

Democracy North Carolina

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State Legislators Pile Up \$8 Million for Campaigns; Incumbent Advantage Will Grow with PACs' "Gratitude Money"

A review of financial reports by the watchdog group Democracy North Carolina shows that state legislators running for reelection have stockpiled more than \$8 million in cash for the final months of the 2014 campaign.

Legislators of both parties can also expect a windfall in special-interest donations when the General Assembly adjourns, likely this week, said Bob Hall, director of the nonpartisan group.

The 101 Republican legislators seeking election to the NC House or Senate hold \$6.8 million in cash, more than four times as much as the \$1.5 million held by the 52 Democrats. (The other 17 legislators are retiring or running for another office, or they were defeated in the primary.)

Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger (R-Rockingham) led all lawmakers with \$1,015,460 in cash as of June 30, the deadline for the most recent financial report. The next report is not due until late October. Senate Republican Majority Leader Harry Brown (R-Onslow) is next with \$444,267, followed by Democratic Senator Josh Stein (D-Wake) with \$347,413.

Because Speaker Thom Tillis is running for the U.S. Senate, the Republicans in the House who have the most cash are Rep. Tim Moore (R-Cleveland) with \$251,573 and Rep. Nelson Dollar (R-Wake) with \$246,216. Both men have Democratic opponents in the general election, but neither challenger had more than \$9,000 as of June 30.

"The combination of big-money fundraising and highly partisan redistricting means we're seeing less competition in general elections," said Hall "It's hard to hold legislators accountable when they don't have competition."

Of the 153 legislators seeking reelection, 74 – or nearly half of them – face no opposition from the other major party.

With few exceptions, the other 79 legislators hold a "stunning cash advantage" over their opponents, Hall said. He pointed out that 55 of the 79 challengers had less than \$10,000 in the bank as of June 30. Only six challengers had more cash than the incumbent (*see below*).

The 79 legislators with major party opponents had nearly 5 times as much cash as their opponents on June 30 - \$5.8 million compared to \$1.2 million.

The incumbents' advantage will only increase when the legislature adjourns, Hall said, because donations to legislative candidates will then be allowed from political action committees (PACs) and over 95 percent of their money typically goes to incumbents.

"PACs are prohibited from donating to legislators while the General Assembly is meeting or in recess, but after the adjournment gavel drops, a flood of what you could call 'gratitude money' begins flowing to the members, even to those who have no opposition in the fall," he said.

Hall pointed out that two years ago, in the seven weeks after the July 3, 2012, adjournment, the

Duke Energy PAC sent checks to 72 legislators totaling \$152,000. Duke will likely be generous again this year Hall noted, because the proposed legislation to manage the company's coal ash pollution neither requires Duke's stockholders to foot the bill for the clean-up nor requires removal of the pollution from the company's 33 waste pits at 14 locations across the state.

Other PACs began showering legislators with donations in the same seven-week period after the 2012 adjournment, Hall said. For example, the chiropractors' Healthy Network Solutions PAC wrote checks to 28 legislators totaling \$24,000 on August 8th and the McGuire Woods lobby/law firm's PAC sent \$43,000 to 27 legislators.

Some PACs waited until after Labor Day. For example, on September 10, 2012, the First Citizens Bank PAC sent a donation to nearly every legislator – 112 checks adding up to \$87,500. A week later, the Petroleum Marketers PAC wrote 48 checks to legislators for \$41,250.

Altogether, PACs donated \$9.9 million directly to legislative candidates in 2012. Hall expects that figure to increase this cycle. PACs also give directly to caucus committees – bank accounts within each major party that incumbents use to steer funds into the most competitive races.

“Legislators are on a constant chase for money to win reelection and win the swing seats that determine who gets majority control of the House and Senate,” said Hall. “Without a public financing option, they're looking for sources of private wealth, and the special-interest PACs are happy to fill their need because they're convinced the donations give them an inside track when they need something back from the legislators. At its core, it's a corrosive system that inevitably leads to private deals that hurt the public interest.”

Hall noted that the figures in his report come from the campaign disclosure reports filed by the candidates. Most have not been audited for accuracy by the State Board of Elections staff. In fact, he said that 79 legislators filed their most recent reports through the mail rather than electronically, so the data must be keyed into a computer before it can be reviewed.

“The good news is that the General Assembly passed a new law this month that will require all candidates receiving more than \$10,000 in an election cycle to electronically submit properly formatted reports,” he said. “The law doesn't become effective until January 2017 because the Board of Elections needs time to prepare and test new software. It's positive step, long overdue.”

SUMMARY OF CASH ON HAND FOR:

153 legislators running for General Assembly office: \$8,347,845

**152 are seeking reelection to their current office except Rep. Andy Wells is running unopposed to succeed Sen. Austin Allran, who is retiring.*

79 legislators with major party opponents: \$5,840,700

79 challengers to incumbents: \$1,201,941

52 Democratic legislators seeking reelection: \$1,514,434

32 of the 52 who have no Republican opponent: \$555,131

101 Republican legislators seeking reelection: \$6,832,411

42 of the 101 who have no Democratic opponent: \$1,951,014

Challengers with more cash than incumbents: Stan White (D) over Sen. Bill Cook (R); Brian Turner (D) over Rep. Tim Moffitt (R); Mark Crawford (R) over Sen. Terry Van Duyn (D); Jane Higgs (D) over Sen. Jim Davis; Carr Ipock (D) over Sen. Norm Sanderson (R); John Ager over Rep. Nathan Ramsey (R).

Cash On Hand for 153 NC Legislators Running for Reelection And for Their Challengers

Dist.	Incum's Party	Incumbent Legislator	Cash on Hand at End of Elec Cycle	Chall's Party	Major Party Challenger	Cash on Hand at End of Elec Cycle	Incum. Minus Chall's Cash
	House						
107	Dem	Kelly Alexander	35,383				
69	Rep	Dean Arp	16,551				
40	Rep	Marilyn Avila	87,674	Dem	Margaret Broadwell	1,951	85,724
32	Dem	Nathan Baskerville	8,384				
10	Rep	John Bell	29,661				
21	Dem	Larry Bell	714				
86	Rep	Hugh Blackwell	26,280	Dem	Jim Cates	-	26,280
62	Rep	John Blust	3,637	Dem	Sal Leone	318	3,319
52	Rep	James Boles	4,967				
103	Rep	William Brawley	44,514				
22	Dem	William Brisson	54,442	Rep	Ken Smith	601	53,842
55	Rep	Mark Brody	9,781	Dem	Kim Hargett	2,350	7,431
9	Rep	Brian Brown	28,223	Dem	Uriah Ward	7,526	24,904
81	Rep	Rayne Brown	2,992				
88	Rep	Rob Bryan	100,447	Dem	Marge Storch	16,470	83,977
109	Rep	Dana Bumgardner	5,700				
67	Rep	Justin Burr	25,970	Dem	Nalin Mehta	2,981	22,989
102	Dem	Becky Carney	30,749				
20	Rep	Rick Catlin	143,584	Dem	Betsy Jordan	33,888	109,695
14	Rep	George Cleveland	4,784				
25	Rep	Jeff Collins	98,986				
74	Rep	Debra Conrad	54,571	Dem	Mary Dickinson	29,418	25,153
100	Dem	Tricia Cotham	42,300				
106	Dem	Carla Cunningham	7,943	Rep	Trey Lowe	100	7,843
26	Rep	Leo Daughtry	22,592				
19	Rep	Ted Davis, Jr.	27,493				
4	Rep	Jimmy Dixon	36,546				
85	Rep	Josh Dobson	2,366	Dem	JR Edwards	75	2,291
36	Rep	Nelson Dollar	246,216	Dem	Lisa Baker	8,750	237,466
101	Dem	Beverly Earle	13,585				
94	Rep	Jeffrey Elmore	14,496				
61	Rep	John Faircloth	14,991	Dem	Ron Weatherford	440	14,551
24	Dem	Jean Farmer-Butterfield	846				
114	Dem	Susan Fisher	18,831				
43	Dem	Elmer Floyd	4,928				
76	Rep	Carl Ford	1,530				
33	Dem	Rosa Gill	4,773	Rep	Perry Whitlock	664	4,109
44	Dem	Rick Glazier	22,599	Rep	Richard Button	17,258	5,341

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66	Dem	Ken Goodman	17,583				
47	Dem	Charles Graham	(143)				
12	Dem	George Graham	2,346				
112	Rep	Mike Hager	12,682	Dem	Lisa Bralley	4,343	8,339
11	Dem	Duane Hall	12,206	Rep	Ray Martin	4,849	7,357
29	Dem	Larry Hall	13,528				
18	Dem	Susi Hamilton	18,419				
72	Dem	Ed Hanes	2,262				
59	Rep	Jon Hardister	41,516	Dem	Scott Jones	10	41,507
57	Dem	Pricey Harrison	(2,696)				
110	Rep	Kelly E. Hastings	12,951				
38	Dem	Yvonne Holley	2,748	Rep	Joe Thompson	150	2,598
91	Rep	Bryan R. Holloway	89,351				
68	Rep	Craig Horn	3,607				
79	Rep	Julia C. Howard	85,770	Dem	Cristina Vazquez	400	85,370
70	Rep	Pat B. Hurley	19,339	Dem	Wesley Fennell	norept	
17	Rep	Frank Iler	9,147	Dem	Charles Warren	251	8,897
56	Dem	Verla Insko	33,676	Rep	Dave Carter	368	33,308
39	Dem	Darren Jackson	30,392				
92	Rep	Charles Jeter	36,675	Dem	Robin Bradford	260	36,414
83	Rep	Linda P. Johnson	11,692				
65	Rep	Bert Jones	58,936	Dem	Elretha Perkins	100	58,836
93	Rep	Jonathan Jordan	52,697	Dem	Sue Counts	24,494	28,203
75	Rep	Donny Lambeth	37,116	Dem	David Gordon	121	36,995
28	Rep	James Langdon	6,007				
53	Rep	David R. Lewis	15,096	Dem	Susan Byerly	11,908	3,188
42	Dem	Marvin Lucas	7,321				
30	Dem	Paul Luebke	12,775				
35	Rep	Chris Malone	52,977	Dem	Brian Mountcastle	3,072	49,904
34	Dem	Grier Martin	15,185				
8	Rep	Susan Martin	141,571	Dem	Bobi Gregory	1,245	140,325
13	Rep	Pat McElraft	19,068	Dem	Jim Nolan	3,812	15,256
117	Rep	Chuck McGrady	7,611				
78	Rep	Allen McNeill	32,677				
50	Dem	Graig Meyer	69,731	Rep	Rod Chaney		
31	Dem	Mickey Michaux	86,269	Rep	Todd Conard	(389)	86,658
16	Rep	Chris Millis	17,351	Dem	Steve Unger	1,009	16,341
116	Rep	Tim Moffitt	109,234	Dem	Brian Turner	139,568	(30,334)
99	Dem	Rodney Moore	4,000				
111	Rep	Tim Moore	251,573	Dem	Nick Carpenter	1,601	249,972
41	Rep	Tom Murry	160,273	Dem	Gale Adcock	87,335	72,938
48	Dem	Garland Pierce	23,550				
82	Rep	Larry G. Pittman	9,073	Dem	Earle Schecter	115	8,958

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118	Rep	Michele Presnell	41,751	Dem	Dean Hicks	10,296	31,456
119	Dem	Joe Sam Queen	18,946	Rep	Mike Clampitt	877	18,069
115	Rep	Nathan Ramsey	68,666	Dem	John Ager	71,968	(3,302)
54	Dem	Robert Reives II	11,204	Rep	Andy Wilkie	88	11,116
7	Dem	Bobbie Richardson	(3,361)				
64	Rep	Dennis Riddell	29,217				
63	Rep	Stephen M. Ross	21,816	Dem	Ian Baltutis	16,520	5,296
97	Rep	Jason Saine	35,223	Dem	Rosemary Hubbard	442	34,781
105	Rep	Jacqueline Schaffer	20,853				
89	Rep	Mitchell S. Setzer	11,351				
15	Rep	Phil Shepard	45,538				
3	Rep	Michael Speciale	27,387	Dem	Whit Whitley	18,217	9,170
37	Rep	Paul Stam	1,394				
87	Rep	Edgar V. Starnes	70,186				
1	Rep	Bob Steinburg	36,487	Dem	Garry Meiggs	3,983	32,504
90	Rep	Sarah Stevens	14,868	Dem	John Wiles	1,341	13,527
51	Rep	Mike Stone	70,691	Dem	Brad Salmon	47,300	23,391
45	Rep	John Szoka	16,627				
71	Dem	Evelyn Terry	1,538	Rep	Kris McCann	-	1,538
6	Dem	Paul Tine	107,306	Rep	Mattie Lawson	1,432	105,873
108	Rep	John A. Torbett	10,589				
84	Rep	Rena W. Turner	25,317	Dem	Gene Mahaffey	788	24,529
46	Dem	Ken Waddell	68,605	Rep	Brenden Jones	30,311	38,295
77	Rep	Harry Warren	25,191				
96	Rep	Andy Wells	35,159				
120	Rep	Roger West	27,092				
113	Rep	Chris Whitmire	6,179	Dem	Norm Bossert	4,524	1,655
27	Dem	Michael Wray	15,020				
	SENATE						
48	Rep	Tom Apodaca	205,475	Dem	Rick Wood	22,855	182,620
18	Rep	Chad Barefoot	141,872	Dem	Sarah Crawford	131,063	10,810
17	Rep	Tamara Barringer	103,644	Dem	Bryan Fulghum	22	103,622
26	Rep	Phil Berger	1,015,460	Dem	William Osbourne	6,099	1,009,361
33	Rep	Stan Bingham	20,102				
14	Dem	Dan Blue	60,219				
34	Rep	Andrew C. Brock	35,358	Dem	Connie Johnson	1,470	33,888
6	Rep	Harry Brown	444,267				
4	Dem	Angela Bryant	6,038	Rep	Richard Scott	3,112	2,926
21	Dem	Ben Clark	4,229				
1	Rep	Bill Cook	26,491	Dem	Stan White	69,248	(42,757)
44	Rep	David L. Curtis	1,513				
46	Rep	Warren Daniel	33,236	Dem	Emily Church	2,813	30,423
5	Dem	Don Davis	41,775				

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50	Rep	Jim Davis	17,628	Dem	Jane Hipps	29,298	(11,670)
38	Dem	Joel Ford	22,127	Rep	Richard Rivette	250	21,877
23	Dem	Valerie Foushee	27,054	Rep	Mary Lopez-Carter	1,123	25,931
24	Rep	Rick Gunn	114,137				
43	Rep	Kathy Harrington	83,482				
36	Rep	Fletcher Hartsell	285				
47	Rep	Ralph Hise	54,126				
10	Rep	Brent Jackson	145,697	Dem	Donald Rains	54,300	91,397
37	Dem	Jeff Jackson	7,963				
31	Rep	Joyce Krawiec	15,372	Dem	John Motsinger	828	14,543
20	Dem	Floyd McKissick	41,148				
25	Dem	Gene McLaurin	85,815	Rep	Tom McInnis	59,088	26,727
19	Rep	Wesley Meredith	277,830	Dem	Billy Richardson	79,712	198,118
11	Rep	E.S. (Buck) Newton	104,859				
32	Dem	Earline Parmon	1,370				
7	Rep	Louis Pate	95,495	Dem	Erik Anderson	50	95,445
12	Rep	Ronald Rabin	36,847	Dem	Joe Langley	2,802	34,045
8	Rep	Bill Rabon	254,407	Dem	Ernie Ward	43,220	211,187
30	Rep	Shirley Randleman	28,681	Dem	Eva Ingle	1,262	27,419
28	Dem	Gladys Robinson	16,792				
39	Rep	Bob Rucho	264,025				
2	Rep	Norm Sanderson	9,914	Dem	Carr Ipock	13,952	(4,038)
45	Rep	Dan Soucek	22,516	Dem	Jim Sponenberg	5,455	17,061
16	Dem	Josh Stein	347,413	Rep	Molotov Mitchell	5,666	341,747
41	Rep	Jeff Tarte	101,216	Dem	Latrice McRae	1,261	99,955
29	Rep	Jerry Tilman	92,039	Dem	Tommy Davis	405	91,633
35	Rep	Tommy Tucker	48,344				
49	Dem	Terry Van Duyn	33,253	Rep	Mark Crawford	50,479	(17,225)
27	Rep	Trudy Wade	47,965				
22	Dem	Mike Woodard	5,348	Rep	Herman Joubert	610	4,738