

# Democracy South

Update: We're now Democracy North Carolina • Durham, NC • [democracy-nc.org](http://democracy-nc.org)

---

For Release, Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2002

Contact: Bob Hall, 919-489-1931

## **MONEY CHASE FOR STATE CANDIDATES ENDS WITH FLURRY OF CONTRIBUTIONS**

The race to the finish line ends today for candidates, voters – and political donors.

Last-minute reports filed at the State Board of Elections show that candidates for the General Assembly were still pulling in checks for \$1000, \$2500 or more from bankers, doctors, tobacco company PACs, and the political parties.

Despite a shortened campaign season, a record number of candidates for the North Carolina legislature have raised over \$300,000 for a job that pays about one-tenth that amount, according to an analysis of the latest campaign disclosure reports by the non-partisan watchdog group Democracy South.

A decade ago, only two legislative candidates raised as much as \$100,000 in the entire campaign. By October 19 of this year, at least 44 candidates had raised that much. Eleven candidates reported taking in over \$300,000 in cash, loans and in-kind contributions, compared to five in 2000 at the same point in the campaign.

“This was supposed to be the year that campaigns for the N.C. General Assembly stopped breaking fund-raising records,” said Bob Hall, research director of Democracy South. “But it appears that there’s too much at stake for either the donors or the candidates to slow down the money chase.”

Political experts say that majority control of the state House or state Senate, both now held by Democrats, could swing to the Republicans, depending on the outcome of a dozen or so hotly contested races from New Bern to Asheville. The choices made by voters – and special-interest donors – will decide who wins and sets the agenda in the state legislature on school spending, health care, taxes, and job development.

Democracy South’s research shows that the legislative candidate in North Carolina who can outspend his or her opponent wins nearly 9 out of 10 times.

Hall pointed out that many legislative winners will spend less than their counterparts in 2000, and total fund-raising by the general-election candidates is estimated at about \$17 million so far, compared to \$18.8 million at the same point two years ago. *[Some candidates have not filed their required reports, so 2002’s total is an estimate.]* The candidates’ districts are now more compact and often smaller than the old, two- or three-member districts that sprawled across four or more counties. This election season was also compressed from the normal 10 or 12 months to about three months, due to delays in drawing those district lines and in the General Assembly adjourning.

As long as the legislature was meeting in Raleigh, candidates could not legally accept contributions from lobbyists or their related political action committees (PACs). “Once the General

Assembly adjourned, a flood of money poured into campaigns from interest groups worried about next year's session or thankful they survived without getting hit with a new tax," Hall said.

"You've got anxious special-interest donors and anxious politicians, and that's a formula for more money changing hands with more strings attached," he added. "Even though total fund-raising may be down from the 2000 election cycle, I think there's little doubt that this October set a one-month record for political fund-raising by legislative candidates."

For example, disclosure reports filed with the State Board of Elections show that the N.C. Home Builders PAC passed out \$98,650 to legislative candidates in the first 19 days of October, compared to \$79,916 for the entire month two years ago.

According to Democracy South's analysis, the Academy of Trial Lawyers' PAC handed out \$59,750 to legislative candidates from October 1 to October 19, the N.C. Hospital Association's PAC gave \$76,750 that same period, and the PAC of BB&T Corporation passed out \$36,624.

Much of this money flowed between various candidate and party committees into the hot campaigns that will decide which party has a majority in the state House and state Senate.

Democracy South identified two dozen of the most expensive races across the state.

In Charlotte, incumbent state Sen. Fountain Odom has raised \$354,000 in his effort to hold off a challenge from Robert Pittenger, who had \$432,100 as of October 19. Fountain, a Democrat, is running in a new district that favors Republican candidates.

Similarly, Democratic state Senate Allen Wellons is losing the money chase against Fred Smith, with \$189,700 versus Smith's \$231,100, in a new district that leans Republican.

But Senators Scott Thomas, Eric Reeves, John Kerr, David Hoyle, and Kay Hagan, all Democrats with formidable Republican challengers, have each amassed at least three times the money of their opponents.

In House races, incumbent Democrats Russell Tucker and Alice Graham Underhill are out-fundraising their opponents, while challengers Bruce Goforth and Margaret High Dickson are beating Republican incumbents Mark Crawford and Mia Morris, respectively, in the money chase.

In most cases, incumbents have more money than challengers. In the cases where no incumbent is in the race or where two incumbents face each other, Democrats typically have more than Republicans.

One reason Republican numbers are lower is because Democratic candidates include in-kind contributions from their party in their totals, while at least \$400,000 worth of polling, mailings, and media ads sponsored by the state Republican party for specific candidates is not including in the totals reported by the individual Republican candidates.

"The public finds the fund-raising arms race disgusting, but it's unrealistic to think the parties or candidates will disarm on their own," said Hall. "People have to get beyond being cynical or angry at politicians and focus on how to change the rules of the game."

# BIGGEST FUNDRAISERS IN N.C. GENERAL ASSEMBLY RACES

## Ranked By District, Based on Total Money Raised By Major Party Candidates

Data through Oct. 19, 2002, based on disclosure reports filed with State Board of Elections. Figures include cash, loans and in-kind donations reported by candidates.

DISTRICT	DEMOCRAT	TOTAL RAISED	REPUBLICAN	TOTAL RAISED
S- 1	Basnight, Marc	\$1,259,865	Toppin, Ronald W Sr	\$ 4,660
H-100	Black, Jim	1,051,864	Cicali, Nick	16,564
S- 40	Odom, T L (Fountain)	354,026	Pittenger, Robert	432,112
S- 2	Thomas, Scott	431,259	Tyson, Charles F Jr	95,790
S- 7	Kerr, John	387,963	Russell, Carolyn B	61,750
S- 16	Reeves, Eric Miller	369,991	Coble, Paul Y	79,269
S- 12	Wellons, Allen	189,696	Smith, Fred	231,095
S- 43	Hoyle, David W	302,878	Harrington, Michael	68,725
H- 34	Barnett, Cynthia	38,891	Munford, Don	331,450
S- 27	Hagan, Kay R	302,844	McDaniel, Mark Jr	51,406
S- 47	Queen, Joe Sam	309,172	Thompson, Gregg	21,250
S- 9	Padgett, Laura	75,136	Ballantine, Patrick J	253,279
H- 11	Baddour, Phil	226,220	Pate, Louis M Jr	50,738
S- 5	Moore, Tony P	245,944	Coulson, Tom	13,590
S- 6	Hargett, Cecil	178,169	Pollard, Tommy	69,778
S- 10	Albertson, Charlie	183,353	Wilson, George E	58,074
H- 36	<i>no major party opponent</i>	0	Miner, David	226,525
H- 10	Tucker, Russell E	115,505	LaRoque, Stephen	98,577
S- 19	Rand, Tony	214,054	White, Bob	under 3,000
H-115	Goforth, Bruce	126,643	Crawford, Mark	85,710
S- 11	Swindell, A B IV	206,329	Cooke, Willie	under 3,000
H- 13	Smith, Ronnie	155,003	Preston, Jean R	51,344
H- 3	Underhill, Alice Graham	166,790	Gorman, Michael A.	37,797
S- 46	Dalton, Walter H	192,419	Weatherly, John	5,809
H- 41	Dickson, Margaret High	127,698	Morris, Mia	68,855
S- 22	Love, Jimmy L Sr	63,775	Blake, Harris	122,777
H-118	Rapp, Ray	116,082	Carpenter, Margaret	61,404
H- 51	Cox, Leslie	139,430	Sauls, John I	33,705
S- 49	Metcalf, Steve	158,250	Clark, R L	11,978
S- 3	Jenkins, Clark	126,685	Carson, Don	39,119
H- 17	Redwine, E David	120,485	Stiller, Bonner	29,725
H- 28	<i>no major party opponent</i>	0	Daughtry, Leo	149,848
H-105	<i>no major party opponent</i>	0	McMahan, W Edwin (Ed)	138,293
S- 50	Robinson, Dan	109,664	Carpenter, Robert C	26,400
H- 25	Wells, Mary P	28,881	Daughtridge, Bill	107,074
H-104	<i>no major party opponent</i>	0	Wilson, Connie	133,604

Prepared by Democracy South, based on reports filed with the State Board of Elections by the candidates. The reports have not been audited for addition errors or omitted information.