



NEWS RELEASE

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CASH INFLUX FROM FEDERAL CANDIDATES BOLSTERED COUNTY PARTIES IN 2018

A \$1.1 million windfall from federal candidates helped county parties enjoy their best fundraising in a federal election year since 2008, according to reports filed with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

Democratic and Republican committees combined raised \$9.7 million and spent \$9 million. While they usually raise more during state election years, it has been a decade since they netted more contributions in a federal election year. Counties together raised and spent \$9.5 million in 2008.

Table 1
County Party Fundraising and Spending
through Fourth Quarter 2008-2018

YEAR	RAISED	SPENT	STATE/ FEDERAL?	OFFICE
2008	\$ 9,511,311	\$ 9,502,015	Federal	P/S/H
2009	\$13,854,662	\$13,306,296	State	G/A
2010	\$ 7,591,065	\$ 8,712,802	Federal	H
2011	\$ 8,449,211	\$ 8,545,440	State	S/A
2012	\$ 6,407,139	\$ 5,885,971	Federal	P/S/H
2013	\$ 9,908,851	\$10,069,188	State	G/S/A
2014	\$ 7,633,924	\$ 7,560,342	Federal	S/H
2015	\$ 9,161,877	\$ 8,883,225	State	A
2016	\$ 8,389,170	\$ 8,055,559	Federal	P/H
2017	\$10,673,468	\$10,259,704	State	G/S/A
2018	\$ 9,709,931	\$ 9,018,198	Federal	S/H

P=Presidential; S=US or State Senate; H=House; G=Gubernatorial; A=Assembly; Excludes special elections

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said Republicans benefited most from federal donors during 2018 due largely to the generosity of Bob Hugin, a retired businessman who ran without success for U.S. Senate.

He gave county committees \$806,210 in contributions and for rental reimbursement. His total represents 71 percent of the \$1.1 million given to all county parties by federal candidates in 2018.

“As we’ve seen in the past, self-financed candidates often share their wealth with county organizations. It helps win support for their candidacies while creating valuable allies during the election,” said Brindle.

Table 2
Contributions by US Senate or Gubernatorial
Candidates to County Parties Since 1999

CANDIDATE	TOTAL	PARTY	WHEN	OUTCOME
Bob Hugin	\$ 806,210	Republican	2018	Lost US Senate
Phil Murphy	\$ 722,957	Democrat	2014-2017	Won Governor
Doug Forrester	\$ 326,105	Republican	2002-2005	Lost US Senate Seat and Governor
Jon Corzine	\$4,759,820	Democrat	1999-2008	Won US Senate Seat and Governor; Lost Governor

Including his contributions to county parties and \$25,000 to the Republican State Committee, Hugin spent \$36,831,210 of his own funds to advance his 2018 campaign. (To see list of top ten self-financed New Jersey campaigns, go to https://www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/top10_self_finance.html)

Table 3
Donations by Congressional Candidates to County Parties

YEAR	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	TOTAL
2018	\$210,900	\$920,510	\$1,131,410
2017	\$ 69,850	\$117,500	\$ 187,350
2016	\$203,821	\$122,463	\$ 326,284

While Republicans benefited more from contributions from congressional candidates, Democrats started 2018 with \$2.5 million in cash reserves versus about \$600,000 for Republicans after receiving a bevy of large checks from unions and national Democratic party committees in 2017.

Despite spending nearly \$1.3 million more than Republicans, Democrats finished 2018 with nearly \$1.5 million more cash in the bank- \$2,474,730 versus \$961,180. Both parties ended with much healthier coffers than they had in 2014. Democratic cash-on-hand was up 156 percent while Republicans were up 108 percent.

Table 4
Summary of Campaign Finance Activity by County Committees
January 1 through December 31, 2018 Versus 2014

	RAISED-2018	SPENT-2018	CASH-ON-HAND-2018	NET WORTH-2018
Democratic County Party Committees	\$5,429,423	\$5,195,282	\$2,474,730	\$2,294,542
Republican County Party Committees	\$4,280,508	\$3,822,916	\$ 961,180	\$1,776,469
Total-Both Parties	\$9,709,931	\$9,018,198	\$3,435,910	\$4,071,011
	RAISED-2014	SPENT-2014	CASH-ON-HAND-2014	NET WORTH-2014*
Democratic County Party Committees	\$4,943,216	\$4,868,915	\$ 964,926	\$ 523,831
Republican County Party Committees	\$2,690,708	\$2,691,427	\$ 462,151	\$1,349,156
Total-Both Parties	\$7,633,924	\$7,560,342	\$1,427,077	\$1,872,987
Difference 2018 versus 2014				
Democratic County Party Committees	10%	7%	156%	338%
Republican County Party Committees	59%	42%	108%	32%
Total-Both Parties	27%	19%	141%	117%

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

While county party fundraising totals in 2018 were respectable for a federal election year, they remain well below 2005 when new limits on contributions by public contractors had not yet taken effect and federal court rulings had not yet triggered a national wave of independent spending. Total county party spending in 2005 was \$19 million versus \$9 million in 2018.

“ELEC-recommended legislation that has unanimously cleared the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee could help reverse the fortunes of all party committees in New Jersey,” said Brindle. “We hope both houses soon will approve the legislation and Governor Phil Murphy will enact it.”

Among Democratic county party committees, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Mercer, Passaic, Salem and Union all reported more than \$100,000 cash-on-hand. Hudson County reported a negative net worth, meaning it owes more its cash reserves.

Table 5
Campaign Finance Activity of
Democratic County Party Committees
January 1 through December 31, 2018

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$100,068	\$102,936	\$ 6,507	\$ 6,507
Bergen	\$762,888	\$872,790	\$ 39,978	\$ 346
Burlington	\$188,786	\$130,944	\$ 81,537	\$ 63,959
Camden	\$594,879	\$332,060	\$611,822	\$611,822
Cape May**	\$ 73,051	\$ 73,138	\$ 1,439	\$ 1,439
Cumberland	\$109,747	\$130,577	\$ 11,637	\$ 11,637
Essex***	\$219,803	\$256,045	\$108,120	\$108,120
Gloucester	\$435,952	\$341,256	\$417,777	\$417,777
Hudson	\$171,832	\$239,998	\$ 76,658	\$ (62,487)
Hunterdon	\$ 64,104	\$ 66,706	\$ 15,736	\$ 15,736
Mercer	\$112,264	\$ 77,825	\$158,124	\$158,124
Middlesex	\$656,629	\$680,836	\$ 15,357	\$ 15,357
Monmouth	\$321,859	\$326,107	\$ 4,468	\$ 4,468
Morris**	\$193,474	\$162,215	\$ 41,554	\$ 41,554
Ocean	\$ 53,523	\$ 78,768	\$ 42,991	\$ 59,157
Passaic	\$540,936	\$682,292	\$386,948	\$386,948
Salem	\$ 24,975	\$ 30,946	\$104,670	\$104,670
Somerset	\$230,199	\$228,013	\$ 38,621	\$ 38,621
Sussex	\$ 73,317	\$ 59,411	\$ 20,232	\$ 20,232
Union	\$458,520	\$306,334	\$263,970	\$263,970
Warren**	\$ 42,616	\$ 16,086	\$ 26,583	\$ 26,583
Democrats-Total	\$5,429,423	\$5,195,282	\$2,474,730	\$2,294,542

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

**3rd quarter totals

***raised and spent 3rd qtr., cash-on-hand, net worth 4th qtr

****2nd quarter totals

Among Republican county committees that filed their reports, Salem and Somerset Counties reported cash-on-hand totals above \$100,000.

Table 6
Campaign Finance Activity of
Republican County Party Committees
January 1 through December 31, 2018

COUNTY	RAISED	SPENT	CASH-ON-HAND	NET WORTH*
Atlantic	\$ 52,352	\$ 34,410	\$ 40,341	\$ 40,341
Bergen	\$ 265,674	\$ 262,182	\$ 9,984	\$ 9,984
Burlington	\$1,381,155	\$1,365,293	\$ 53,474	\$ 870,841
Camden	\$ 48,255	\$ 21,437	\$ 18,469	\$ 18,469
Cape May**	\$ 162,105	\$ 108,634	\$ 61,168	\$ 61,168
Cumberland	\$ 138,569	\$ 104,247	\$ 48,861	\$ 48,861
Essex	\$ 70,500	\$ 54,240	\$ 19,507	\$ 19,507
Gloucester	\$ 56,721	\$ 35,590	\$ 29,468	\$ 29,468
Hudson†	\$ 37,000	NA	NA	NA
Hunterdon	\$ 127,469	\$ 122,650	\$ 13,367	\$ 13,367
Mercer	\$ 47,606	\$ 40,981	\$ 28,051	\$ 28,051
Middlesex***	\$ 62,935	\$ 41,682	\$ 43,551	\$ 43,551
Monmouth	\$ 329,260	\$ 334,955	\$ 28,076	\$ 28,076
Morris	\$ 212,206	\$ 200,838	\$ 16,018	\$ 17,297
Ocean	\$ 204,600	\$ 186,999	\$ 19,910	\$ 19,910
Passaic	\$ 287,910	\$ 269,420	\$ 18,490	\$ 18,490
Salem	\$ 58,976	\$ 45,457	\$236,684	\$ 236,684
Somerset	\$ 392,035	\$ 275,753	\$157,116	\$ 153,759
Sussex	\$ 110,120	\$ 109,272	\$ 35,444	\$ 35,444
Union	\$ 136,650	\$ 118,439	\$ 60,893	\$ 60,893
Warren	\$ 98,410	\$ 90,437	\$ 22,306	\$ 22,306
Republicans-Total	\$4,280,508	\$3,822,916	\$961,180	\$1,776,469

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

**3rd quarter totals.

***raised and spent 3rd qtr., cash-on-hand and net worth 4th qtr.

†Reported by US Senate Candidate Bob Hugin; NA= No reports available

The numbers in this analysis are based on reports filed by noon February 1, 2019. 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.state.nj.us).

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