76,446	\$ 76,446
Union	\$ 13,370	\$ 12,388	\$ 38,999	\$ 38,999
Warren	\$ 56,530	\$ 14,767	\$ 59,238	\$ 59,238
Republicans-Total	\$613,812	\$457,909	\$762,412	\$1,238,040

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

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon May 8, 2023. They have yet to be verified by ELEC staff, and should be considered preliminary.

Individual reports can be reviewed on ELEC’s website (www.elec.nj.gov).

