



NEWS RELEASE

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County Party Fundraising Spree Continues into State Election Year

County political party committees enjoyed their best first quarter fund-raising haul since 2004 as they gear up for gubernatorial, legislative and local elections this year.

Quarterly reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC) showed they raised nearly \$2.9 million in the three months ending March 31, 2025. That was the largest fundraising total since \$2.8 million raised during the first three months of 2004.

Collectively, county parties also ended the quarter with the fattest first quarter cash-on-hand total- \$4.6 million- since at least 2000.

“County parties clearly have benefited from a 2023 state law that significantly raised campaign contribution limits for non-gubernatorial fundraising committees,” said Joe Donohue, ELEC’s Deputy Director. “Prior to enactment of the Elections Transparency Act, fundraising was a bigger struggle for county parties.”

Compared to first quarter averages for the past decade, fundraising, spending and cash-on-hand all were up significantly.

Table 1
First Quarter Campaign Financing
Activity by County Party Committees
Through March 31, 2025

| PERIOD | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON HAND |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 2025 | \$2,859,461 | \$2,699,018 | \$4,602,387 |
| Versus Average 2015-2025 | 88% | 86% | 57% |

Contribution limits for all non-gubernatorial fundraising committees in New Jersey were raised when Governor Phil Murphy signed the Elections Transparency Act (P.L. 2023, Chapter 30) on April 3, 2023.

The law doubled the maximum annual contribution to county party committees from \$37,500 to \$75,000- the first increase since 2005. In addition, the law created new “housekeeping” accounts that enabled even bigger contributions for the year.

Housekeeping accounts are earmarked solely for expenses deemed administrative, including mortgages, rent, taxes, compliance costs, legal bills and collective bargaining outlays. Only the two state parties and the 42 county parties can maintain such accounts.

The new law also mandated inflation adjustments for non-gubernatorial contribution limits every two years. The first such increases took effect on January 1, 2025.

Donors now can give county parties a general contribution of \$79,000 plus \$39,500 to housekeeping accounts- a total of \$118,500 annually.

Table 2
First Quarter Campaign Finance Activity
By County Party Committees- 2015-2025

| Year | Raised | Spent | Cash on Hand |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 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 |
| 2024 | \$2,157,259 | \$1,635,625 | \$4,227,400 |
| 2025 | \$2,859,461 | \$2,699,018 | \$4,602,387 |
| Average-2015-2025 | \$1,523,986 | \$1,453,384 | \$2,932,746 |
| Difference | 88% | 86% | 57% |

Democratic county committees raised and spent more funds than their GOP counterparts.

Their biggest advantage is that they are sitting on more than three times the cash reserves of Republican committees.

Table 3
First Quarter Campaign Finance
Activity by Party Breakdown

| PARTY | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON-HAND | NET WORTH* |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Democrats | \$1,850,650 | \$1,874,973 | \$3,545,730 | \$3,209,942 |
| Republicans | \$1,008,811 | \$ 824,045 | \$1,056,657 | \$1,434,292 |
| Combined | \$2,859,461 | \$2,699,018 | \$4,602,387 | \$4,644,234 |

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

Among Democratic county committees that have filed their quarterly reports, eight committees- Bergen, Burlington, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Passaic, Somerset, and Union - reported cash balances above \$100,000. Camden reported a negative net worth when debts are subtracted from cash-on-hand.

Table 4
Campaign Finance Activity of
Democratic County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2025

| COUNTY | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON-HAND | NET WORTH* |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Atlantic | \$ 35,829 | \$ 20,614 | \$ 26,488 | \$ 26,488 |
| Bergen | \$ 332,639 | \$ 162,955 | \$ 949,790 | \$ 949,790 |
| Burlington | \$ 216,490 | \$ 27,759 | \$ 237,528 | \$ 231,153 |
| Camden | \$ 115,705 | \$ 111,724 | \$ 90,935 | \$ (80,017) |
| Cape May* | \$ 1,375 | \$ 5,883 | \$ 25,437 | \$ 25,437 |
| Cumberland | \$ 11,500 | \$ 5,548 | \$ 22,293 | \$ 22,293 |
| Essex | \$ 39,560 | \$ 172,570 | \$ 89,459 | \$ 86,236 |
| Gloucester | \$ 23,512 | \$ 49,299 | \$ 210,111 | \$ 191,555 |
| Hudson | \$ 234,871 | \$ 376,756 | \$ 322,379 | \$ 169,531 |
| Hunterdon* | \$ 22,387 | \$ 13,573 | \$ 34,613 | \$ 34,613 |
| Mercer | \$ 547 | \$ 11,323 | \$ 373,404 | \$ 373,404 |
| Middlesex | \$ 397,589 | \$ 540,088 | \$ 71,289 | \$ 71,289 |
| Monmouth | \$ 36,179 | \$ 65,238 | \$ 62,995 | \$ 62,995 |
| Morris | \$ 14,970 | \$ 27,542 | \$ 5,763 | \$ 5,762 |
| Ocean | \$ 8,705 | \$ 10,040 | \$ 43,095 | \$ 59,262 |
| Passaic | \$ 209,983 | \$ 77,565 | \$ 315,930 | \$ 315,930 |
| Salem | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Somerset | \$ 62,760 | \$ 82,886 | \$ 212,103 | \$ 212,103 |
| Sussex | \$ 305 | \$ 4,509 | \$ 61,596 | \$ 61,596 |
| Union | \$ 85,743 | \$ 109,100 | \$ 390,521 | \$ 390,521 |
| Warren | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Democrats-Total | \$1,850,650 | \$1,874,973 | \$3,545,730 | \$3,209,942 |

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee. NA= Not Available

As for Republican committees, Cape May and Salem reported a cash balance above \$100,000. Burlington reported a net worth above \$100,000 when factoring in payments owed to the committee. Morris and Somerset reported negative balances adjusting for outstanding debts.

Table 5
Campaign Finance Activity of
Republican County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2025

| COUNTY | RAISED | SPENT | CASH-ON-HAND | NET WORTH* |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Atlantic | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Bergen | \$ 31,630 | \$ 27,431 | \$ 46,232 | \$ 46,232 |
| Burlington | \$ 86,811 | \$ 35,626 | \$ 76,952 | \$ 584,057 |
| Camden | \$ 25,050 | \$ 19,511 | \$ 38,161 | \$ 38,129 |
| Cape May | \$ 38 | \$ 42,274 | \$ 295,043 | \$ 295,035 |
| Cumberland | \$ 44,375 | \$ 11,632 | \$ 66,893 | \$ 66,893 |
| Essex | \$ 5,000 | \$ 6,069 | \$ 2,032 | \$ 2,032 |
| Gloucester | \$ 5,395 | \$ 13,250 | \$ 15,938 | \$ 15,938 |
| Hudson | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Hunterdon | \$ 12,200 | \$ 8,835 | \$ 9,712 | \$ 4,712 |
| Mercer | \$ 13,025 | \$ 4,520 | \$ 31,577 | \$ 31,577 |
| Middlesex | \$ 12,468 | \$ 3,142 | \$ 29,086 | \$ 29,086 |
| Monmouth | \$ 155,932 | \$174,943 | \$ 67,835 | \$ 63,866 |
| Morris | \$ 46,247 | \$ 35,987 | \$ 13,443 | \$ (6,757) |
| Ocean | \$ 121,508 | \$115,646 | \$ 24,108 | \$ 24,108 |
| Passaic | \$ 91,700 | \$ 52,977 | \$ 57,161 | \$ 30,392 |
| Salem | \$ 238,635 | \$168,447 | \$ 116,078 | \$ 116,078 |
| Somerset | \$ 42,362 | \$ 46,970 | \$ 71,958 | \$ (1,534) |
| Sussex | \$ 12,579 | \$ 16,162 | \$ 22,330 | \$ 22,330 |
| Union | \$ 38,471 | \$ 25,458 | \$ 42,988 | \$ 42,988 |
| Warren | \$ 25,386 | \$ 15,166 | \$ 29,131 | \$ 29,131 |
| Republicans-Total | \$1,008,811 | \$824,045 | \$1,056,657 | \$1,434,292 |

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee. NA-not available

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon April 28, 2025.

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

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