



# NEWS RELEASE

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Updates in bold italics

## Gubernatorial Campaign Spending Soars as November 2 Election Nears

Spending in the 2021 gubernatorial election has reached \$46 million, a jump of 65 percent from the last snapshot on October 6, according to the latest filings with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said the total combines the most recent spending by the two major candidates with a late influx from several independent committees aligned with them.

“With just two governor seats in play this year here and in Virginia, and the seeming tightening of polls in New Jersey, both parties seem to be viewing this as a high stakes race,” said Brindle. “In the past week alone, independent groups spent more than ***\$7.4 million.***”

Democratic Governor Phil Murphy, who is running for reelection, so far has raised \$16 million and spent \$12.5 million. With the November 2 election just eight days away, he has \$3.5 million in cash reserves.

Republican challenger Jack Ciattarelli has raised \$13.1 million and spent \$12.4 million. He has \$685,259 cash-on-hand.

**Table 1**  
**Latest General Election Campaign Finance Activity\*\***

CANDIDATE	PARTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND
Murphy, Phil	Democrat	\$16,031,915	\$12,553,403	\$ 3,478,512
Ciattarelli, Jack	Republican	\$13,126,924	\$12,441,665	\$ 685,259
Mele, Gregg*	Libertarian	\$ 6,000	NA	NA
Hoffman, Madelyn*	Green	\$ 1,874	NA	NA
Kuniansky, Joanne*	Socialist Workers Party	NA	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL - CANDIDATES</b>		<b>\$29,166,712</b>	<b>\$24,995,068</b>	<b>\$ 4,163,771</b>
Independent Committees - General			<b>\$21,056,018</b>	
<b>TOTAL - GENERAL</b>			<b>\$46,051,086</b>	
Pre-Primary/ Primary				
Candidates			\$16,735,704	
Independents			\$13,412,705	
<b>TOTAL - PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND GENERAL</b>			<b>\$76,199,495</b>	

\*Does not expect to spend more than \$5,800. \*\*Through 10/19 for candidates and 10/24 for independent committees

Brindle said the **\$46 million** in spending is nearly twice the \$23.8 million in spending reported at this point four years ago.

One reason is because Ciattarelli has had more success than other recent challengers raising money. New Jersey gubernatorial candidates are eligible for two public dollars for every one dollar they receive from private sources.

Murphy has received the full \$10.5 million available through the public financing program. Ciattarelli has received \$9.1 million to date- 87 percent of the full sum.

“Ciattarelli has received more than three times as much public funds as the Republican candidate in 2017 and nearly five times more than the Democratic contender in 2013,” Brindle said. “He has raised more public funds than even Chris Christie in 2009, who defeated incumbent Governor Jon Corzine.”

More public funds are available for the candidates this year than in 2017- a maximum of \$10.5 million in 2021 versus \$9.3 million in 2017. Public financing is adjusted upward every four years to account for inflation.

**Table 2**  
**Campaign Finance Activity by Independent Spending**  
**Committees Involving Gubernatorial General Election**

<b>Supports</b>	<b>GROUP</b>	<b>SPENT</b>
Murphy	Our NJ	\$ 5,577,673
Murphy	Garden State Forward (NJEA)*	\$ 5,000,000
Murphy	Committee to Build the Economy	\$ 2,400,404
Ciattarelli	Republican Governors Association	\$ 2,154,348
Murphy	Working for Working Americans (Carpenters)***	\$ 1,500,000
Murphy	Democratic Governors Association**	\$ 1,300,000
Murphy	Carpenters Action Fund***	\$ 1,000,000
Murphy	Growing Economic Opportunities (Laborers)***	\$ 900,000
Ciattarelli	Garden State Rescue	\$ 444,273
Murphy	New Direction for New Jersey	\$ 229,833
Ciattarelli	Fix NJ Now	\$ 286,233
Murphy	United HERE TIP State and Local Fund***	\$ 150,000
Murphy	NJ League of Conservation Voters	\$ 50,000
Murphy	International Brotherhood of Teamsters	\$ 32,040
Murphy	Tech for Campaigns	\$ 18,764
Murphy	NEA (National Education Association) Advocacy Fund	\$ 12,450
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$21,056,018</b>

\*Gave \$2.5 million to Our NJ and \$2.5 million to Build the Economy

\*\*Contributed \$1,000,000 to Our NJ and \$300,000 to Turnout Project

\*\*\*Contributions to Our NJ

The election price tag also is up this year because independent spending is about twice what it was at this point four years ago- **\$21 million** versus \$10.6 million.

“Independent spending committees, which barely existed 15 years ago, now play a major role in state elections. A significant share of spending in each statewide election now comes from these groups,” he said.

At least so far, combined spending by the Democratic and Republican Governors Associations is below the total in 2017, when Democratic Governor Phil Murphy first won election.

The two associations combined have spent \$3.9 million on independent spending and contributions to candidates. In 2017, they spent a total of \$5.5 million. Both groups could be spending more in coming days. Murphy serves as DGA’s finance chairman.

**Table 3**  
**Spending in New Jersey by Democratic and Republican**  
**Governors Associations During 2021 Election**

	<b>Democratic Governors Association</b>	<b>Republican Governors Association</b>	<b>Both Associations<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Independent Spending</b>			
Direct Independent Spending		\$2,154,348	
DGA Contribution to Our NJ	\$1,000,000		
DGA Contribution to Turnout Project	\$ 300,000		
<b>Total Independent Spending</b>	<b>\$1,300,000</b>	<b>\$2,154,348</b>	<b>\$3,454,348</b>
<b>Contributions to Candidates or Parties</b>			
County Parties	\$ 383,500		
Democratic State Committee Or Legislative Leadership PACs	\$ 50,000		
Local candidates	\$ 15,600		
<b>Total Contributions to Candidates or Parties</b>	<b>\$ 449,100</b>		<b>\$ 449,100</b>
<b>Total All Spending</b>	<b>\$1,749,100</b>	<b>\$2,154,348</b>	<b>\$3,903,448</b>

Along with the spending by the two governors’ associations, national unions usually send large checks to Democratic county parties during gubernatorial election years and that trend is occurring again in 2021. County parties play a key role in get-out-the-vote activities and other election-related efforts.

So far, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union has been the top union donor, sending \$377,500 to county parties while Laborers Political League has given \$231,500.

While not Washington, DC-based like these two unions, generous Republican benefactors also have emerged during a critical election year.

Bob Hugin, former Celgene CEO who spent \$36 million in an unsuccessful run for US Senate in 2018, now serves as chairman of the Republican State Committee.

<sup>1</sup> Both associations are 527 political organizations. While they cannot make contributions to federal candidates, they can make contributions to state and local candidates along with engaging in independent spending.

He and his wife Kathy have already contributed \$520,875 to Republican party committees, candidates and Women for a Stronger New Jersey, an independent group that supports Republican women candidates.

The founder of that independent group, Laura Overdeck, has donated \$300,000 to the committee. Along with her husband John, she has given a total of \$427,100 to GOP candidates and committees.

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