



NEWS RELEASE

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“Big Six” Spending Remains Subdued During Federal Election Year

The so-called “Big Six” fund-raising committees through September 30 have raised \$3.1 million and spend \$2.5 million for fall elections, according to quarterly reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The two state parties and four legislative leadership committees also reported a combined \$1.6 million in cash reserves.

Contests for New Jersey’s 12 congressional seats are the chief focus of the November 8 elections except for local elections and two special state legislative elections to fill vacancies.

Table 1
Campaign Finance Activity by “Big Six”
Committees Through September 30

PERIOD	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
2022	\$3,081,272	\$2,480,441	\$1,620,865	\$1,576,458
Average for Eight State Election Years	<i>\$6,669,304</i>	<i>\$5,535,534</i>	<i>\$3,152,109</i>	<i>\$2,917,001</i>
2022 Versus Average	46%	45%	51%	54%
Average for Eight Federal Election Years	\$3,230,949	\$2,770,077	\$1,384,479	\$1,170,845
2022 Versus Average	95%	90%	117%	135%

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

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said state fund-raising activity by the “Big Six” typically dips during federal election years.

“In years when federal elections are the main attraction, “Big Six” fundraising and spending are half as much as in years when state elections have top billing,” Brindle said.

“Congressional races are the big show this fall, and the two state parties are concentrating their resources on those elections. That includes shifting some funds from state to federal accounts,” Brindle said. “Meanwhile, the four legislative leadership committees are gradually gearing up for next year’s legislative elections.”

The two state parties so far this year have transferred a combined \$773,232 from their state accounts to their federal fund-raising accounts- \$550,232 for Democrats and \$223,000 for Republicans.

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According to reports filed with the Federal Election Commission, the Democratic federal account has raised \$3.9 million and spent \$2.2 million. Republicans through their federal accounts have raised \$1.6 million for federal elections and spent \$767,169 so far.

The two parties combined have raised \$5.5 million and spent \$2.9 million from their federal election accounts. Republicans reported more cash-on-hand- \$476,743 versus \$236,482. Reports for both parties show their main expense has been buying direct mail for congressional candidates that goes to voter residences.

Table 2
Federal Campaign Finance Activity
of Two New Jersey State Parties

COMMITTEE	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND
Democratic State Committee	\$3,882,577	\$2,160,908	\$236,482
Republican State Committee	\$1,630,341	\$ 767,169	\$476,743
Totals	\$5,512,918	\$2,928,077	\$713,225

Source: Federal Election Commission reports downloaded 10/17/22

Based on the two-year congressional fund-raising cycle, federal reports reflect activity between January 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022.

Reports involving state accounts are filed with ELEC and reflect activity for the first three quarters of 2022.

Democrats have raised and spent more than Republicans so far this year and have flusher cash reserves. Compared to similar totals in 2018, Democratic fund-raising and spending are down, and their cash reserves are up. Republicans have raised more and have more cash than four years ago while spending slightly less.

Table 3
Fundraising by “Big Six” Committees
January 1 Through September 30, 2022

REPUBLICANS	RAISED	SPENT	CASH	NET WORTH
New Jersey Republican State Committee	\$ 308,246	\$ 256,872	\$ 105,790	\$ 105,790
Senate Republican Majority	\$ 311,616	\$ 198,996	\$ 121,695	\$ 121,695
Assembly Republican Victory	\$ 270,938	\$ 112,209	\$ 216,991	\$ 216,991
Sub-Total- Republicans	\$ 890,800	\$ 568,077	\$ 444,476	\$ 444,476
Versus 2018- (Dollars)	\$ 217,631	\$ (3,780)	\$ 82,870	\$ 82,870
Versus 2018 (Percent)	32%	-1%	23%	23%
DEMOCRATS				
New Jersey Democratic State Committee	\$1,024,405	\$1,379,931	\$ 133,728	\$ 119,760
Senate Democratic Majority	\$ 643,283	\$ 176,606	\$ 717,181	\$ 717,181
Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee	\$ 522,783	\$ 355,828	\$ 325,480	\$ 295,042
Sub-Total- Democrats	\$2,190,472	\$1,912,364	\$1,176,390	\$1,131,983
Versus 2018- (Dollars)	\$(983,155)	\$ (809,213)	\$ 239,062	\$ 279,159
Versus 2018 (Percent)	-31%	-30%	26%	33%
Total- Both Parties	\$3,081,272	\$2,480,441	\$1,620,865	\$1,576,458
Versus 2018- (Dollars)	\$(765,524)	\$ (812,993)	\$ 321,932	\$ 362,028
Versus 2018 (Percent)	-20%	-25%	25%	30%

Brindle said while alternating election years are one reason “Big Six” coffers are down, there is a long-term downward fund-raising decline over the past two decades.

That is one reason why state legislators together with Governor Phil Murphy need to act on pending legislation that would reinvigorate party fund-raising while increasing transparency for so-called “dark money” groups that raise and spend their election funds independently of parties and candidates, often with little or no public oversight.

“Unlike parties and candidates, these independent groups operated by special interests are not subject to contribution limits and have far surpassed spending by party committees during the past decade,” Brindle said. “Unless steps are taken to make it easier for party committees to raise funds, the role of parties in state elections could continue to shrink.”

Brindle said both parties would benefit from enactment of the pending “Elections Transparency Act” (S-2866/A4372). After being voted out unanimously and with bipartisan support by two state Senate Committees and an Assembly committee, the bill stalled before the Legislature recessed June 29.

The bill incorporates several ELEC recommendations, including increasing contribution limits on party committees including the Big Six, letting them accept more funds from public contractors, and requiring more disclosure by independent groups and public contractors.

“I remain optimistic that the Legislature will enact these reforms in coming weeks,” he said.

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.nj.gov.

ELEC also can be accessed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NJElectionLaw) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/elecnj).

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