



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:
October 19, 2015

Fundraising by the “Big Six” fundraising committees has fallen more than 50 percent since the last time the state Assembly was running alone on the ballot in 1999, according to a new analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The analysis shows that even without adjusting for inflation, the combined totals for the two state parties and four legislative leadership this year are well below 1999 totals.

When the numbers are adjusted to current dollars, the falloff is even sharper. Fundraising is down 52 percent, spending is down 47 percent and cash-on-hand is off by 59 percent.

TABLE 1
Combined Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six”
Through End of Third Quarter- 1999 Versus 2015

	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
1999 Totals- No Inflation Adjustment	\$5,667,777	\$4,758,764	\$3,360,571	\$3,274,462
1999 Totals- Inflation Adjusted	\$8,107,575	\$6,803,331	\$4,807,190	\$4,684,014
2015 Totals	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849
2015 Versus 1999 Inflation Adjusted	-52%	-47%	-59%	-71%

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

“These numbers show that the decline in Big-Six fundraising this year is due to more than just the fact that only one house is up for grabs in this year’s election,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

“Tight contribution limits on state contractors adopted since 2005 are a major cause of the falloff. In addition, the McCain Feingold reforms in 2002 that ended unlimited “soft money” contributions to national parties, and subsequent federal court rulings, have prompted more special interest groups to spend their money independently of parties and candidates,” he said.

Brindle said ELEC has made several bipartisan recommendations that might counter these trends.

These include streamlining complex “pay-to-play” contribution restrictions into one law, allowing public contractors to make larger contributions particularly to parties, adjusting other contribution limits higher for inflation, and making independent special interest groups follow the same disclosure laws as parties and candidates.

“Many independent special interest groups disclose little or nothing about their fundraising activities. So the public would be better informed if the flow of contributions can be shifted back to the traditional party committees,” Brindle said. “Political parties and legislative leadership PACs are closely regulated, more accountable and follow all disclosure rules and contribution limits.”

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BIG SIX 3rd QUARTER 2015

October 19, 2015

Through September 30 of this year, the two state parties and four legislative leadership committees combined reported just under \$2 million in reserves. Cash reserves, as well as funds raised and spent, were markedly higher in all four previous elections. This year's election is November 3.

All 80 Assembly seats are up for reelection this year. Also on the slate is one candidate running for a Senate seat in the 5th Legislative District in a special election. In other elections since 2007, Assembly candidates shared the slate with all state Senate candidates, gubernatorial candidates, or both.

TABLE 2
Campaign Finance Activity by "Big Six"
January 1 Through September 30, 2015

BOTH PARTIES	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*	STATE ELECTIONS
2007	\$9,322,604	\$6,713,165	\$7,368,421	\$7,095,891	Senate and Assembly
2008	\$4,457,887	\$3,508,376	\$1,519,083	\$1,134,427	
2009	\$6,309,496	\$5,098,191	\$3,073,241	\$2,746,784	Governor and Assembly
2010	\$3,160,458	\$2,859,927	\$1,664,237	\$1,457,787	
2011	\$6,913,921	\$5,025,694	\$3,428,259	\$3,123,885	Senate and Assembly
2012	\$4,083,910	\$3,971,806	\$1,331,432	\$1,192,473	
2013	\$7,203,008	\$5,917,331	\$2,970,203	\$2,884,025	Governor and Both Houses
2014	\$2,444,799	\$1,887,661	\$1,388,946	\$ 765,268	
2015	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849	Assembly

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

For the first nine months of the year, the three Republican committees raised more and had larger cash reserves than the three Democratic committees. Democratic committees have spent more this year.

TABLE 3
Fundraising by "Big Six" Committees
January 1 Through September 30, 2015

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT**	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 989,440	\$1,180,134	\$ 362,855	\$ (184,743)
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 273,524	\$ 94,350	\$ 397,263	\$ 397,263
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 780,533	\$ 501,754	\$ 501,608	\$ 501,608
SUB TOTAL-REPUBLICANS	\$2,043,497	\$1,776,238	\$1,261,726	\$ 714,128
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$ 809,916	\$ 750,689	\$ 234,878	\$ 195,135
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 165,998	\$ 220,432	\$ 125,341	\$ 105,341
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 877,128	\$ 831,659	\$ 362,684	\$ 332,245
SUB TOTAL-DEMOCRATS	\$1,853,042	\$1,802,780	\$ 722,903	\$ 632,721
TOTAL-BOTH PARTIES	\$3,896,539	\$3,579,018	\$1,984,629	\$1,346,849

*Net worth is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts owed to or by the committee.

**Some spending totals exceed fundraising totals because cash reserves were used as well as recent contributions.

State Parties and Legislative Leadership Committees are required to report their financial activity to the Commission on a quarterly basis. The reports are available on ELEC's website at www.elec.state.nj.us.