



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: JEFF BRINDLE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Contributors could give a maximum of \$3,800 per election to gubernatorial candidates in 2013 under new inflation-adjusted limits and thresholds established today by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

Also under the changes required by law every four years, gubernatorial candidates who qualify for public funding could spend a maximum of \$5.6 million in primary elections, and \$12.2 million in general elections.

They could receive up to \$3.5 million in public funds for primary elections, and \$8.2 million for general elections, under the Gubernatorial Public Financing Program that began in 1977.

The bi-partisan Commission unanimously agreed to accept the report at today's meeting. Following a public hearing, it must by December adopt regulations implementing the changes.

The following chart shows the adjustments proposed for contribution limit and thresholds for the Gubernatorial Public Financing Program.

Table 1
2013 Gubernatorial Cost Index Adjustments

Limit/Threshold	2009 Amount	2013 Amount
Contribution Limit	\$ 3,400	\$ 3,800
Qualification Threshold	\$ 340,000	\$ 380,000
Amount Not Matched	\$ 109,000	\$ 122,000
Primary Public Fund Cap	\$ 3,100,000	\$ 3,500,000
Primary Expenditure Limit	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 5,600,000
General Public Fund Cap	\$ 7,300,000	\$ 8,200,000
General Expenditure Limit	\$ 10,900,000	\$ 12,200,000

Executive Director Jeffrey Brindle said the Gubernatorial Public Financing Program has received national praise for its effectiveness.

“Since its inception, 67 candidates have received \$105.2 million in public matching funds. That amounts to just \$4.98 per vote cast in those elections,” he said. “In exchange, New Jersey gubernatorial elections have been issue-oriented and scandal-free.”

The program, he said, has enabled three Democrats and three Republicans to win the office of Governor, and, in some cases, helped them win reelection.

“One of the original purposes of public funding was to help persons of limited financial means seek election to the state’s highest office,” Brindle said. “Judged by that standard, it is a resounding success.”

One reason for the program’s success, he said, is that contribution limits and thresholds are adjusted every four years for inflation.

New Jersey is believed to be the only state that makes the cost of advertising a major part of its inflation formula.

“We believe this better reflects the real world cost pressures faced by candidates,” said Brindle, who developed the formula.

In addition to adjusting the contribution limits and thresholds for gubernatorial candidates, the Commission also adjusts thresholds for non-gubernatorial candidates.

The revised non-gubernatorial thresholds are listed on the following page.

Table 2
2013 Adjustments for Non-Gubernatorial Candidates and Committees

Reporting Thresholds and Fines	2009 Amount	2013 Amount
Political Committee Reporting Threshold	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,400
CPC Reporting Threshold	\$ 4,900	\$ 5,500
Contribution Reporting Threshold (P.L. 2004, c.28)*	\$ 300	\$ 300
48-hr Notice Contribution Threshold	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,400
48-hr Notice Expenditure Threshold	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,400
JCC Thresholds - 2 candidates	\$ 7,600	\$ 8,500
JCC - 3 or more candidates	\$ 11,000	\$ 12,300
Form A-3 Threshold	\$ 4,900	\$ 5,500
Form A-1 & School Board/Write-in Threshold	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,500
Independent Expenditure Threshold	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,400
Section 20.1 Penalties (P.L. 2004, c.32)		
First Time	\$ 6,800	\$ 7,600
Subsequent	\$ 13,600	\$ 15,200
Section 22 Penalties (P.L. 2004, c.32)		
First Time	\$ 6,800	\$ 7,600
Subsequent	\$ 13,600	\$ 15,200
Pro Rata Return of Contributions**	\$ 300	\$ 300

*Frozen at \$300 pursuant to P.L. 2004, c.28

**Frozen by regulation to conform to contribution reporting threshold pursuant to P.L. 2004, c.28

The law further requires that by July 1st each year, the Commission must issue a report that includes recommended increases in contribution limits for non-gubernatorial candidates. The report must be transmitted to the Legislature by July 15th.

In table 3 below, the recommended 2013 non-gubernatorial contribution limit adjustments are displayed. The Commission derived the 2013 recommended amounts by applying the cost multiplier to the contribution levels from 2005, the last year when adjustments were made.

Table 3
Recommended 2013 Non-Gubernatorial
Contribution Amount Adjustments

2005 Contribution Limit	2013 Contribution Limit
\$ 2,600	\$ 3,000
\$ 7,200	\$ 8,100
\$ 8,200	\$ 9,200
\$ 25,000	\$ 28,000
\$ 37,000	\$ 42,000
\$ 72,000	\$ 81,000

The Legislature now must decide whether to accept these revisions.

By December 15th, the Commission must report to the Legislature all of its final adjustments for gubernatorial and non-gubernatorial candidates.

A copy of “2013 Cost Index Report” is available at ELEC’s website (www.elec.state.nj.us).

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