



# NEWS RELEASE

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## With Fall Elections Looming, Combined County Party Fund-raising is Above Average

County parties continue to rake in campaign dollars at a healthy clip as the fall election season nears, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Combined fund-raising during the first six months of 2023 totaled just under \$4 million. That is 28 percent above the decade-long average.

Spending was 21 percent above average while cash reserves are 30 percent higher than the historic benchmark.

**TABLE 1  
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY COUNTY PARTY  
COMMITTEES THROUGH 2ND QUARTER BY YEAR**

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	STATE ELECTIONS
2013	\$2,647,728	\$2,560,856	\$1,627,287	Governor and Both Houses
2014	\$2,379,387	\$2,316,264	\$1,492,059	
2015	\$2,597,718	\$2,365,487	\$1,706,465	Assembly
2016	\$2,811,365	\$2,409,239	\$2,088,607	
2017	\$3,585,017	\$3,060,539	\$2,768,884	Governor and Both Houses
2018	\$2,847,179	\$2,736,142	\$2,793,340	
2019	\$3,180,991	\$3,291,234	\$3,251,147	Assembly
2020	\$1,955,019	\$2,257,696	\$2,103,422	
2021	\$2,429,408	\$2,438,694	\$3,057,443	Governor and Both Houses
2022	\$2,993,063	\$3,182,672	\$3,918,418	
2023	\$3,989,567	\$3,484,187	\$3,678,305	Senate and Assembly
Average-Six Election Years	\$2,856,040	\$2,736,637	\$2,589,580	
Difference- %	28%	21%	30%	

“It is encouraging to see county party spending in New Jersey elections doing better from a fundraising standpoint” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director. “Taking into consideration the rise in independent group spending in New Jersey elections, an increase in funds to county party committees will help to bring more balance to the State’s electoral process.”

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So far, there seems to be little impact from a new law (P.L. 2023, Chapter 30) signed by Governor Phil Murphy on April 3, 2023. It made several changes to the state’s chief campaign finance statute.

One change was to double the maximum annual contribution to county party committees from \$37,500 to \$75,000.

In addition, the law created new “housekeeping” accounts. A donor can give \$75,000 to regular campaign accounts and \$37,500 to these new accounts for a total of **\$112,500<sup>1</sup>** each year. Only the two state parties and the 42 county parties can create such accounts. National parties also have housekeeping accounts under federal law.

In New Jersey, housekeeping accounts are earmarked solely for administrative expenses, including mortgages, rent, taxes, compliance costs, legal bills and collective bargaining outlays.

An ELEC review of individual contributions received by county parties during 2023 shows the New Jersey State Laborers PAC is the first – and only- donor to take advantage of the new higher contribution limits. The Laborers union traditionally has been one of the major contributors in the state.

It has given \$85,000 to the Democratic Committee of Bergen County and \$75,000 each to the Essex, Hudson and Middlesex County committees.

Another change in the new law was to end tight contribution limits on public contractors that give to party committees. Previously, they were unable to give more than \$300. Now they can give up to **\$112,500<sup>2</sup>**.

One sign so far that this change is having an impact is a tripling of receipts from engineers after the law’s effective date. Engineers, many of whom have public contracts, gave \$11,850 before the law’s enactment and \$47,700 after the new law took effect.

“After county parties file their next quarterly reports in mid-October, we may well see more evidence of the law’s impact on their fund-raising,” said Brindle.

To date in 2023, Democrats have raised and spent twice as much as Republicans and have more than triple the amount of cash in the bank.

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

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>	<b>NET WORTH*</b>
<b>Democrats</b>	\$2,690,404	\$2,352,307	\$2,889,774	\$2,661,353
<b>Republicans</b>	\$1,299,163	\$1,131,880	\$ 788,530	\$1,250,820
<b>Combined</b>	\$3,989,567	\$3,484,187	\$3,678,305	\$3,912,173

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

<sup>1</sup> Revised August 20, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Revised August 20, 2024.

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 June 30, 2023**

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 31,860	\$ 37,642	\$ 15,742	\$ 13,979
Bergen	\$ 648,500	\$ 243,817	\$ 480,992	\$ 480,992
Burlington	\$ 51,265	\$ 27,633	\$ 50,551	\$ 44,176
Camden	\$ 195,229	\$ 330,259	\$ 142,034	\$ 142,034
Cape May	\$ 14,020	\$ 6,675	\$ 14,697	\$ 14,697
Cumberland	\$ 6,877	\$ 34,133	\$ 31,558	\$ 24,558
Essex	\$ 221,075	\$ 262,037	\$ 317,127	\$ 317,127
Gloucester	\$ 178,623	\$ 100,923	\$ 86,839	\$ 64,515
Hudson	\$ 203,303	\$ 170,867	\$ 58,617	\$ (146,931)
Hunterdon	\$ 19,204	\$ 14,957	\$ 23,841	\$ 23,841
Mercer	\$ 82,560	\$ 82,024	\$ 363,493	\$ 363,493
Middlesex	\$ 346,213	\$ 444,539	\$ 12,452	\$ 12,452
Monmouth	\$ 65,596	\$ 85,786	\$ 8,951	\$ 8,951
Morris	\$ 66,266	\$ 92,812	\$ 329	\$ 328
Ocean	\$ 21,478	\$ 19,091	\$ 23,349	\$ 39,515
Passaic	\$ 354,801	\$ 139,728	\$ 527,783	\$ 527,783
Salem**	\$ 0	\$ 2,269	\$ 77,945	\$ 76,893
Somerset	\$ 66,881	\$ 52,125	\$ 264,864	\$ 264,340
Sussex	\$ 19,004	\$ 25,456	\$ 5,730	\$ 5,730
Union	\$ 97,648	\$ 179,535	\$ 382,882	\$ 382,882
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Democrats-Total</b>	<b>\$2,690,404</b>	<b>\$2,352,307</b>	<b>\$2,889,774</b>	<b>\$2,661,353</b>

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

\*\* First quarter totals.

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

**Table 4**  
**Campaign Finance Activity of**  
**Republican County Party Committees**  
**January 1 through June 30, 2023**

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 122,074	\$ 124,835	\$ 35,163	\$ 35,163
Bergen	\$ 51,274	\$ 50,309	\$ 2,104	\$ (7,896)
Burlington	\$ 33,882	\$ 51,888	\$ 4,639	\$ 505,622
Camden	\$ 19,353	\$ 21,183	\$ (2,639)	\$ (2,644)
Cape May	\$ 197,459	\$ 57,798	\$330,781	\$ 330,781
Cumberland	\$ 58,244	\$ 14,109	\$ 47,406	\$ 47,406
Essex	\$ 0	\$ 11,814	\$ 15,866	\$ 15,866
Gloucester	\$ 33,480	\$ 30,446	\$ 6,222	\$ 6,222
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 32,875	\$ 40,732	\$ 16,281	\$ 16,281
Mercer	\$ 20,500	\$ 6,326	\$ 16,736	\$ 16,735
Middlesex**	\$ 6,950	\$ 2,477	\$ 17,222	\$ 17,136
Monmouth	\$ 98,239	\$ 99,313	\$ 52,535	\$ 52,535
Morris	\$ 117,504	\$ 114,498	\$ 11,079	\$ (2,421)
Ocean	\$ 170,331	\$ 225,243	\$ 6,405	\$ (6,928)
Passaic	\$ 149,462	\$ 105,213	\$ 47,447	\$ 45,678
Salem	\$ 22,020	\$ 19,045	\$ 32,513	\$ 32,513
Somerset	\$ 67,593	\$ 66,616	\$ 13,154	\$ 13,154
Sussex	\$ 18,625	\$ 11,344	\$ 79,520	\$ 79,520
Union	\$ 19,915	\$ 24,888	\$ 33,043	\$ 33,043
Warren	\$ 59,382	\$ 53,803	\$ 23,054	\$ 23,054
<b>Republicans-Total</b>	<b>\$1,299,163</b>	<b>\$1,131,880</b>	<b>\$788,530</b>	<b>\$1,250,820</b>

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

Totals contained in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon August 9, 2023. They have yet to be verified by ELEC staff and should be considered preliminary. Data on individual contributions to county parties during the first two quarters was downloaded August 4, 2023.

Individual reports can be reviewed on ELEC's website ([www.elec.nj.gov](http://www.elec.nj.gov)).

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