



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Primary Spending by Gubernatorial Candidates Tops \$14 million

Candidates seeking gubernatorial primary nominations have raised \$16.1 million and spent \$14.4 million, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Reports show incumbent Governor Phil Murphy, who is running unopposed in the Democratic primary, has raised \$7.8 million and spent \$7.2 million.

He has spent more than the combined \$7.1 million expended by five Republicans who have participated in this year's primary (one has withdrawn from the race).

The top Republican fundraiser and spender is former state Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli, who has raised \$6.9 million and spent \$5.9 million. With the election just six days away, Ciattarelli has spent five times more than his opponents combined and has 3.7 times more cash in reserve than his opponents combined.

Gubernatorial candidates are required to provide an update on their campaign finance activities 11 days before the June 8 primary. Those reports reflect fund-raising and spending between May 8 and May 25.

**TABLE 1  
PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY  
OF GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES THROUGH MAY 25, 2021  
(RANKED BY CUMULATIVE SPENDING)**

CANDIDATE	PARTY	LATEST RAISED	LATEST SPENT	CUMULATIVE RAISED	CUMULATIVE SPENT	CASH ON HAND
Murphy, Phil	D	\$ 460	\$ 367,783	\$ 7,833,932	\$ 7,249,883	\$ 584,050
Ciattarelli, Jack*	R	\$1,184,245	\$1,563,623	\$ 6,866,995	\$ 5,944,832	\$ 922,163
Singh, Hirsh	R	\$ 22,458	\$ 52,005	\$ 549,811	\$ 509,502	\$ 40,309
Rizzo, Phil	R	\$ 60,610	\$ 197,949	\$ 623,873	\$ 442,001	\$ 181,872
Steinhardt, Douglas**	R	NA	NA	\$ 248,345	\$ 221,819	\$ 26,527
Levine, Brian***	R	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL- PRIMARY CANDIDATES</b>		<b>\$1,267,722</b>	<b>\$2,181,361</b>	<b>\$16,122,956</b>	<b>\$14,368,037</b>	<b>\$1,754,920</b>
<b>TOTAL- INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES</b>					<b>\$13,288,828</b>	
<b>TOTAL- CANDIDATES AND INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES</b>					<b>\$27,656,864</b>	

\*Fundraising and cash-on-hand totals include \$296,390 in public funds received after cutoff date for 11-day pre-election report.

\*\*Withdrew from race. Totals from April quarterly report. \*\*\*Expects to spend less than \$5,800 on primary election.

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Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said candidate spending in this year's primary is considerably lower than in 2017. However, that is because the 2017 primary had more competition because it was for an open seat to replace former Governor Chris Christie.

"Candidates in 2017 had spent \$28 million through the same period during the last governor's race in 2017. That is nearly twice as much as the amount so far," Brindle said. "However, the 2017 primary also had nearly twice as many candidates- 6 Democrats and 5 Republicans."

Under a nationally regarded program begun in the 1970s, New Jersey gubernatorial candidates who raise more than a certain threshold- \$490,000 in 2021- can qualify for two dollars of public financing for every one dollar raised from private sources. Public funding in 2021 is limited to \$4,600,000. To receive public funds, candidates must limit their primary spending to \$7.3 million and can donate no more than \$25,000 to their campaigns.

This year, only Murphy and Ciattarelli have qualified for public funding.

Murphy has raised more than enough to qualify for the full \$4.6 million. However, his campaign so far has requested just \$4.1 million. Ciattarelli to date has received \$4.4 million in public funds.

Brindle noted that "the \$8.5 million provided so far to the two candidates for the 2021 primary already exceeds the \$6.7 million given out to four candidates during the entire 2017 primary."

"While there has been little independent spending during the primary period, nevertheless one committee in the years leading up to the primary has spent slightly less than the candidates themselves. Independent spending will pick up in the general election," Brindle said.

A 501c4 social welfare non-profit group called New Direction for New Jersey set up to promote Murphy's policies has spent \$13.2 million since its inception four years ago. However, only \$82,668 of its expenditures (0.6 %) have occurred in 2021. It raised \$15 and spent \$10,470 since May 11, according to a new P-2 Issue Advocacy Organization Participation report filed by Murphy's campaign.

*A 527 political organization called Fix NJ Now, set up by supporters of Ciattarelli, has begun running advertisements on his behalf, according to Politico.<sup>1</sup> Organizational reports filed with ELEC state that its objective is to “unite New Jerseyans to put an end to the reign of Phil Murphy.”*

TABLE 2  
SPENDING BY INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES  
TO SUPPORT GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES

FORMED BY OR AFFILIATED WITH	INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES	RAISED	SPENT
<b>Primary/ Pre-Primary</b>			
Murphy, Phil	New Direction for New Jersey	\$ 13,691,195	\$ 13,223,616
<i>Ciattarelli, Jack</i>	<i>Fix NJ Now*</i>	<b>\$ 57,825</b>	<b>\$ 65,212</b>
Murphy, Phil	Our New Jersey (Democratic Governors Association)**	\$ 0	\$ 0
	<b>TOTAL- INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES</b>	<b>\$ 13,749,020</b>	<b>\$ 13,288,828</b>

\*\$1,602 paid and \$63,610 incurred but unpaid. \*\*Committee has registered with ELEC but has spent no funds yet.

Reports filed by gubernatorial candidates are available online on ELEC’s website at [www.elec.state.nj.us](http://www.elec.state.nj.us). ELEC also can be accessed on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw](https://www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/elecny](https://www.twitter.com/elecny)).

<sup>1</sup> Matt Friedman, “Pro-Ciattarelli Super PAC Emerges with Ad Buy on Fox News,” Politico, June 1, 2021.