



NEWS RELEASE

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County Party Fund-raising Continues to Flourish in Wake of New Law

First quarter fund-raising by county party committees was the highest in a decade as higher contribution limits have made it easier for officials to amass donor dollars, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The number of dollars raised during the quarter totaled almost \$2.2 million- nearly 37 percent higher than the decade-long average.¹

Cash reserves also are at a high for the period- \$4.2 million, or 38 percent above average.

Table 1
First Quarter Totals for County
Party Committees 2014-2024

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND
2014	\$1,048,455	\$1,099,335	\$1,312,788
2015	\$1,080,157	\$1,118,813	\$1,437,520
2016	\$1,499,334	\$ 970,613	\$2,027,203
2017	\$1,195,248	\$1,250,534	\$2,086,933
2018	\$1,371,138	\$1,378,945	\$2,657,429
2019	\$1,648,413	\$1,654,402	\$3,341,448
2020	\$1,234,693	\$1,290,897	\$2,155,834
2021	\$ 695,644	\$ 897,135	\$2,657,845
2022	\$1,346,643	\$1,538,378	\$3,872,588
2023	\$1,675,860	\$1,552,863	\$3,193,619
2024	\$2,157,259	\$1,635,625	\$4,227,400
1st Quarter Averages- 2014-2024	\$1,359,349	\$1,307,958	\$2,633,691
Difference	37%	20%	38%

“The numbers are up despite the fact that six committees have yet to report their first quarter campaign finance activity,” said Joe Donohue, ELEC’s Acting Executive Director. “This is a strong clue that legislative changes have made fund-raising easier for party committees.”

¹ Some earlier totals adjusted for inflation might have had more buying power.

Donohue said the impact is likely due to the enactment last year of the Elections Transparency Act (P.L. 2023, c.30). On April 3, 2023, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation (S-2866) that made several changes to the laws that are enforced by ELEC.

One change that had a direct impact on county party finances raised from \$37,500 to \$75,000 the regular annual contribution limit that applies to those committees. In addition, state and county parties can annually accept an additional \$37,500 for “housekeeping accounts” that some, though not all, have created to defray administrative expenses.

Committees with these accounts can raise up to \$112,500 each year. These increases in contribution limits followed an 18-year freeze lifted by the Legislature through the 2023 law.

The new law also allowed public contractors to resume making political donations to all party committees, including counties, for the first time in more than a decade up to the same limit as other donors.

During the quarter, Democratic party committees raised more than twice the Republican committees and spent about twice as much. Democratic committees also have four times as much cash-on-hand as their GOP counterparts at the end of the quarter.

One caveat is that these numbers are preliminary since two Democratic and four Republican committees have yet to file their first quarter reports.

Table 2
First Quarter Snapshot of 2024 Campaign
Finance Activity by County Parties

PARTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Democrats	\$1,536,728	\$1,092,420	\$3,372,439	\$3,254,469
Republicans	\$ 620,531	\$ 543,205	\$ 854,961	\$ 807,262
Combined	\$2,157,259	\$1,635,625	\$4,227,400	\$4,061,730

*Cash-on-hand plus or minus debts owed to or by the committee.

Among Democratic county party committees that have filed their reports, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset and Union Counties all reported cash balances of more than \$100,000. Hudson County reported a negative cash balance when adjusting for outstanding debts.

Table 3
Campaign Finance Activity of
Democratic County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2024

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 30,195	\$ 19,545	\$ 12,997	\$ 12,997
Bergen	\$ 242,226	\$ 100,058	\$ 467,608	\$ 467,608
Burlington	\$ 114,830	\$ 4,301	\$ 165,124	\$ 158,749
Camden	\$ 112,793	\$ 120,703	\$ 274,403	\$ 274,403
Cape May	\$ 1,285	\$ 4,148	\$ 15,602	\$ 15,602
Cumberland	\$ 22,400	\$ 8,307	\$ 32,742	\$ 32,742
Essex	\$ 163,460	\$ 114,253	\$ 298,639	\$ 298,639
Gloucester	\$ 138,300	\$ 63,084	\$ 288,349	\$ 269,940
Hudson	\$ 12,500	\$ 31,497	\$ 9,598	\$ (99,176)
Hunterdon	\$ 7,670	\$ 10,245	\$ 23,467	\$ 23,467
Mercer	\$ 50	\$ 9,313	\$ 331,453	\$ 330,875
Middlesex	\$ 193,143	\$ 277,311	\$ 274,451	\$ 274,451
Monmouth	\$ 46,981	\$ 50,936	\$ 1,909	\$ 1,909
Morris	\$ 13,773	\$ 28,364	\$ 43,597	\$ 43,596
Ocean	\$ 7,626	\$ 3,620	\$ 40,754	\$ 56,921
Passaic	\$ 192,190	\$ 69,226	\$ 365,848	\$ 365,848
Salem	NA	NA	NA	NA
Somerset	\$ 63,160	\$ 94,287	\$ 196,317	\$ 196,317
Sussex	\$ 1,203	\$ 3,768	\$ 36,445	\$ 36,445
Union	\$ 172,944	\$ 79,452	\$ 493,136	\$ 493,136
Warren	NA	NA	NA	NA
Democrats-Total	\$1,536,728	\$1,092,420	\$3,372,439	\$3,254,469

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

Among Republican county party committees that have filed their reports, Cape May and Monmouth Counties reported cash balances above \$100,000. Passaic County reported a negative balance when adjusting for outstanding debts.

Table 4
Campaign Finance Activity of
Republican County Party Committees
January 1 through March 31, 2024

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bergen	\$ 35,737	\$ 36,535	\$ 10,329	\$ 329
Burlington	NA	NA	NA	NA
Camden	\$ 13,952	\$ 12,632	\$ 9,445	\$ 9,440
Cape May	\$ 20,914	\$ 20,914	\$346,862	\$346,861
Cumberland	\$ 43,210	\$ 19,693	\$ 65,806	\$ 65,806
Essex	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,002	\$ 3,808	\$ 3,808
Gloucester	\$ 20,475	\$ 19,435	\$ 12,746	\$ 7,746
Hudson	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 39,858	\$ 46,137	\$ 4,180	\$ 4,180
Mercer	NA	NA	NA	NA
Middlesex	\$ 9,772	\$ 10,340	\$ 19,766	\$ 19,637
Monmouth	\$ 65,695	\$ 65,352	\$110,289	\$110,289
Morris	\$ 32,312	\$ 37,545	\$ 18,034	\$ 12,834
Ocean	\$149,567	\$103,434	\$ 58,403	\$ 58,403
Passaic	\$ 78,720	\$ 72,953	\$ 24,700	\$ (2,069)
Salem	\$ 23,450	\$ 9,795	\$ 52,164	\$ 52,164
Somerset	\$ 6,880	\$ 24,329	\$ 1,679	\$ 1,679
Sussex	\$ 11,645	\$ 8,821	\$ 14,161	\$ 13,890
Union	\$ 30,295	\$ 20,795	\$ 65,961	\$ 65,961
Warren	\$ 33,050	\$ 30,492	\$ 36,629	\$ 36,304
Republicans-Total	\$620,531	\$543,205	\$854,961	\$807,262

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

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon May 1, 2024. They have yet to be verified by ELEC staff and should be considered preliminary.

Individual reports can be reviewed on ELEC’s website (www.elec.nj.gov).

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