



NEWS RELEASE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE:
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County political parties emerged from last year's elections in a slightly better financial position than most recent years, according to quarterly reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Reports filed by 37 of 42 county parties showed that fundraising and spending totaled about \$1.4 million during the first three months of 2018. Those totals were slightly better than the 14-year average since state pay-to-play laws sharply curtailed contributions by public contractors.

Table 1
First Quarter Campaign Finance
Activity by County Political Parties

	RAISED	SPENT
First Quarter 2018	\$1,371,138	\$1,378,945
Average After Pay to Play Laws- (2005-2018)	\$1,294,348	\$1,367,318
Difference- %	6%	1%
Average Before Pay to Play Laws- (2000-2004)	\$2,561,410	\$2,216,409
Difference- %	-46%	-38%

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said while the improvement is welcome, the quarterly totals remain much less than the average before 2005, after which pay-to-play laws and other trends made fundraising more difficult.

"Fundraising is 46 percent less than the average before contractor cash dried up. Spending is down 38 percent. Clearly, county parties still are having problems filling their coffers," said Brindle.

Brindle said legislation recommended by ELEC could make it easier for state and county parties to raise money while shifting funds away from independent special interest groups that compete for contributions, often operate in the shadows and are now dominating federal, state and even local elections.

"Both parties have introduced bills that would enact ELEC's suggestions. We hope legislative leaders will take up those bills this fall," Brindle said.

Compared to four years ago, Democratic county committees fund-raising and spending were up while Republican committees were down. Democratic committees also had nearly four times more cash-on-hand.

Table 2
Summary of Campaign Finance
Activity by County Committees
January 1 through March 31
2018 Versus 2014

	RAISED-2018	SPENT-2018	CASH-ON-HAND-2018	NET WORTH-2014
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 955,693	\$ 933,191	\$2,107,613	\$1,926,415
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 415,445	\$ 445,753	\$ 549,815	\$1,226,378
Total-Both Parties	\$1,371,138	\$1,378,945	\$2,657,429	\$3,152,793
	RAISED-2014	SPENT-2014	CASH-ON-HAND-2014	NET WORTH-2014*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 576,479	\$ 649,320	\$ 838,605	\$ 454,143
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 471,976	\$ 450,015	\$ 474,184	\$1,202,231
Total-Both Parties	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788	\$1,656,374
Difference 2018 versus 2014				
Democratic County Party Committees	66%	44%	151%	324%
Republican County Party Committees	-12%	-1%	16%	2%
Total-Both Parties	31%	25%	102%	90%

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

County parties during the first quarter of 2018 raised and spent the second most funds since 2009 and reported the largest cash reserve since that year.

Table 3
County Party Fundraising and Spending
through First Quarter 2009-2018

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND
2009	\$1,338,922	\$1,468,328	\$1,855,920
2010	\$1,023,791	\$1,199,044	\$2,078,378
2011	\$1,088,038	\$1,108,475	\$1,141,821
2012	\$ 891,658	\$ 978,826	\$1,023,935
2013	\$ 957,098	\$ 980,628	\$1,457,253
2014	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788
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

“County parties seem to be enjoying a slight windfall from last year’s election. With the governor’s seat and the entire Legislature in contention in 2017, they received a large infusion of funds from national party groups. It seems they were able to sock some away for this year,” said Brindle.

Among Democratic county committees that have filed their reports, Bergen, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Passaic, and Salem 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 4
Campaign Finance Activity of
Democratic County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2018

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 28,916	\$ 21,526	\$ 16,765	\$ 16,765
Bergen	\$205,292	\$173,331	\$ 182,543	\$ 141,912
Burlington	\$ 11,786	\$ 22,901	\$ 12,590	\$ (4,998)
Camden	\$137,609	\$ 80,520	\$ 406,093	\$ 406,093
Cape May	\$ 651	\$ 1,556	\$ 621	\$ 621
Cumberland	\$ 8,833	\$ 25,476	\$ 15,824	\$ 15,824
Essex	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gloucester	\$117,898	\$ 43,621	\$ 397,358	\$ 397,358
Hudson	\$ 800	\$ 53,217	\$ 92,407	\$ (46,737)
Hunterdon	\$ 3,555	\$ 9,239	\$ 13,379	\$ 13,379
Mercer	None	\$ 19,296	\$ 104,389	\$ 104,389
Middlesex	\$141,529	\$175,224	\$ 5,869	\$ 5,869
Monmouth	\$ 36,785	\$ 43,021	\$ 2,451	\$ 2,451
Morris	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ocean	\$ 10,155	\$ 19,131	\$ 58,760	\$ 74,926
Passaic	\$128,993	\$ 58,183	\$ 599,113	\$ 599,113
Salem	\$ 486	\$ 4,746	\$ 102,745	\$ 102,745
Somerset	\$ 22,005	\$ 47,230	\$ 13,170	\$ 13,170
Sussex	\$ 5,088	\$ 4,920	\$ 6,494	\$ 6,494
Union	\$ 95,313	\$130,055	\$ 77,043	\$ 77,043
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
Democrats-Total	\$955,693	\$933,191	\$2,107,613	\$1,926,415

*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, Salem County reported a cash reserve larger than \$100,000. Burlington and Salem Counties reported net worth totals above \$100,000.

TABLE 5
Campaign Finance Activity of
Republican County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2018

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 5,500	\$ 9,664	\$ 18,286	\$ 18,286
Bergen	\$ 14,460	\$ 12,736	\$ 9,062	\$ 9,062
Burlington	\$144,777	\$166,412	\$ 15,977	\$ 701,666
Camden	\$ 3,999	\$ 3,762	\$ 20,313	\$ 20,313
Cape May	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cumberland	\$ 19,480	\$ 11,967	\$ 22,052	\$ 22,052
Essex	\$ 1,000	NA	\$ 4,247	\$ 4,247
Gloucester	\$ 6,425	\$ 4,796	\$ 9,967	\$ 9,967
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 18,915	\$ 20,535	\$ 6,928	\$ 6,928
Mercer	\$ 5,200	\$ 1,980	\$ 24,646	\$ 24,646
Middlesex	\$ 7,260	\$ 8,265	\$ 9,334	\$ 9,334
Monmouth	\$ 16,040	\$ 30,248	\$ 19,562	\$ 19,562
Morris	\$ 63,751	\$ 59,918	\$ 13,957	\$ 5,236
Ocean	\$ 17,600	\$ 15,526	\$ 4,383	\$ 4,383
Passaic	NONE	\$ 4,085	\$ 19,564	\$ 19,564
Salem	\$ 10,126	\$ 13,030	\$220,261	\$ 220,261
Somerset	\$ 30,580	\$ 42,426	\$ 29,988	\$ 29,582
Sussex	\$ 19,675	\$ 24,167	\$ 29,855	\$ 29,855
Union	\$ 19,570	\$ 11,435	\$ 50,817	\$ 50,817
Warren	\$ 11,085	\$ 4,801	\$ 20,617	\$ 20,617
Republicans-Total	\$415,445	\$445,753	\$549,815	\$1,226,378

*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 noon May 4, 2018. 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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