

NEW JERSEY 1999 GENERAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

By Sara Marino
July 14, 2000

Total Candidate dollars: \$13,178,096

Total number of voters: 1,389,864
Average dollars per vote: \$9.48

Incumbent candidates' total dollars: \$9,441,944
Challengers to incumbents' total dollars: \$3,736,152

General election winners' total dollars: \$9,479,091
General election losers' total dollars: \$3,517,216
Primary election losers' total dollars: \$181,789

The New Jersey General Assembly is comprised of 40 districts, each represented by two members. Therefore, 80 races were held in 1999, 79 of which were contested. However, there were 10 races in which challengers did not raise any money. **Incumbents ran in 100 percent of the races, and 98 percent of them won.** No statewide or Senate races ran in 1999. In the year 2001 the entire Senate and Assembly will run for a two-year term¹, and the governor will run for a four-year term. (The NJ Senate runs after every Census for a two-year term, and then for two consecutive four-year terms.)

THE CANDIDATES

Democrat	Republican	Third Party	TOTAL	Incumbents	Challengers
87	86	43	216	80	136

Democrat	Republican	Third Party	TOTAL
\$5,817,185	\$7,345,529	\$15,382	\$13,178,096

Republicans raised 56% of total dollars

Democrats and Republicans were represented equally in the pool of candidates, with a small percentage coming from third parties. Republicans went into the elections holding a majority in the Assembly, with 48 -- or 60 percent -- of the 80 incumbents.

THE WINNERS

Democrat	Republican	Third Party	TOTAL	Incumbents	Challengers
33	47	0	80	78	2

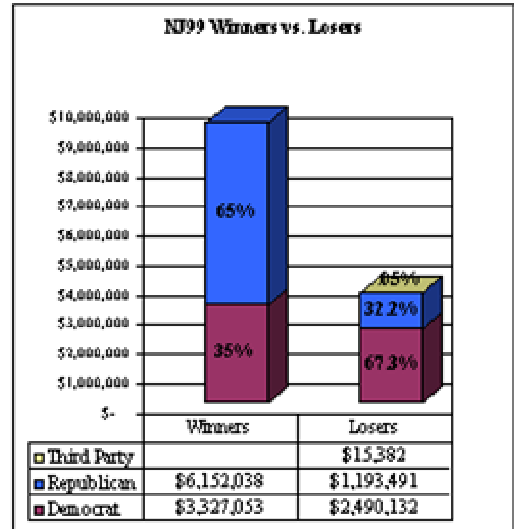
Republican candidates won 59 percent of the races, maintaining their long-time control of the Assembly. The Republicans did, however, lose one seat in the fourth district to Democrat challenger Robert J. Smith.

Money & Incumbency

Compiling the largest war chest and coming into the race as an incumbent are two key advantages that almost always guarantee a winning candidate.

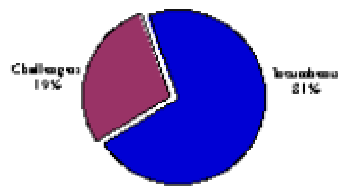
In the Assembly races, the winners raised 2.5 times more than did the losers -- \$9,479,091 compared to the losers' \$3,699,005.

Incumbents won 78 out of the 80 races — winning nearly 98 percent of the time. Challengers who raised more money than the losing incumbents won the other two races.



Therefore, money and/or incumbency resulted in a 100 percent success rate.

On average, incumbents outspent their challengers by a ratio of 4:1.



Incumbents	Challengers
\$9,441,944	\$3,736,152
Avg/Incumbent	Avg/Challenger
\$118,024	\$27,472

TOP FUNDRAISING CANDIDATES & DISTRICTS

Candidate/Party	District	Status	Type	Total \$ Raised	District	Total \$ Raised
DIGAETANO, PAUL (R)	36	Won	Incumbent	\$596,479	7	\$880,060
CORODEMUS, STEVE (R)	11	Won	Incumbent	\$288,603	36	\$878,664
THOMPSON, SAM (R)	13	Won	Incumbent	\$257,919	4	\$860,003
GEIST, GEORGE F (R)	4	Won	Incumbent	\$247,399	13	\$833,700
AZZOLINA, JOSEPH (R)	13	Won	Incumbent	\$244,436	11	\$739,315

Long-time Assembly member and Majority Leader Paul DiGaetano raised the most money in the 1999 elections. DiGaetano alone raised 67 percent of the money raised in District 36. DiGaetano contributed \$36,200 to 45 fellow Republican candidates.

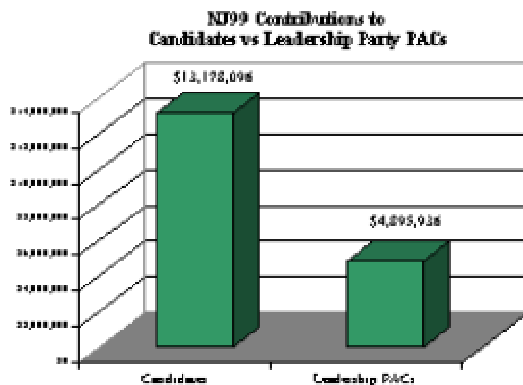
It is interesting to note that DiGaetano received only \$2,500 from party PACs, whereas party PAC money was the top source of contributions for the other four candidates listed above.

THE BIG 6 PARTY PACS

Party PAC	Total \$ Raised
NJ Republican State Committee	\$3,469,778
NJ Democratic State Committee	\$2,607,082
Doria Democratic Leadership Fund	\$1,676,526
Assembly Republican Majority	\$1,502,594
Senate President's Committee	\$919,486
Senate Democratic Majority 2001	\$797,330
TOTAL	\$10,972,796

Money received by candidates from party PACs was a significant part of the 1999 elections. Almost 35 percent of the total candidate dollars came from party PAC conduits. The state provided data on the "Big 6" party PACs listed above, and the Institute analyzed the source and amount of these funds.

Out of the six party PACs, the NJ Republican State Committee raised 31 percent of total party PAC dollars. Combined, Republican PACs raised \$5,891,858, or 54 percent of party PAC dollars, and Democrat PACs raised \$5,080,938. Of the total \$10.9 million dollars raised, they gave \$2.6 million directly to the candidates, and spent the rest on party activities.



The NJ Republican State Committee and NJ Democratic State Committee are general party state committees while the other four are leadership PACs connected with Assembly Minority Leader Joseph Doria, Assembly Speaker Jack Collins, Senate President Donald DiFrancesco, and Senate Minority Leader Richard Codey.

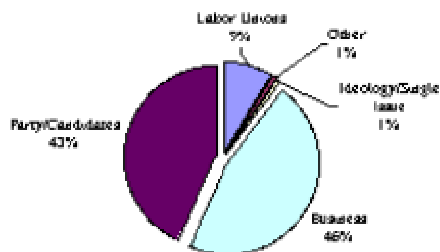
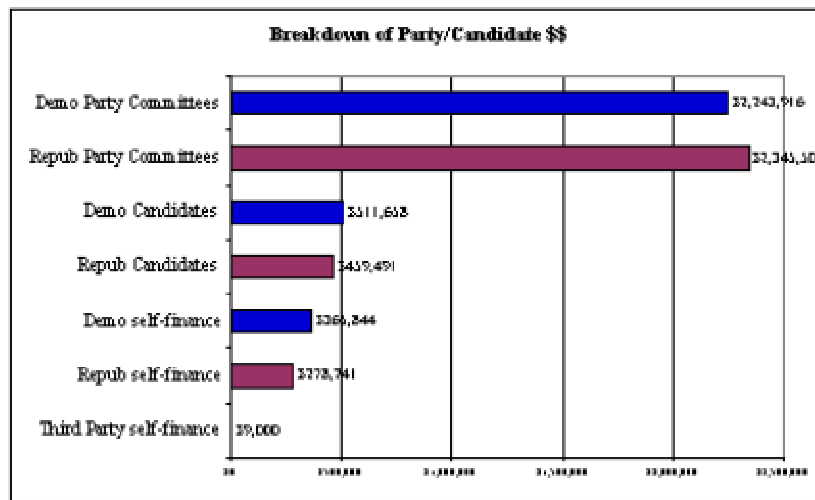
These leaders proved their fundraising power by raising an average of \$1.2 million each, which they passed on to their colleagues and fellow candidates. The 216 candidates raised an average of \$61,009 each. Individuals, corporations and unions are limited to contributing \$1,800 per Assembly candidate and PACs are limited to \$5,900 per Assembly candidate. However, they can all contribute up to \$30,000 per legislative leadership PAC.

WHO GIVES

The following table shows the breakdown of contributions by business sector, sorted from the largest percentage of total dollars to the smallest. It does not include \$2.2 million dollars that could not be identified by business interest.

SECTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANDIDATES	CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARTY PACS	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	% of TOTAL
Party/Candidates	\$6,214,156		\$6,214,156	33%
Construction	\$738,713	\$1,244,692	\$1,983,406	11%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	\$265,651	\$1,046,315	\$1,311,966	10%
Lawyers & lobbyists	\$814,145	\$1,059,681	\$1,873,826	10%
Labor Unions	\$1,280,950	\$559,742	\$1,840,692	10%
General Business	\$772,310	\$753,489	\$1,525,799	8%
Health	\$632,405	\$824,050	\$1,456,455	8%
Energy/Natural Resources	\$237,629	\$317,750	\$555,379	3%
Non-Contribution	\$39,001	\$288,222	\$327,223	2%
Transportation	\$181,772	\$126,850	\$308,622	2%
Other	\$106,947	\$143,300	\$250,247	1%
Agriculture	\$116,825	\$119,475	\$236,300	1%
Communications/Electronics	\$102,779	\$117,456	\$220,235	1%
Ideology/Single Issue	\$104,442	\$10,000	\$114,442	1%
TOTAL	\$12,207,725	\$6,611,022	\$18,818,748	100%

As is the case with most states, the top source of contributions in the New Jersey elections was party money. Democrat and Republican committees contributed 36 percent and 38 percent of the party money respectively. The remainder was contributed by candidates to themselves, or to other candidates within their parties.



When combined, all business-interest sectors make up the majority of the database, narrowly outpacing the party committees and candidates, and outpacing labor unions by a ratio of 5:1.

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

Contributor	\$ to Candidates	\$ to Party PACs	Total \$
NJ Education Assoc/NJEA	\$273,552	\$43,495	\$317,047
NJ Carpenters	\$161,100	\$137,500	\$298,600
NJ Laborers PAC	\$130,050	\$143,500	\$273,550
Realtors PAC	\$209,550	\$46,950	\$256,500
Medical Society of NJ/MEDPAC	\$90,650	\$129,700	\$220,350
NJ Org for a Better State/NJ Business & Industry Assoc	\$117,974	\$58,000	\$175,974
Builders PAC	\$73,150	\$90,000	\$163,150
NJ Dental PAC	\$62,764	\$77,800	\$140,564
ATLA NJ Legal PAC	\$84,550	\$65,750	\$150,300
Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 9	\$102,240	\$20,696	\$122,936

Approximately 5,100 contributors gave to the 1999 elections. The above chart lists the top 10 contributors, excluding party money, as it has already been shown that party money accounts for significant dollars raised. Note all the top 10 are PACs rather than individual contributors.

There were approximately 2,300 individual contributors; however, they collectively gave \$3,002,308 — 22 percent of all dollars contributed. Additionally, of the 5,100 contributors, 353 gave \$10,000 or more (only 30 were individuals who were not candidates). Those alone made up 74 percent of all 1999 money.

The Realtors PAC, also a major contributor in the 1997 elections, has been hoping to draw attention to the issue of "smart growth," which would control coastal development and possibly require developers to help cover costs for municipal services required for new developments.

ABOUT OUR INFORMATION

The Institute worked with the NJ Division of Elections to obtain the 1999 campaign finance data in electronic form. Funds raised by joint candidate committees were divided evenly between the candidates, as required by law.

¹Joe Donohue, "Teachers union again leads PACs in donations." *The Star Ledger*, 23 October, 1999.