



NEWS RELEASE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE:
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County party committees have raised 25 percent more during the first three months of 2017 than they did at the same point 2013, the last year when gubernatorial and legislative candidates shared the ballot, according to the reports filed with the Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The \$2.1 million cash-on-hand total reported by 36 of the 42 county parties also is the largest than since the 2010 total, which is higher (\$2.3 million) when adjusted for inflation.

**TABLE 1
COUNTY PARTY FUNDRAISING AND SPENDING
THROUGH FIRST QUARTER 2009-2017**

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	GUBERNATORIAL AND/OR LEGISLATIVE ELECTION?
2009	\$1,338,922	\$1,468,328	\$1,855,920	Yes
2010	\$1,023,791	\$1,199,044	\$2,078,378	No
2011	\$1,088,038	\$1,108,475	\$1,141,821	Yes
2012	\$ 891,658	\$ 978,826	\$1,023,935	No
2013	\$ 957,098	\$ 980,628	\$1,457,253	Yes†
2014	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788	No
2015	\$1,080,157	\$1,118,813	\$1,437,520	Yes
2016	\$1,499,334	\$ 970,613	\$2,027,203	No
2017	\$1,195,248	\$1,250,534	\$2,086,933	Yes†

†Elections with both legislative houses and gubernatorial candidates running

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said one reason county parties may be doing better than four years ago is a temporary windfall from gubernatorial candidates.

An August 9, 2016 ELEC analysis found that between 2014 and 2016, prospective and actual gubernatorial candidates had contributed nearly \$1.5 million to county parties.

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Brindle noted, however, that even with this infusion, county party committees on average are raising less than 50 percent than they did before 2005. Since that time, tighter restrictions on public contractor contributions, more independent spending by special interest groups and other factors have dampened party fundraising.

“Between 2000 and 2004, county parties during the first quarter raised an average of \$2.6 million. Since 2005, the average is \$1.3 million,” he said. “This year’s total (\$1.2 million), while an improvement over 2013, still is less than that average.”

Brindle has recommended legislative changes that could bolster party fund-raising while shifting funds away from independent committees to party committees, which he considers more accountable and transparent. Both parties have introduced legislation that incorporate these recommendations.

The reform suggestions include simplifying the complex, multi-jurisdictional pay-to-play laws by adopting a single state law, increasing the sum public contractors can legally contribute, boosting contribution limits for parties and candidates for the first time since 2005, and requiring independent special interest groups to fully disclose their campaign finances just like candidates and parties.

A comparison of 2017 totals with those from 2013 shows that both parties raised and spent more money than four years ago during the quarter. Both parties also boosted their reserves. Democrats raised and spent more and had larger cash-on-hand, while Republicans reported a larger net worth.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY COUNTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31
2017 VERSUS 2013

	RAISED-2017	SPENT-2017	CASH-ON-HAND-2017	NET WORTH-2017*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 677,650	\$ 796,293	\$1,465,078	\$1,186,948
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 517,598	\$ 454,241	\$ 621,855	\$1,460,648
Total-Both Parties	\$1,195,248	\$1,250,534	\$2,086,933	\$2,647,595
	RAISED-2013	SPENT-2013	CASH-ON-HAND-2013	NET WORTH-2013*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 553,744	\$ 573,608	\$1,194,185	\$ 875,564
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 403,354	\$ 407,020	\$ 263,068	\$ 842,521
Total-Both Parties	\$ 957,098	\$ 980,628	\$1,457,253	\$1,718,085
Difference 2017 versus 2013				
Democratic County Party Committees	22%	39%	23%	36%
Republican County Party Committees	28%	12%	136%	73%
Total-Both Parties	25%	28%	43%	54%

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

Among Democratic county committees that have filed their reports, Bergen, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Passaic, and Union Counties reported cash-on-hand above \$100,000. Burlington and Hudson County reported a negative net worth, meaning they owe more than their total cash reserves.

TABLE 3
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
DEMOCRATIC COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2017

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bergen	\$159,224	\$152,042	\$ 137,223	\$ 76,592
Burlington	\$ 5,150	\$ 5,708	\$ 1,690	\$ (84,277)
Camden	\$ 59,829	\$ 96,057	\$ 101,355	\$ 101,355
Cape May	\$ 3,588	\$ 3,007	\$ 1,776	\$ 1,776
Cumberland	\$ 15,000	\$ 25,888	\$ 2,724	\$ 2,724
Essex	\$115,375	\$ 85,985	\$ 148,065	\$ 148,065
Gloucester	\$ (26,696)	\$ 40,712	\$ 260,459	\$ 260,459
Hudson	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,650	\$ 82,594	\$ (56,550)
Hunterdon	\$ 5,815	\$ 6,678	\$ 7,252	\$ 7,252
Mercer	\$ 2,600	\$ 12,948	\$ 61,860	\$ 61,860
Middlesex	\$ 56,755	\$148,707	\$ 9,879	\$ 9,879
Monmouth	\$ 53,536	\$ 52,450	\$ 6,859	\$ 6,859
Morris	\$ 20,731	\$ 22,692	\$ 10,176	\$ 10,176
Ocean	\$ 17,585	\$ 15,650	\$ 15,975	\$ 32,142
Passaic	\$ 82,563	\$ 55,448	\$ 462,328	\$ 462,328
Salem	NA	NA	NA	NA
Somerset	\$ 30,243	\$ 20,559	\$ 12,047	\$ 12,047
Sussex	\$ 535	\$ 3,080	\$ 7,192	\$ 7,192
Union	\$ 55,815	\$ 28,033	\$ 135,624	\$ 127,070
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
Democrats-Total	\$677,650	\$796,293	\$1,465,078	\$1,186,948

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

Among Republican county committees that have filed their reports, Somerset County reported a cash reserve larger than \$100,000. Burlington and Somerset Counties reported net worth totals above \$100,000.

TABLE 4
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
REPUBLICAN COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2017

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 8,750	\$ 10,756	\$ 513	\$ 513
Bergen	\$ 23,410	\$ 42,777	\$ 31,727	\$ 21,727
Burlington	\$202,507	\$162,852	\$ 43,270	\$ 892,858
Camden	\$ 8,512	\$ 4,698	\$ 22,904	\$ 22,904
Cape May	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cumberland	\$ 40,166	\$ 9,298	\$ 66,789	\$ 66,789
Essex	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,357	\$ 8,357
Gloucester	\$ 8,510	\$ 12,837	\$ 3,446	\$ 3,446
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 36,920	\$ 36,300	\$ 10,323	\$ 10,323
Mercer	\$ 11,715	\$ 2,111	\$ 14,194	\$ 14,194
Middlesex	\$ 11,728	\$ 1,233	\$ 44,145	\$ 44,145
Monmouth	\$ 30,333	\$ 35,198	\$ 4,758	\$ 4,758
Morris	\$ 23,110	\$ 19,443	\$ 27,120	\$ 26,771
Ocean	\$ 10,926	\$ 20,992	\$ 4,380	\$ 4,380
Passaic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Salem	\$ 28,320	\$ 28,565	\$ 19,281	\$ 19,281
Somerset	\$ 41,605	\$ 40,768	\$233,559	\$ 233,113
Sussex	\$ 1,117	\$ 3,909	\$ 19,832	\$ 19,832
Union	\$ 21,620	\$ 13,815	\$ 60,789	\$ 60,789
Warren	\$ 8,350	\$ 8,687	\$ 6,467	\$ 6,467
Republicans-Total	\$517,598	\$454,241	\$621,855	\$1,460,648

*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 9 A.M May 8, 2017. 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.state.nj.us).

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