



NEWS RELEASE

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After spending the most money in a federal election year since 2012, the so-called Big Six committees ended 2018 with a combined reserve of \$1.5 million heading into a legislative election year, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The two state parties and four legislative leadership committees raised \$6.2 million and spent \$5.4 million during 2018. The focus was mainly on federal congressional elections though there also were special legislative elections to fill ten seats. This year, there will be contests for all 80 Assembly seats.

Table 1
Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six”
January 1 through December 31, 2018

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	STATE OR FEDERAL	ELECTION TYPE
2007	\$19,177,655	\$23,367,064	\$ 377,324	State	S/A
2008	\$ 6,653,676	\$ 5,186,294	\$1,844,704	Federal	P/S/H
2009	\$12,368,082	\$12,919,862	\$1,297,457	State	G/A
2010	\$ 6,180,605	\$ 5,918,029	\$1,540,032	Federal	H
2011	\$15,035,468	\$15,547,359	\$1,028,142	State	S/A
2012	\$ 7,063,133	\$ 6,391,757	\$1,684,525	Federal	P/S/H
2013	\$13,885,028	\$14,727,957	\$ 841,599	State	G/S/A
2014	\$ 4,872,907	\$ 4,048,955	\$1,662,052	Federal	S/H
2015	\$ 8,027,793	\$ 8,661,126	\$ 979,220	State	A
2016	\$ 4,518,172	\$ 3,842,223	\$1,667,465	Federal	P/H
2017	\$12,243,328	\$13,348,131	\$ 738,454	State	G/S/A
2018	\$ 6,194,632	\$ 5,393,169	\$1,546,522	Federal	S/H

P=Presidential; S=US or State Senate; H=House; G=Gubernatorial; A=Assembly

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said it is normal for party coffers to be depleted after an election year. A year ago, after the governor’s seat and all 120 legislative seats were decided in 2017, the Big Six committees ended up with \$738,454 in combined cash-on-hand versus \$1.5 million this year.

“Perhaps not surprisingly, the two committees with the most at stake this fall carried over the largest balances among their respective parties,” said Brindle. “The Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee reported \$635,823 as of December 31 while the Assembly Republican Victory Committee reported \$187,031.”

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Brindle noted that the two state parties, which were the biggest spenders in 2018, ended up with the smallest cash reserves- \$117,803 for the Republican State Committee and \$102,682 for the Democratic State Committee.

Table 3
Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six” Committees
2014 Versus 2018

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 876,007	\$ 860,993	\$ 117,803	\$ 117,803
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 316,334	\$ 211,268	\$ 172,251	\$ 172,251
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 303,545	\$ 206,833	\$ 187,031	\$ 187,031
SUBTOTAL – REPUBLICANS - 2018	\$1,495,886	\$1,279,094	\$ 477,085	\$ 477,085
Subtotal - 2014	\$2,286,487	\$1,801,330	\$ 994,468	\$ 466,737
Versus 2014 (%)	-35%	-29%	-52%	2%
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$3,001,834	\$3,285,349	\$ 102,682	\$ 36,960
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 459,634	\$ 200,409	\$ 330,932	\$ 310,932
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$1,237,278	\$ 628,317	\$ 635,823	\$ 605,384
SUB TOTAL – DEMOCRATS - 2018	\$4,698,746	\$4,114,075	\$1,069,437	\$ 953,276
Subtotal- 2014	\$2,586,420	\$2,247,625	\$ 667,584	\$ 541,875
Versus 2014 (%)	82%	83%	60%	76%
BOTH PARTIES				
TOTAL - 2018	\$6,194,632	\$5,393,169	\$1,546,522	\$1,430,361
Total 2014	\$4,872,907	\$4,048,955	\$1,662,052	\$1,008,612
Versus 2014 (%)	27%	33%	-7%	42%

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

With Democrats now in control of the governor’s seat and both legislative houses, their fund-raising has improved since four years ago, when a Republican occupied the governor’s post. Democratic fund-raising, spending, cash-on-hand and net worth all were up compared to 2014. Republican fund-raising, spending and cash-on-hand was down compared to four years ago, though net worth was up slightly.

Brindle said he is hopeful pending legislation recommended by ELEC that requires disclosure by independent committees and increases contribution limits for candidates and parties will boost the fortunes of party committees.

“During the past decade, there has been a tremendous shift in influence from parties and candidates to independent groups. Hopefully, these legislative changes will create a better balance by helping to restore influence to the parties,” he said.

State parties and legislative leadership committees are required to report their financial activity to the Commission on a quarterly basis. The reports are available on ELEC’s website at www.elec.state.nj.us. ELEC also can be accessed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/elecnj).