



NEWS RELEASE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE:
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County party fundraising for the first quarter of 2016 climbed at the fastest pace in several years even without a major state election this year, according to the latest reports filed with the Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Thirty-eight of the 42 county parties reported raising \$1.5 million during the first three months of 2016. That was the most fund-raising since at least 2009. The 2009 total is slightly higher when adjusted for inflation.

County parties also reported \$2 million in cash reserves, the largest since 2010. Though fundraising is up, spending by county parties is at the lowest point in eight years.

**TABLE 1
COUNTY PARTY FUNDRAISING AND SPENDING
THROUGH FIRST QUARTER 2009-2016**

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	MAJOR STATE ELECTION?
2009	\$1,338,922	\$1,468,328	\$1,855,920	Yes
2010	\$1,023,791	\$1,199,044	\$2,078,378	No
2011	\$1,088,038	\$1,108,475	\$1,141,821	Yes
2012	\$ 891,658	\$ 978,826	\$1,023,935	No
2013	\$ 957,098	\$ 980,628	\$1,457,253	Yes
2014	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788	No
2015	\$1,080,157	\$1,118,813	\$1,437,520	Yes
2016	\$1,499,334	\$ 970,613	\$2,027,203	No

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said it is encouraging to see an uptick in party fundraising. But he said today's totals remain well below peak highs of the first decade of the 2000s.

"As recently as 2004, the combined county parties raised \$2.8 million for the first quarter. Even without adjusting for inflation, that is double the current quarter," he said.

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Brindle said fundraising has become harder because county party officials now face tighter restrictions on contributions by public contractors and fund-raising competition from PACs and independent special interest groups.

He has recommended legislative changes that could boost party fund-raising while shifting funds away from independent committees to party committees, which he considers more accountable and transparent.

Those recommendations include consolidating the state’s complex pay-to-play laws into a single, clear state law, raising the amount public contractors can contribute, boosting contribution limits for parties and candidates for the first time in several years, and requiring independent special interest groups to fully disclose their fundraising activities.

A comparison with 2012 totals shows that both parties raised more money than four years ago during the quarter. Democrats spent more; Republicans spent less than four years ago.

Both parties also boosted their cash reserves. Democrats raised and spent more money during the quarter and reported more cash-on-hand. Republicans reported a higher net worth, which is cash-on-hand adjusted for debts.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY BY COUNTY
COMMITTEES JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31
2016 VERSUS 2012

	RAISED-2016	SPENT-2016	CASH-ON-HAND- 2016	NET WORTH-2016*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 799,673	\$ 679,954	\$1,245,021	\$ 968,679
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 699,661	\$ 290,658	\$ 782,181	\$1,699,526
Total-Both Parties	\$1,499,334	\$ 970,613	\$2,027,203	\$2,668,205
	RAISED-2012	SPENT-2012	CASH-ON-HAND-2012	NET WORTH-2012*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$ 430,689	\$ 587,606	\$ 708,074	\$ 294,174
Republican County Party Committees	\$ 460,969	\$ 391,220	\$ 315,861	\$ 706,740
Total-Both Parties	\$ 891,658	\$ 978,826	\$1,023,935	\$1,000,914
Difference 2016 versus 2012				
Democratic County Party Committees	86%	16%	76%	229%
Republican County Party Committees	52%	-26%	148%	140%
Total-Both Parties	68%	-1%	98%	167%

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

Among Democratic county committees that have filed their reports, Bergen, Essex, and Passaic Counties raised more than \$100,000 during the quarter. Bergen, Camden, Essex, Passaic and Union Counties reported cash-on-hand above \$100,000. Camden, Essex and Passaic Counties reported a net worth total above \$100,000, while Hudson County reported a negative net worth.

TABLE 3
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
DEMOCRATIC COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2016

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 13,553	\$ 10,774	\$ 17,370	\$ 17,370
Bergen	\$177,290	\$ 66,027	\$ 177,805	\$ 58,807
Burlington**	NA	NA	NA	NA
Camden	\$ 67,416	\$ 92,534	\$ 185,209	\$185,209
Cape May	\$ 1,945	\$ 101	\$ 6,636	\$ 6,636
Cumberland	\$ 7,000	\$ 9,133	\$ 3,056	\$ 3,056
Essex	\$121,380	\$ 53,291	\$ 119,477	\$119,477
Gloucester	\$ 69,914	\$ 57,893	\$ 29,267	\$ 16,814
Hudson	\$ 26,324	\$ 33,039	\$ 55,635	\$ (96,870)
Hunterdon	\$ 2,820	\$ 8,282	\$ 6,419	\$ 6,419
Mercer	\$ 900	\$ 11,423	\$ 38,426	\$ 38,426
Middlesex	\$ 56,003	\$145,202	\$ 20,638	\$ 20,638
Monmouth	\$ 46,575	\$ 52,442	\$ 9,363	\$ 9,363
Morris	\$ 20,722	\$ 18,126	\$ 13,327	\$ 13,327
Ocean	\$ 21,836	\$ 5,107	\$ 27,170	\$ 43,337
Passaic	\$100,249	\$ 64,459	\$ 375,646	\$375,646
Salem	\$ 11,700	\$ 780	\$ 37,199	\$ 37,199
Somerset	\$ 25,504	\$ 11,360	\$ 11,290	\$ 11,290
Sussex	\$ 2,220	\$ 7,481	\$ 5,892	\$ 5,892
Union	\$ 26,320	\$ 32,501	\$ 105,196	\$ 96,642
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
Democrats-Total	\$799,673	\$679,954	\$1,245,021	\$968,679

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

** Does not expect to spend more than \$5,500 this year.

Among Republican county committees that have filed their reports, Burlington and Somerset Counties raised more than \$100,000 during the quarter. Somerset reported a cash reserve larger than \$100,000. Burlington and Somerset Counties reported a net worth larger than \$100,000.

TABLE 4
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ACTIVITY OF
REPUBLICAN COUNTY PARTY COMMITTEES
JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2016

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 11,700	\$ 7,825	\$ 5,410	\$ 5,410
Bergen	\$ 38,758	\$ 37,605	\$ 11,330	\$ 11,330
Burlington	\$205,750	\$ 2,177	\$ 5,881	\$ 925,464
Camden	\$ 7,329	\$ 3,148	\$ 9,484	\$ 9,484
Cape May	\$ 84,208	\$ 30,463	\$ 87,451	\$ 87,451
Cumberland	\$ 24,981	\$ 7,987	\$ 45,554	\$ 45,554
Essex	-	\$800	\$ 5,877	\$ 5,877
Gloucester	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,185	\$ 8,185
Hudson**	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 27,340	\$ 31,742	\$ 7,747	\$ 7,747
Mercer	\$ 5,875	\$ 3,145	\$ 8,287	\$ 8,287
Middlesex	\$ 2,150	\$ 1,675	\$ 14,206	\$ 14,206
Monmouth	\$ 38,073	\$ 36,295	\$ 8,520	\$ 8,520
Morris	\$ 44,420	\$ 22,761	\$ 44,522	\$ 43,390
Ocean	\$ 12,213	\$ 15,208	\$ 7,367	\$ 7,367
Passaic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Salem	\$ 13,185	\$ 12,051	\$ 10,102	\$ 10,102
Somerset	\$130,776	\$ 43,539	\$427,159	\$ 426,062
Sussex	\$ 17,260	\$ 9,895	\$ 18,051	\$ 18,051
Union	\$ 18,097	\$ 8,378	\$ 52,356	\$ 52,356
Warren	\$ 10,045	\$ 8,464	\$ 4,695	\$ 4,695
Republicans-Total	\$699,661	\$290,658	\$782,181	\$1,699,526

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

**Does not expect to spend more than \$5,500 this year.

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon April 28, 2016. They have yet to be verified by ELEC staff, and should be considered preliminary.

Interested parties are encouraged to review individual reports at ELEC's website (www.elec.state.nj.us).

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