



# NEWS RELEASE

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With the June primary election less than three weeks away, legislative candidates have raised \$29.4 million, spent \$16.3 million and report cash reserves totaling \$13.3 million, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said early totals suggest it could be a record year for legislative fundraising and spending.

"If this trend holds up, it could be a big year," Brindle said, noting that the current candidate numbers do not include millions of dollars in spending by independent committees that is likely this fall. The primary election is June 6.

The latest candidate reports reflect campaign finance activity through May 5. Fundraising in other legislative elections dating back to 2001 was higher only in 2011 if that year's total is adjusted for inflation, Brindle said. The 2011 spending total was slightly higher. Cash-on-hand totals in 2003 and 2007 are also higher if inflation is factored in.

**TABLE 1  
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES  
UP UNTIL 29 DAYS BEFORE PRIMARY ELECTION**

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	ELECTIONS*
2001	\$15,815,829	\$ 9,130,851	\$ 7,693,540	G, S, A
2003	\$19,574,759	\$ 9,162,430	\$10,859,720	S, A
2005	\$ 9,666,688	\$ 5,150,371	\$ 4,555,059	G, A
2007	\$24,566,334	\$14,186,840	\$11,451,675	S, A
2009	\$10,297,502	\$ 5,454,703	\$ 4,828,749	G, A
2011	\$28,713,681	\$16,692,458	\$12,212,748	S, A
2013	\$22,494,542	\$11,226,734	\$11,409,682	G, S, A
2015	\$11,476,533	\$ 6,200,601	\$ 5,219,743	A
2017	\$29,440,397	\$16,298,199	\$13,258,762	G, S, A

\*G=Gubernatorial, S=Senate, A=Assembly

This year's election is taking place at a time when both parties are vying for the governor's seat and both legislative houses. Currently, a Republican is governor, and Democrats control the Senate by a margin of 24 to 16, and the Assembly by a margin of 52 to 28.

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With majorities in both houses, Democratic legislators enjoy a more than two-to-one advantage in fundraising, spending and cash.

**TABLE 2  
PARTY BREAKDOWN  
OF LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
Democrats	\$20,919,427	\$10,640,809	\$10,249,366
Republicans	\$ 8,520,970	\$ 5,657,390	\$ 3,009,396
<b>BOTH PARTIES</b>	<b>\$29,440,397</b>	<b>\$16,298,199</b>	<b>\$13,258,762</b>

Incumbents usually have a massive advantage over challengers in most districts. The latest numbers continue to reflect this trend.

**TABLE 3  
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY  
INCUMBENTS VERSUS CHALLENGERS**

<b>STATUS</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
Incumbents	\$26,719,782	\$15,263,294	\$11,549,947
Challengers	\$ 2,720,615	\$ 1,034,905	\$ 1,708,815
<b>ALL CANDIDATES</b>	<b>\$29,440,397</b>	<b>\$16,298,199</b>	<b>\$13,258,762</b>

This fundraising advantage has a real impact historically. In the 2013 elections, when both the Assembly and Senate were up for reelection, 97 percent of the Assembly incumbents and all Senate incumbents won.

In the 2015 election, with just the Assembly running, four incumbents lost. That still meant 95 percent won.

Senate races historically tend to attract the most money even though the number of senators is half the number of assembly members (40 versus 80). This year is no exception.

**TABLE 4  
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY  
BY LEGISLATIVE HOUSE**

<b>HOUSE</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
Assembly	\$12,931,763	\$ 6,890,336	\$ 6,039,771
Senate	\$16,508,634	\$ 9,407,864	\$ 7,218,990
<b>BOTH HOUSES</b>	<b>\$29,440,397</b>	<b>\$16,298,199</b>	<b>\$13,258,762</b>

The ten candidates with the most money stockpiled include several legislative leaders, including Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto and Senator and Assistant Minority Leader Joe Pennacchio. Seven are Senators, while three are Assembly members. The list includes nine Democrats and one Republican. All are incumbents.

**TABLE 5  
TOP TEN CANDIDATES  
RANKED BY CASH-ON-HAND**

<b>CANDIDATE</b>	<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>PARTY</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
Senate President Stephen Sweeney	3	S	D	\$803,480
Senator Shirley Turner	15	S	D	\$683,192
Senator Richard Codey	27	S	D	\$653,355
Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto	32	A	D	\$613,438
Senator Paul Sarlo	36	S	D	\$556,792
Senator Nicholas Scutari	22	S	D	\$538,549
Senator Bob Smith	17	S	D	\$449,172
Assemblyman Gerald Green	22	A	D	\$358,828
Assemblyman Joseph Egan	17	A	D	\$321,526
Senator Joe Pennacchio	26	S	R	\$314,825

The numbers in this report should be considered preliminary. This analysis is based on legislative reports received by noon May 10, 2017.

Reports filed by legislative candidates are available online on ELEC's website at [www.elec.state.nj.us](http://www.elec.state.nj.us). A downloadable summary of data from those reports is available in both spreadsheet and PDF formats at [www.elec.state.nj.us/publicinformation/statistics.htm](http://www.elec.state.nj.us/publicinformation/statistics.htm).

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