



NEWS RELEASE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE:
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County party fund-raising during the first six months of 2017 reached its highest point in a decade due in part to an influx of national party funds related to this year's gubernatorial election, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Combined county party-fundraising totaled \$3.6 million through June 30. That is 35 percent more than 2013, the last year when voters faced an election for governor and both legislative houses. It also is 73 percent higher than 2010, a non-election year that saw the weakest county party fundraising since 2001.

Table 1
Total County Party Fundraising Through
June 30, 2017 Versus Prior Years

Year	2017	2013	2010	2003
Elections	Gubernatorial and Legislative Elections	Gubernatorial and Legislative Elections	No State Elections (Lowest County Fundraising Year*)	Legislative Elections (Top County Fundraising Year*)
Total County Fundraising Through June 30	\$3,585,017	\$2,647,728	\$2,070,581	\$7,932,857
How 2017 Compares		35% higher	73 % higher	55% lower

*Since 2001

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said even though total county party fundraising this year is higher than some recent years, it was off 55 percent from the six-month total for 2003. The \$7.9 million collected in 2003 was the most county parties raised during the first two quarters since 2001.

"While county party fundraising has been surprisingly robust this year, it still was much lower than earlier years when there were no restrictions on contributions by public contractors and independent groups weren't competing for donor dollars," said Brindle. "Fundraising remains a challenge for party officials."

Brindle said pending bills sponsored by both parties contain ELEC recommendations that would permanently strengthen party fundraising by letting public contractors and other donors give more to party coffers and by expanding disclosure requirements for independent groups.

Brindle said a key reason fundraising is higher this year is a one-time influx of funds from the Democratic Governors Association (DGA) aimed at giving Democratic county organizations a boost in a gubernatorial election year.

So far, the DGA has pumped \$415,000 into 14 county parties. Ten received checks worth \$37,000, the maximum per year a county party can accept.

“ELEC records show that DGA also contributed to county parties in New Jersey during the 2001, 2005 and 2009 gubernatorial election years,” Brindle said. He further noted that the Republican Governors Association (RGA) gave an infusion of funds in 2005 to county parties. The RGA has not participated so far this year.

Table 2
Contributions to County Parties by Democratic Governors Association and Republican Governors Association Since 2001

Year	DGA	RGA	Gubernatorial Election?
2001	\$ 266,280	None	Yes
2002	\$ 47,790	None	No
2005	\$ 592,000	\$522,000	Yes
2008	\$ 62,000	None	No
2009	\$ 669,000	None	Yes
2013	None	None	Yes
2017	\$ 415,000	None	Yes
Totals	\$2,052,070	\$522,000	

“There are other ways that the national governor organizations participate in elections, including running independent advertisements on behalf of their candidates or against opponents. But pumping money into county parties also has been a strategy to help support gubernatorial candidates,” Brindle said.

Brindle said with better fundraising, county parties in 2017 have spent more than many recent years (\$3.1 million) and have the largest combined cash reserve (\$2.8 million) at this point since at least 2008.

**Table 3
Campaign Finance Activity of
County Parties 2001-2017**

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	MAJOR STATE ELECTION?*
2001	\$5,728,804	\$4,459,489	NA	G/S/A
2002	\$6,181,702	\$4,226,377	NA	No
2003	\$7,932,857	\$6,749,299	NA	S/A
2004	\$6,339,337	\$5,128,855	NA	No
2005	\$4,596,354	\$4,995,807	NA	G/A
2006	\$4,354,230	\$4,464,552	NA	No
2007	\$5,049,224	\$4,840,451	NA	S/A
2008	\$2,992,406	\$3,314,915	\$1,619,924	No
2009	\$2,829,837	\$3,044,906	\$1,713,660	G/A
2010	\$2,070,581	\$2,327,162	\$1,746,121	No
2011	\$2,617,165	\$2,374,567	\$1,444,408	S/A
2012	\$2,115,739	\$2,186,873	\$1,036,375	No
2013	\$2,647,728	\$2,560,856	\$1,627,287	G/S/A
2014	\$2,379,387	\$2,316,264	\$1,492,059	No
2015	\$2,597,718	\$2,365,487	\$1,706,465	A
2016	\$2,811,365	\$2,409,239	\$2,088,607	No
2017	\$3,585,017	\$3,060,539	\$2,768,884	G/S/A

*G=Gubernatorial;
S=Senate;
A=Assembly

County parties representing both Democrats and Republicans are reporting higher totals for fundraising, spending and reserves for the six-month period than they did in 2013, the last gubernatorial campaign.

**Table 4
County Party Totals by Parties- 2017 Versus 2013**

2017 Totals Through June 30	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$2,174,012	\$1,902,984	\$1,916,163	\$1,638,013
Republican County Party Committees	\$1,411,005	\$1,157,556	\$ 852,722	\$1,681,112
Total- Both Parties	\$3,585,017	\$3,060,539	\$2,768,884	\$3,319,124
2013 Totals Through June 30	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$1,552,125	\$1,631,925	\$1,188,337	\$ 807,293
Republican County Party Committees	\$1,095,596	\$ 928,931	\$ 438,950	\$ 992,787
Total- Both Parties	\$2,647,721	\$2,560,856	\$1,627,287	\$1,800,080
Difference 2017 versus 2013				
Democratic County Party Committees	40%	17%	61%	103%
Republican County Party Committees	29%	25%	94%	69%
Total- Both Parties	35%	20%	70%	84%

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

Among Democratic committees that filed reports, Bergen, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Passaic and Union Counties reported cash-on-hand above \$100,000. Burlington reported a negative net worth, meaning it owes more than its cash reserves.

**Table 5
Campaign Finance Activity of Democratic County
Party Committees January 1 through June 30, 2017**

County	Raised	Spent	Cash-On-Hand	Net Worth*
Atlantic	\$ 37,502	\$ 37,800	\$ 34,562	\$ 34,562
Bergen	\$ 239,231	\$ 248,575	\$ 120,698	\$ 60,066
Burlington	\$ 62,644	\$ 52,490	\$ 12,402	\$ (73,565)
Camden	\$ 198,498	\$ 183,228	\$ 152,854	\$ 152,854
Cape May	\$ 10,203	\$ 4,540	\$ 6,858	\$ 6,858
Cumberland	\$ 37,350	\$ 44,598	\$ 6,364	\$ 6,364
Essex	\$ 251,105	\$ 174,468	\$ 190,980	\$ 190,980
Gloucester	\$ 38,204	\$ 78,157	\$ 287,915	\$ 287,915
Hudson	\$ 204,983	\$ 130,422	\$ 157,805	\$ 18,660
Hunterdon	\$ 61,050	\$ 44,992	\$ 24,174	\$ 24,174
Mercer	\$ 115,434	\$ 89,919	\$ 97,722	\$ 97,722
Middlesex	\$ 172,445	\$ 256,389	\$ 17,886	\$ 17,866
Monmouth	\$ 175,274	\$ 164,159	\$ 16,888	\$ 16,888
Morris	\$ 99,029	\$ 75,516	\$ 35,651	\$ 35,651
Ocean**	\$ 17,585	\$ 15,650	\$ 15,975	\$ 32,142
Passaic	\$ 184,607	\$ 94,169	\$ 523,957	\$ 523,957
Salem	\$ 0	\$ 2,367	\$ 26,593	\$ 26,593
Somerset	\$ 77,237	\$ 41,895	\$ 37,706	\$ 37,706
Sussex	\$ 53,240	\$ 42,003	\$ 20,974	\$ 20,974
Union	\$ 111,596	\$ 92,000	\$ 127,437	\$ 118,883
Warren**	\$ 26,795	\$ 29,649	\$ 764	\$ 764
Democrats-Total	\$2,174,012	\$1,902,984	\$1,916,163	\$1,638,013

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

**First quarter totals

Among Republican committees, Salem and Somerset Counties reported cash-on-hand above \$100,000.

**Table 6
Campaign Finance Activity of Republican County
Party Committees January 1 through June 30, 2017**

County	Raised	Spent	Cash-On-Hand	Net Worth*
Atlantic	\$ 10,300	\$ 12,156	\$ 663	\$ 663
Bergen	\$ 39,446	\$ 76,528	\$ 14,013	\$ 14,013
Burlington	\$ 491,757	\$ 479,004	\$ 16,368	\$ 846,181
Camden	\$ 8,512	\$ 8,901	\$ 18,701	\$ 18,701
Cape May**	\$ 81,480	\$ 42,065	\$ 52,357	\$ 52,357
Cumberland	\$ 42,486	\$ 21,576	\$ 56,831	\$ 56,831
Essex	\$ 10,000	\$ 17,729	\$ 628	\$ 628
Gloucester	\$ 31,670	\$ 18,551	\$ 20,492	\$ 20,492
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 49,300	\$ 41,364	\$ 17,639	\$ 17,639
Mercer	\$ 11,865	\$ 3,082	\$ 13,398	\$ 13,398
Middlesex	\$ 21,989	\$ 11,173	\$ 44,466	\$ 44,466
Monmouth	\$ 139,926	\$ 116,634	\$ 32,916	\$ 32,916
Morris	\$ 34,156	\$ 36,025	\$ 21,583	\$ 21,583
Ocean	\$ 23,806	\$ 34,476	\$ 3,777	\$ 3,777
Passaic	\$ 11,058	\$ 33,648	\$ 5,618	\$ 5,618
Salem	\$ 258,812	\$ 35,388	\$242,950	\$ 242,950
Somerset	\$ 88,350	\$ 110,474	\$210,599	\$ 209,176
Sussex	\$ 12,442	\$ 10,290	\$ 24,776	\$ 24,776
Union	\$ 29,550	\$ 28,080	\$ 54,455	\$ 54,455
Warren	\$ 14,100	\$ 20,412	\$ 493	\$ 493
Republicans- Total	\$1,411,005	\$1,157,556	\$852,722	\$1,681,112

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

**First quarter totals

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by 10 a.m. July 31, 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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