



NEWS RELEASE

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LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES HEAD TOWARD JUNE 4 PRIMARY WITH \$5.6 MILLION IN THE BANK

With the June 4 primary just a few weeks off, legislative candidates say they have raised \$11 million, spent \$5.4 million and still have \$5.6 million set aside for the election, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The totals reflect cumulative campaign finance activity since the previous legislative election in November 2017 through May 3, 2019. The reports were due May 6, which is 29 days before this year's primary. This year's primary features elections for all 80 Assembly seats. There also is one special election for the state Senate in the 1st legislative district.

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
2019	\$11,045,006	\$ 5,421,905	\$ 5,620,509	A**

*G=Gubernatorial, S=Senate, A=Assembly **Special Senate Election 1st District

“While the numbers may not be eye-popping, they are comparable to those from 2015, the last year when the entire Assembly was facing reelection,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

“Keep in mind, it is still early in the election year. So far, we’ve seen no involvement with the legislative primary by independent special interest groups,” Brindle said. “In 2015, they spent more than \$900,000 just in the primary. In 2017, when both houses were running, they spent \$2.2 million.”

“This year, there appears to be no hotly contested primary races. So there is little incentive for independent groups to participate,” he said.

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Measuring 2019 campaign finance totals against comparable (Assembly-only) figures from five previous elections shows that fundraising and spending is lower than most previous years, though the current cash-on-hand total is the second highest in the past decade.

Table 2
Campaign Finance Activity by State Assembly
Candidates Up Until 29 Days before Primary Election

Year	Raised	Spent	Cash-on-Hand
2009	\$10,297,502	\$5,454,703	\$4,828,749
2011	\$11,070,681	\$6,551,696	\$4,537,642
2013	\$10,122,149	\$5,995,636	\$4,252,515
2015	\$11,476,533	\$6,200,601	\$5,219,743
2017	\$12,931,763	\$6,890,336	\$6,039,771
2019*	\$11,045,006	\$5,421,905	\$5,620,509

*Totals include two Senate candidates running in 1st district special election.

Democrats control the lower house by a 54-to-26 margin and have led both legislative houses since 2001. They hold sizeable advantages in fundraising, spending and cash reserves.

Table 3
Party Breakdown of Legislative
Campaign Finance Activity

Party	Raised	Spent	Cash-on-Hand
Democrats	\$ 8,268,007	\$3,875,655	\$4,389,374
Republicans	\$ 2,776,999	\$1,546,249	\$1,231,134
Both Parties	\$11,045,006	\$5,421,905	\$5,620,509

With the most Assembly incumbents (76) seeking reelection since at least 2001, current office-holders have a big edge over challengers.

Table 4
Number of Assembly Incumbents
Who Won Reelection

Year	Total	Won	Lost	Percent Won
2001	59	56	3	94.9
2003	72	68	4	94.4
2005	73	70	3	95.9
2007	54	53	1	98.1
2009	71	71	0	100
2011	66	65	1	98.0
2013	74	72	2	97.3
2015	74	70	4	95.0
2017	70	70	0	100
2019	76	NA	NA	NA

Brindle said the average number of Assembly incumbents to win reelection since 2001 is 97 percent.

“Except in years with major anti-incumbent backlash, such as after the big tax hikes of 1990, incumbents typically start with an enormous upper hand over challengers,” Brindle said.

“More people know the names of incumbents. Incumbents have more money. They usually have party support. Plus, they already are in a position to advocate for supporters,” he added.

The latest reports do reflect a wide gap between incumbents and challengers in terms of campaign finances.

Table 5
Breakdown of Assembly Campaign Finance
Activity Incumbents Versus Challengers

Type	Raised	Spent	Cash-on-Hand
Incumbents	\$10,455,028	\$5,198,235	\$5,254,200
Challengers	\$ 589,978	\$ 223,669	\$ 366,309
Both Types	\$11,045,006	\$5,421,905	\$5,620,509

Since the 2017 elections, the following lawmakers were the most active fundraisers. Eight of ten are Democrats. Five hold party leadership positions and five chair legislative committees.

Table 6
Top Ten Most Active Fundraisers Since Previous Election*

Assembly Member	Raised	Spent	Cash-on-Hand	Party
Assembly Minority Leader Jon Bramnick	\$552,264	\$392,376	\$159,888	R
Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin	\$518,259	\$288,579	\$229,680	D
Deputy Speaker Gary Schaer	\$513,660	\$158,528	\$355,132	D
Labor Chairman Joseph Egan	\$378,906	\$ 61,903	\$317,003	D
Majority Leader Louis Greenwald	\$376,706	\$237,381	\$139,326	D
Telecommunications and Utilities Chairman Wayne DeAngelo	\$337,319	\$103,777	\$233,542	D
Assembly Budget Chairwoman Eliana Pintor Marin	\$329,959	\$202,068	\$127,890	D
Minority Conference Leader Anthony Bucco	\$311,039	\$187,183	\$123,857	R
Assembly Judiciary Chairwoman Annette Quijano	\$284,580	\$ 83,507	\$201,074	D
Regulated Professions Chairman Thomas Giblin	\$279,648	\$169,525	\$110,124	D

*Includes only individual legislative accounts. Bramnick and Coughlin also oversee separate legislative leadership committees

The numbers in this report should be considered preliminary. The analysis is based on legislative fundraising reports received by noon May 8, 2019.

Reports filed by legislative candidates are available online on ELEC’s website at www.elec.nj.gov. A downloadable summary of data from those reports is available in both spreadsheet and PDF formats at www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/statistics.htm.

ELEC also can be accessed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/elecnj).