



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Independent Spending in New Jersey Governor's Election Already a New High at \$39 million

With more than \$4 million in outside group spending just since Monday in the New Jersey governor's race, independent spending for the election is well into record territory, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Combined spending by these groups in the general election is now \$25.8 million. Together with \$13.4 million in pre-primary and primary spending, the total for the entire election is \$39.2 million. The numbers are preliminary since the election isn't until Tuesday, November 2.

**Table 1**  
**Independent Spending in New Jersey**  
**Gubernatorial Elections Since 2009**

YEAR	PRIMARY	GENERAL	TOTAL
2009	\$ 2,161,802	\$11,918,366	\$14,080,168
2013	\$13,011,027	\$ 8,339,592	\$21,350,619
2017	\$ 9,123,371	\$15,380,781	\$24,504,152
<b>2021 (preliminary)</b>	<b>\$13,412,705</b>	<b>\$25,796,599</b>	<b>\$39,209,304</b>

"Even this preliminary total already is a 60 percent increase over the previous high of \$24.5 million in 2017," said Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director. "For more than a decade, we at ELEC have spoken about the growing influence of these so-called outside or independent groups. This year's election already has taken it to new heights."

Part of the late influx this past week included nearly \$2.6 million in late spending by the Democratic and Republican Governors' Associations. Their combined spending in 2021 has now topped their 2017 total.

The Republican Governors Association (RGA) has outspent the Democratic Governors Association (DGA) \$3.8 million to \$2.7 million. The \$6.5 million in combined spending total tops the \$5.5 million spent here during the 2017 campaign, when Democratic Governor Phil Murphy first won election.

Murphy is running for reelection this year against Republican and former Republican state Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli. He also is DGA's finance chairman.

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**Table 2**  
**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		\$3,768,013	
DGA Contribution to Our NJ	\$2,000,000		
DGA Contribution to Turnout Project	\$ 300,000		
<b>Total Independent Spending</b>	<b>\$2,300,000</b>	<b>\$3,768,013</b>	<b>\$6,068,013</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>\$2,749,100</b>	<b>\$3,768,013</b>	<b>\$6,517,113</b>

ELEC's last overview of gubernatorial campaign activity was released the morning of October 25.

RGA spent \$996,902 on television advertising that afternoon. DGA on October 26 contributed \$1 million to Our NJ, a state political committee set up by DGA to support Murphy's candidacy. On October 27, Our NJ spent \$1.1 million on television, radio and digital ads as well as fund-raising.

Today, RGA followed up with another \$616,764 in spending on television advertising and text messaging.

Another major Murphy supporter is New Jersey Education Association, the state's largest union. It operates Garden State Forward, a federal 527 political organization.

On October 25, it contributed \$500,000 to Committee to Build the Economy, another New Jersey political committee that backs the governor.

It spent \$475,000 on October 26 and 27 on consulting, digital ads and handouts.

To date, Garden State Forward has given \$3 million to Build the Economy and \$2.5 million to Our NJ.

<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.

**Table 3  
Spending by Independent Committees**

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>SPENT</b>
Our NJ	\$ 6,722,890
Garden State Forward*	\$ 5,500,000
Republican Governors Association	\$ 3,768,013
Committee to Build the Economy	\$ 2,875,404
Democratic Governors Association**	\$ 2,300,000
Working for Working Americans (Carpenters)***	\$ 1,500,000
Carpenters Action Fund***	\$ 1,000,000
Growing Economic Opportunities	\$ 900,000
Garden State Rescue	\$ 444,273
Fix NJ Now	\$ 286,233
New Direction for New Jersey	\$ 229,833
Unite Here TIP State and Local Fund***	\$ 150,000
NJ League of Conservation Voters Victory Fund	\$ 50,000
International Brotherhood of Teamsters	\$ 32,040
Tech for Campaigns	\$ 25,463
NEA (National Education Association) Advocacy Fund	\$ 12,450
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$25,796,599</b>
Primary/ Pre-Primary	\$13,412,705
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$39,209,304</b>

\*Gave \$3,000,000 million to Our NJ and \$2.5 million to Build the Economy

\*\*Contributed \$2,000,000 to Our NJ and \$300,000 to Turnout Project

\*\*\*Contributions to Our NJ

Combined with candidate spending, the general election already has cost more than \$50 million while the total election has surpassed \$80 million.

**Table 4  
Latest General Election Campaign Finance Activity\*\***

<b>CANDIDATE</b>	<b>PARTY</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
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>\$25,796,599</b>	
<b>TOTAL - GENERAL</b>			<b>\$50,791,667</b>	
Pre-Primary/ Primary				
Candidates			\$16,735,704	
Independents			\$13,412,705	
<b>TOTAL - PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND GENERAL</b>			<b>\$80,940,076</b>	

\*Does not expect to spend more than \$5,800. \*\*Through 10/19 for candidates and 10/28 for independent committees. Fund-raising totals do not include \$198,000 raised by Murphy and \$328,100 raised by Ciattarelli since October 25.

The most expensive gubernatorial election was the \$87.8 million showdown between Democratic U.S. Senator Jon Corzine and Republican Doug Forrester in 2005. It was mostly financed by their personal fortunes and would cost more than \$123 million in today’s dollars.

The next ELEC overview of gubernatorial campaign finance activity will be released November 24.

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