



NEWS RELEASE

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The top 25 special interest groups during the past 15 years spent a combined \$311 million on campaign contributions, lobbying and independent spending, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

The major spending went to political contributions (\$163 million), followed by lobbying (\$107 million), and, in more recent years, independent spending on campaigns (\$41 million).

**TABLE 1
TOP SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS- 1999-2013**

RANK	GROUP	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS	INDEPENDENT SPENDING*	LOBBYING	TOTAL
1	New Jersey Education Association	\$ 16,681,005	\$ 15,614,427	\$ 24,761,355	\$ 57,056,787
2	IBEW and Affiliates	\$ 26,299,636	\$ 436,000	\$ 163,027	\$ 26,898,663
3	NJ State Laborers and Affiliates	\$ 24,673,953	\$ 640,000	\$ 1,102,656	\$ 26,416,609
4	Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters and Affiliates	\$ 18,559,023	\$ 2,210,000	\$ 462,445	\$ 21,231,468
5	NJ Association of Realtors	\$ 11,775,537	\$ 1,410,572	\$ 4,337,532	\$ 17,523,640
6	Plumbers and Pipefitters Affiliates	\$ 14,535,409	\$ 27,000	\$ 29,145	\$ 14,591,554
7	Verizon	\$ 1,197,609	\$ 50,000	\$ 11,521,798	\$ 12,769,407
8	NJ Hospital Association	\$ 2,254,143		\$ 8,787,511	\$ 11,041,654
9	Communications Workers of America and Affiliates	\$ 8,545,397	\$ 997,841	\$ 1,477,136	\$ 11,020,374
10	NJ Builders Association	\$ 3,197,365	\$ 25,000	\$ 7,505,233	\$ 10,727,598
11	Republican Governor's Association		\$ 9,250,000		\$ 9,250,000
12	NJ Business and Industry Association and Affiliate NJ Organization for a Better State	\$ 5,502,315	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,625,225	\$ 9,132,540
13	AARP			\$ 8,854,940	\$ 8,854,940
14	Committee for Our Children's Future		\$ 7,800,000		\$ 7,800,000
15	AFSCME	\$ 5,441,846	\$ 2,119,648	\$ 170,530	\$ 7,732,024
16	NJ Association for Justice (Formerly ATLA)	\$ 5,612,431		\$ 1,251,940	\$ 6,864,371
17	PSE&G	\$ 655,518	\$ 286,500	\$ 5,726,322	\$ 6,668,340
18	NJ State League of Municipalities			\$ 6,399,160	\$ 6,399,160
19	Prudential Companies	\$ 199,723	\$ 100,000	\$ 5,815,959	\$ 6,115,681
20	International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825 and Affiliates	\$ 4,880,030	\$ 23,500	\$ 1,061,994	\$ 5,965,524
21	Atlantic City Electric	\$ 70,479	\$ 55,000	\$ 5,442,651	\$ 5,568,130
22	T&M Associates	\$ 5,540,225			\$ 5,540,225
23	NJ Dental Association	\$ 3,279,226		\$ 2,149,861	\$ 5,429,087
24	Medical Society of New Jersey	\$ 4,295,022		\$ 1,074,808	\$ 5,369,830
25	First Energy/JCP&L	\$ 278,144		\$ 5,051,712	\$ 5,329,857
	TOTALS	\$ 163,474,037	\$ 41,050,488	\$106,772,940	\$311,297,464

*Includes ballot question committees.

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Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said the influence of the special interest groups was uncovered through ELEC’s broadest-ever review of their New Jersey political efforts.

“This is the most detailed examination of special interest spending ever done by ELEC. It included looking at contributions made either through PACs or directly to candidates and parties, lobbying and independent spending on both campaigns and ballot initiatives,” he added.

“While eight unions collectively are the biggest spenders, the top 25 represents a wide array of interests. It includes three trade associations, two national political committees, four utilities and an insurance company that are regulated by the state, a public contractor, four professional associations and two “ideological” groups that represent businesses and senior citizens,” Brindle said.

He explained that political action committees (PACs) traditionally have been one of the major outlets for special interest spending. But focusing solely on PACs does not disclose the full clout of special interest groups. “Some interest groups, such as public contractors, make massive contributions without PACs. Those groups also exert an influence in the state’s capitol,” said Brindle.

Other groups mostly rely on lobbying, particularly regulated industries that are barred by law from making direct campaign contributions and do minimal spending through employee PACs, Brindle said. He also explained that since 2009, there has been a major surge of independent campaign spending, both nationally and within New Jersey.

“There are lots of ways for special interest groups to wield their influence, and the biggest ones take advantage of some or all of these options,” he said.

Overall, unions were the biggest spenders, leading all groups in contributions (\$120 million), independent spending (\$22 million) and total spending (\$171 million). Regulated industries invested the most dollars in lobbying (\$34 million).

TABLE 2
TOP SPENDING BY TYPE OF
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

TYPE	CONTRIBUTIONS	INDEPENDENT SPENDING	LOBBYING	TOTAL
Union	\$ 119,616,299	\$ 22,068,416	\$ 29,228,287	\$ 170,913,002
Trade Association	\$ 17,227,045	\$ 1,435,572	\$ 20,630,275	\$ 39,292,892
Regulated Industry	\$ 2,401,474	\$ 491,500	\$ 33,558,442	\$ 36,451,415
Professional	\$ 18,726,904		\$ 10,875,770	\$ 29,602,674
Ideological	\$ 5,502,315	\$ 17,055,000	\$ 12,480,165	\$ 35,037,480
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 163,474,037	\$ 41,050,488	\$ 106,772,940	\$ 311,297,464

Regulated industries include gas and electric utilities, insurance, water and cable companies and other businesses that are substantially regulated by the state.

Looking only at 2013, unions also were big spenders during a state campaign that was the largest since 2001. It featured a campaign for governor and all 120 legislative seats.

**TABLE 3
TOP SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS-2013**

RANK	GROUP	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS	INDEPENDENT SPENDING	LOBBYING	TOTAL
1	New Jersey Education Association	\$ 1,602,022	\$ 14,608,194	\$ 3,316,893	\$ 19,527,109
2	Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters and Affiliates	\$ 2,107,040	\$ 2,000,000		\$ 4,107,040
3	IBEW and Affiliates	\$ 3,107,412	\$ 336,000		\$ 3,443,412
4	NJ State Laborers and Affiliates	\$ 2,787,003		\$ 123,270	\$ 2,910,273
5	One New Jersey		\$ 2,800,000		\$ 2,800,000
6	NJ Association of Realtors	\$ 1,248,937	\$ 1,120,572	\$ 388,438	\$ 2,757,947
7	AFL-CIO	\$ 53,464	\$ 2,163,343	\$ 383,797	\$ 2,600,604
8	Republican Governor's Association		\$ 1,725,000		\$ 1,725,000
9	Plumbers and Pipefitters Affiliates	\$ 1,642,690	\$ 27,000		\$ 1,669,690
10	Communications Workers of America and Affiliates	\$ 1,038,436	\$ 614,099		\$ 1,652,535
11	International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825 and Affiliates	\$ 1,314,119	\$ 23,500	\$ 89,703	\$ 1,427,322
12	Service Employees International Union and Affiliates	\$ 868,966	\$ 100,200	\$ 26,350	\$ 995,516
13	NJ Business and Industry Association and Affiliate NJ Organization for a Better State	\$ 677,404	\$ 5,000	\$ 293,670	\$ 976,074
14	Enterprise Freedom Action Committee ⁽¹⁾		\$ 970,000		\$ 970,000
15	Americans For Prosperity			\$ 951,233 ⁽²⁾	\$ 951,233
16	NJ Association for Justice (Formerly ATLA)	\$ 636,538		\$ 212,500	\$ 849,038
17	Honeywell International Inc.	\$500		\$ 822,575	\$ 823,075
18	Verizon	\$ 127,480		\$ 674,269	\$ 801,749
19	NJ Hospital Association	\$ 170,218		\$ 628,337	\$ 798,555
20	PSE&G	\$ 93,000		\$ 635,589	\$ 728,589
21	AARP			\$ 717,148	\$ 717,148
22	Prudential			\$ 647,108	\$ 647,108
23	Remington and Vernick	\$ 529,400			\$ 529,400
24	Hackensack University Medical Center	\$ 7,300		\$ 508,500	\$ 515,800
25	Medical Society of New Jersey	\$ 371,412		\$ 139,981	\$ 511,393
	TOTALS	\$ 18,383,341	\$ 26,492,908	\$ 10,559,362	\$ 55,435,610

(1) Federal Super PAC that contributed to ballot initiative committee.

(2) Includes \$400,000 in independent spending.

The state's oldest registered lobbying group and the top special interest spender since 1999 is the New Jersey Education Association. The union represents 195,501 teachers and other school employees.

NJEA spent \$57 million during the period- \$30 million more than the next biggest spender, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and its state affiliates. In 2013 alone, it spent \$19.5 million on contributions, independent spending, and lobbying- the largest annual total ever for any special interest group.

“NJEA is considered a powerhouse in Trenton and for good reason. Few special interest groups come close to matching its financial clout,” said Brindle.

TABLE 4
NJEA PAC, LOBBYING AND INDEPENDENT SPENDING
1999-2013

YEAR	NJEA SCHOOL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE*	NJEA PAC	INDEPENDENT	LOBBYING	TOTAL
1999	\$ 150,983	\$ 551,183		\$ 156,696	\$ 858,862
2000	\$ 155,160	\$ 336,980		\$ 181,331	\$ 673,471
2001	\$ 189,239	\$ 647,614	\$ 408,920	\$ 173,341	\$ 1,419,114
2002	\$ 524,414	\$ 354,692		\$ 283,989	\$ 1,163,095
2003	\$ 228,123	\$ 703,296		\$ 272,367	\$ 1,203,785
2004	\$ 203,125	\$ 450,586		\$ 262,713	\$ 916,424
2005	\$ 340,364	\$ 691,058		\$ 249,750	\$ 1,281,172
2006	\$ 378,099	\$ 519,097		\$ 342,271	\$ 1,239,467
2007	\$ 276,188	\$ 1,215,626		\$ 317,488	\$ 1,809,302
2008	\$ 504,798	\$ 531,653		\$ 305,463	\$ 1,341,914
2009	\$ 744,512	\$ 1,016,883	\$ 522,313	\$ 360,505	\$ 2,644,213
2010	\$ 478,759	\$ 675,967		\$ 6,869,256	\$ 8,023,982
2011	\$ 767,712	\$ 1,526,013		\$ 11,259,886	\$ 13,553,611
2012	\$ 24,605	\$ 892,255	\$ 75,000	\$ 409,407	\$ 1,401,267
2013	\$ 3,905	\$ 1,598,117	\$ 14,608,194	\$ 3,316,893	\$ 19,527,109
GRAND TOTALS	\$4,969,986	\$ 11,711,019	\$ 15,614,427	\$ 24,761,355	\$ 57,056,787

*Net totals after adjusting for transfers back to NJEA.

For the third year, ELEC reviewed all spending by 296 PACs that filed reports to determine how much went directly to New Jersey candidates and committees in 2013.

The analysis found that PACs funneled \$22.1 million to New Jersey candidates and committees- a 148 percent increase from the \$8.9 million in estimated spending the year before, when there were no major state elections.

Not surprisingly, legislative candidates (\$13.7 million) and gubernatorial candidates (\$720,453) combined received the lion’s share of the funds distributed by PACs in 2013.

TABLE 5
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY PACS IN 2013 TO
NEW JERSEY CANDIDATES AND COMMITTEES*

RECIPIENT	AMOUNT	PERCENT
Legislative	\$ 13,665,583	62%
Local/Other PACs	\$ 4,061,068	18%
County Parties	\$ 2,873,799	13%
State Parties	\$ 819,207	4%
Gubernatorial	\$ 720,453	3%
TOTAL	\$ 22,140,110	100%

*Excludes federal candidates.

Including the \$22.1 million that went directly to New Jersey candidates and committees, PACs that register with ELEC reported spending a total of \$59.5 million- the highest amount ever.

Most of the difference between the two numbers represents funds that went to out-of-state candidates or committees, or to federal candidates in New Jersey. Some national PACs that register in New Jersey include all spending in their reports, including funds that go to other states.

In addition, New Jersey candidates and committees received about \$1.8 million from PACs that did not register and file reports with ELEC. That brought total PAC spending to \$61.3 million- a 116 percent increase from 2012.

TABLE 6
TOTAL PAC CONTRIBUTIONS
2009-2013

YEAR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Registered PACs	\$35,445,360	\$28,198,556	\$33,311,510	\$28,231,785	\$59,547,890
Unregistered PACs	NA	NA	\$ 1,001,575	\$ 212,387	\$ 1,803,368
TOTAL	\$35,445,360	\$28,198,556	\$34,313,085	\$28,444,172	\$61,351,258
Change (%)	39.4%	-20%	22%	-17%	116%

Following a trend that dates back to at least 2005, union PACs once again were the major contributors in 2013. They gave \$14.3 million to New Jersey candidates and committees- 64 percent of the total PAC funds distributed within the state.

TABLE 7
2013 SPENDING IN
NEW JERSEY BY PAC TYPE

TYPE	AMOUNT	PERCENT
Union	\$ 14,268,199	64%
Professional	\$ 3,012,489	14%
Trade Association	\$ 1,743,864	8%
Ideological	\$ 1,469,390	7%
Regulated Industries	\$ 672,990	3%
Business	\$ 628,483	3%
Other Ongoing	\$ 344,694	2%
TOTAL	\$ 22,140,110	100%

Among registered PACs, the top 25 contributors in 2013 alone funneled \$12.5 million to New Jersey candidates and committees- 61 percent of total PAC spending. They gave a combined \$7.5 million to legislative candidates- nearly 60 percent of the total spending by PACs.

TABLE 8
TOP 25 PAC CONTRIBUTORS IN 2013
TO NEW JERSEY CANDIDATES AND COMMITTEES

NAME	GOVERNOR	LEGISLATIVE	STATE PARTIES	COUNTY PARTIES	LOCAL	TOTAL
NJ State Laborers PAC	\$ 3,800	\$ 562,175	\$ 50,000	\$ 571,250	\$ 352,751	\$ 1,539,976
NJ Education Association PAC	\$ 7,600	\$ 790,711	\$ 25,000	\$ 356,045	\$ 98,950	\$ 1,278,306
Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters NJ Political Education Committee	\$ 7,600	\$ 539,918		\$ 351,900	\$ 316,270	\$ 1,215,688
International Union of Operating Engineering Local 825	\$ 3,800	\$ 642,600	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,725	\$ 246,048	\$ 1,003,173
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #351	\$ 3,800	\$ 421,700		\$ 339,000	\$ 228,176	\$ 992,676
1199/SEIU NY State Political Action Fund ⁽²⁾	\$ 7,600	\$ 634,400	\$ 25,000		\$ 96,450	\$ 763,450
Realtors PAC		\$ 372,185	\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 44,100	\$ 456,285
NJ Organization for a Better State		\$ 447,700				\$ 447,700
Local Union 164 IBEW Cope Fund ⁽¹⁾	\$ 7,600	\$ 163,800		\$ 55,150	\$ 189,557	\$ 416,107
CWA NJ PEC ⁽³⁾	\$ 7,600	\$ 347,500	\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 13,600	\$ 403,700
NJ Association for Justice PAC	\$ 3,800	\$ 346,300	\$ 28,500			\$ 378,600
Leaders Fund		\$ 140,200	\$ 25,000	\$ 185,000	\$ 16,400	\$ 366,600
IBEW LU 456 Cope Fund ⁽¹⁾	\$ 3,800	\$ 230,850	\$ 750	\$ 37,250	\$ 42,090	\$ 314,740
Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 9		\$ 168,700	\$ 3,500	\$ 17,250	\$ 103,600	\$ 293,050
Local 322 Committee for Political Education (Plumbers and Pipefitters)		\$ 103,500		\$ 76,000	\$ 100,091	\$ 279,591
Car PAC		\$ 265,400				\$ 265,400
Developers PAC	\$ 3,800	\$ 239,170	\$ 13,500			\$ 256,470
Local 102 IBEW PAC ⁽¹⁾	\$ 7,600	\$ 156,300	\$ 25,000	\$ 6,200	\$ 59,880	\$ 254,980
United Association Political Action Fund	\$ 7,600	\$ 72,200	\$ 50,000	\$ 111,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 248,300
NJ Apartment Association PAC	\$ 4,300	\$ 205,250	\$ 25,500		\$ 1,700	\$ 236,750
AFSCME Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality ⁽⁴⁾	\$ 7,600	\$ 124,500	\$ 1,000		\$ 96,286	\$ 229,386
NJ Funeral Directors PAC		\$ 222,700				\$ 222,700
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (Trenton)		\$ 116,550		\$ 27,000	\$ 75,503	\$ 219,053
Plumbers Local 14 PAC Fund	\$ 3,800	\$ 86,500		\$ 19,300	\$ 108,775	\$ 218,375
Democrat Republican Independent Voter Education (Teamsters)		\$ 74,100	\$ 10,000	\$ 3,250	\$ 114,375	\$ 201,725
TOTALS	\$ 91,700	\$7,474,909	\$ 392,750	\$2,231,320	\$2,312,101	\$12,502,780

(1) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

(2) Service Employees International Union.

(3) Communications Workers of America.

(4) American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Technically known in New Jersey as continuing political committees, PACs generally are required to file detailed reports with ELEC when, during a calendar year, they contribute in excess of \$5,500 to state and/or local candidates. They must file reports with ELEC each quarter that list their contributions and expenditures.

For purposes of this analysis, special interest PACs are defined as those that identified themselves as a business, labor union, professional association, ideological group, civic association, trade association, or other ongoing.

The list also includes PACs formed by employees of regulated industries such as banks and insurance companies, which cannot use corporate funds for campaign contributions.

In its long-term analysis of major special interest spending, ELEC began with 1999 because it was the earliest year for which PAC reports and lobbying information are available online.

This press release is a compilation of figures reported to the Commission, and is not intended to express any opinion concerning the accuracy or completeness of any filed report. Although the Commission has taken all reasonable precautions to prevent mathematical or typographical errors, they may occur.

Copies of PAC, lobbying and independent spending reports are available on ELEC's website at www.elec.state.nj.us.

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