



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Legislative Districts 2 and 8 Continue to Draw Heaviest Spending as November 2 Election Looms

Two Southern New Jersey legislative districts remain the focal points for spending in this year’s legislative elections, according to the latest reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said the most contested legislative districts typically are magnets for spending since incumbents in most other districts face little risk of defeat. “If you follow the money, most of it invariably ends up in so-called battleground districts,” said Brindle.

“This year, both the Second Legislative District (Atlantic County) and the Eighth Legislative District (parts of Atlantic, Burlington and Camden Counties) each have drawn more than \$6.6 million in spending. Both races already rank among the top ten most expensive legislative races in New Jersey history,” he said.

“The two districts alone have drawn \$13.3 million in spending- nearly four of every ten dollars sunk into this year’s general election,” said Brindle. “One quarter of all candidate spending, and 66 percent of spending by independent committees, has occurred in these two districts alone.”

**Table 1**  
**Top Ten Legislative Districts by Spending**

DISTRICT	CANDIDATES*	INDEPENDENT GROUPS**	TOTAL
8	\$ 2,640,871	\$ 4,071,831	\$ 6,712,702
2	\$ 2,589,459	\$ 4,053,819	\$ 6,643,278
11	\$ 3,012,657	\$ 222,536	\$ 3,235,193
16	\$ 2,182,881	\$ 110,646	\$ 2,293,527
3	\$ 1,808,103	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,818,103
21	\$ 1,332,002	\$ 208,675	\$ 1,540,677
25	\$ 985,562	\$ 17,500	\$ 1,003,062
39	\$ 568,925		\$ 568,925
14	\$ 467,864		\$ 467,864
36	\$ 466,828		\$ 466,828
Top 10 Districts	\$16,055,153	\$ 8,695,007	\$24,750,160
All 40 Districts	\$21,654,479	\$12,392,236	\$34,046,715
<b>Top Two Districts Only</b>	<b>\$ 5,230,331</b>	<b>\$ 8,125,650</b>	<b>\$13,355,981</b>
<b>Top Two Districts as % of State Total</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>39%</b>

\*Through October 19 \*\*Through October 26

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The Eighth Legislative District race already has topped a previous high of \$4.4 million inflation adjusted in 2007. The Second Legislative District race ranks second all-time for the district and could surpass the record \$7.1 million cost in 2011. “Never before have two legislative races topped \$6 million in one election,” Brindle said.

**Table 2**  
**Top Ten Costliest Legislative Races in New Jersey**  
**History Ranked by Inflation-Adjusted Totals**

DISTRICT	COUNTIES	YEAR	TOTAL SPENDING AT THE TIME	TOTAL SPENDING-INFLATION ADJUSTED
3	Gloucester/Salem/Cumberland	2017	\$24,100,941*	\$26,590,942
4	Camden/Gloucester	2003	\$ 6,142,441	\$ 9,157,245
12	Monmouth	2007	\$ 5,963,939	\$ 7,890,192
2	Atlantic	2011	\$ 5,806,467	\$ 7,080,906
38	Bergen/ Passaic	2013	\$ 5,910,318	\$ 6,959,479
3	Gloucester/Salem/Cumberland	2003	\$ 4,548,302	\$ 6,780,678
<b>8</b>	<b>Atlantic/Burlington/Camden</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>\$ 6,712,702</b>	<b>\$ 6,712,702</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Atlantic</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>\$ 6,643,278</b>	<b>\$ 6,643,278</b>
1	Cape May/Cumberland	2007	\$ 4,975,772	\$ 6,582,863
38	Bergen/ Passaic	2011	\$ 5,183,499	\$ 6,321,205

\*Believed to be the most expensive state legislative election in US history.

After the most expensive legislative election in New Jersey history in 2017, independent spending took a huge dip in 2019. However, the \$14.6\*million spent so far already is the third most independent spending in a legislative general election since 2007.

**Table 3**  
**Spending by Independent Special Interest**  
**Committees in New Jersey Legislative Elections**

YEAR	PRIMARY	GENERAL	TOTAL
2007		\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000
2009		\$ 15,999	\$ 15,999
2011		\$ 1,835,500	\$ 1,835,500
2013	\$ 650,623	\$15,375,071	\$16,025,694
2015	\$ 927,561	\$10,908,983	\$11,836,544
2017	\$ 727,746	\$26,562,428	\$27,290,174
2019	\$ 15,000	\$ 9,283,402	\$ 9,298,402
<b>2021</b>	<b>\$2,252,576*</b>	<b>\$12,392,236</b>	<b>\$14,644,812*</b>

\*Revised 11/30/21

American Democratic Majority, a federal 527 political organization run by South Jersey Democrats, so far is the biggest spender in the election. It has expended nearly \$4.5 million just in the general election. Most of its spending (\$3.7 million) has gone to the Eighth Legislative District.

Garden State Forward, a federal 527 political organization run by the New Jersey Education Association, the state's largest union, has spent \$3.6 million so far in the general election. Most of its funds (\$3.5 million) have been funneled into the Second Legislative District.

**Table 4**  
**Cumulative Spending to Date by Independent Committees on 2021 Legislative Elections**

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>PRIMARY</b>	<b>GENERAL</b>	<b>BOTH ELECTIONS</b>
<b>American Democratic Majority</b>	<b>\$1,058,991</b>	<b>\$ 4,460,645</b>	<b>\$ 5,519,636</b>
<b>Garden State Forward (NJEA)</b>	<b>\$ 198,493</b>	<b>\$ 3,568,154</b>	<b>\$ 3,766,647</b>
Working for Working Americans (Carpenters)*		\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
Carpenters Action Fund*	\$ 25,000	\$ 1,025,000	\$ 1,050,000
New Jersey Coalition of Real Estate	\$ 533,887	\$ 275,897	\$ 809,784
Women for a Stronger New Jersey	\$ 63,512	\$ 533,554	\$ 597,066
Stronger Foundations Inc (Operating Engineers)	\$ 276,629	\$ 183,000	\$ 459,629
Republican State Leadership Committee <sup>1</sup>		\$ 368,965	\$ 368,965
NJ League of Conservation Voters Victory Fund		\$ 180,627	\$ 180,627
Turnout Project		\$ 168,600	\$ 168,600
Growing Economic Opportunities (Laborers)	\$ 133,161		\$ 133,161
UA Political Action Fund (Plumbers)*		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Building Stronger Communities	\$ 77,535		\$ 77,535
Better Days PAC	\$ 30,545		\$ 30,545
America's Future First	\$ 23,560		\$ 23,560
NJ Bankers Association		\$ 19,984	\$ 19,984
New Jersey Right to Life		\$ 7,810	\$ 7,810
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,421,314</b>	<b>\$12,392,236</b>	<b>\$14,813,549</b>

\*Contributions to American Democratic Majority.

Democrats, who hold majorities in both legislative houses, continue to dominate in fund-raising, spending and cash-on-hand.

**Table 5**  
**Breakdown of Legislative Campaign Finance Activity by Party through October 19, 2021**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
<b>Democratic Candidates</b>	<b>\$30,496,975</b>	<b>\$15,907,165</b>	<b>\$14,589,810</b>
<b>Republican Candidates</b>	<b>\$ 8,989,355</b>	<b>\$ 5,747,313</b>	<b>\$ 3,242,041</b>
All Parties	\$39,486,330	\$21,654,479	\$17,831,852

<sup>1</sup> RSLC has also directly donated \$164,000 to Republican candidates for primary and general elections in 2021. As a 527 political organization, it cannot donate to federal candidates. It can contribute to state candidates along with engaging in independent spending.

Incumbents also hold a heavy advantage over challengers. They have raised three times more money, spent 1.6 times more, and have 11 times more cash in reserve.

**Breakdown of Spending by Incumbents  
and Challengers through October 19, 2021**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>RAISED</b>	<b>SPENT</b>	<b>CASH-ON-HAND</b>
<b>Incumbents</b>	<b>\$29,818,420</b>	<b>\$13,473,686</b>	<b>\$16,344,735</b>
<b>Challengers</b>	<b>\$ 9,667,910</b>	<b>\$ 8,180,793</b>	<b>\$ 1,487,117</b>
All Candidates	\$39,486,330	\$21,654,479	\$17,831,852

Candidate totals in this analysis are based on 11-day pre-election day reports that reflect campaign finance activity through October 19, 2021. Independent spending totals are based on reports filed as recently as October 27, 2021.

Reports filed by legislative candidates and independent spenders are available online on ELEC's website at [www.elec.nj.gov](http://www.elec.nj.gov). A downloadable summary of data from candidate reports is available in both spreadsheet and PDF formats at [www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/statistics.htm](http://www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/statistics.htm).

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