



NEWS RELEASE

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Public Contractors Report Second Fewest Contributions Since 2006 *Tame Election Year in 2019 Plus Current Virus Crisis May Be Cause*

Public contractors have reported making 17 percent fewer contributions in 2019 than in 2018, the biggest year-to-year decline since 2012, according to annual disclosure reports filed with the NJ Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

Contractors so far have reported making just \$8.1 million in political donations last year. That is the lowest total since 2012, when contributions dipped 20 percent to just under \$8 million.

Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director, said the current viral pandemic definitely is one factor in the current falloff. Several contractors have asked for delays in filing their annual reports due to the crisis. Through April 23, 2020, ELEC had received 2,109 reports- a 5.4 percent drop-off from the 2,229 reports received through the same date in 2019.

"The fact that last year's Assembly-only election was one of the more low-key state elections of the last decade also might be a factor," Brindle said. "Past numbers show contractors gave 34 percent more in 2013 and 15 percent more in 2017. Both years featured high-profile gubernatorial and legislative elections. Contributions topped \$10 million in each year."

YEAR	AMOUNT	CHANGE-%	YEAR	AMOUNT	CHANGE-%
2019	\$ 8,122,684	-17%	2012	\$ 7,988,882	-20%
2018	\$ 9,811,647	-6%	2011	\$ 9,982,696	3%
2017	\$10,453,554	15%	2010	\$ 9,725,922	-12%
2016	\$ 9,083,938	-1%	2009	\$11,078,713	-9%
2015	\$ 9,215,463	-6%	2008	\$12,120,923	-26%
2014	\$ 9,843,769	-8%	2007	\$16,436,039	8%
2013	\$10,713,401	34%	2006	\$15,157,941	

Among firms making the most contributions, Remington & Vernick, based in Camden County and one of the state's largest engineering firms with 219 reported public contracts in 2019, reclaimed the top spot after a one-year hiatus.

BUSINESS ENTITIES	AMOUNT	CONTRACTS
Remington & Vernick Engineers	\$556,550	\$44,855,582
CME Associates	\$408,075	\$43,860,104
T&M Associates	\$378,958	\$34,763,972
Pennoni Associates Inc.	\$267,650	\$13,863,201
Richard A. Alaimo Business Entities ¹	\$246,075	\$ 8,727,226
French and Parrello Associates PA	\$177,245	\$ 7,300,133
Fairview Insurance Agency Associates Inc.	\$148,400	\$ 1,719,434
Allergan USA Inc. ²	\$139,375	\$ 5,872,038
Neglia Engineering Associates	\$139,005	\$ 8,931,639
Archer & Greiner, P.C.	\$134,000	\$ 3,627,534

Engineering firms traditionally have been active donors in New Jersey politics. Since ELEC began analyzing pay-to-play reports in 2009, engineering firms have topped the contribution list nine out of 11 years.

Firms on the current top ten list made a total of \$2.6 million in contributions- 32 percent of all contributions reported by public contractors. They reported a combined \$173.5 million in contracts- just 2 percent of the total.

The top recipient of contractor contributions is General Majority PAC.

It is a federal political fund-raising committee that supports Democrats but operates independently of parties and candidates. It has been one of the leading spenders on recent legislative elections.

In 2019, it spent \$2.8 million and was the top “outside” spender in the race. The \$234,800 provided by contractors comprised about 8.4 percent of its warchest.

RECIPIENT	AMOUNT
General Majority PAC	\$234,800
Frank DiMarco & Dan Christy for Freeholder (Gloucester County)	\$152,150
Claribel Azcona-Barber for Freeholder (Middlesex County)	\$147,639
Mildred Scott for Sheriff (Middlesex County)	\$121,150
Charles Kenny for Freeholder (Middlesex County)	\$115,450
Kenneth Armwood for Freeholder (Middlesex County)	\$111,350
EFO Steve Sweeney for Senate	\$ 94,100
Constructors for Good Government (UTCA)	\$ 88,172
Shaun Golden for Sheriff (Monmouth County)	\$ 68,780
Blue PAC	\$ 64,600

¹ The Alaimo Group Inc., Richard A. Alaimo Associates, Richard A. Alaimo Association of Engineers, Richard A. Alaimo Engineering Associates, Richard A. Alaimo Engineering Company.

² \$124,325 came from executive Robert Hugin, who ran unsuccessfully for U.S. Senate in 2018.

Six of the top ten recipients of contractor contributions were committees supporting county freeholder or sheriff candidates.

Contributions by public contractors were down not just overall but also to traditional political action committees, which are subject to contribution limits, and independent groups, which are not.

PACs and independent groups received \$1.2 million in 2019- a 30 percent drop, and 15 percent of all contractor donations. It was the lowest amount since 2012, when contractors gave just \$1 million to such committees.

YEAR	AMOUNT	CHANGE-%	% OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
2019	\$1,212,441	-30%	15%
2018	\$1,731,839	27%	19%
2017	\$1,364,528	6%	13%
2016	\$1,286,280	-1%	14%
2015	\$1,300,622	-30%	14%
2014	\$1,863,693	16%	19%
2013	\$1,604,014	58%	15%
2012	\$1,017,353	-42%	13%
2011	\$1,746,947		18%

Contractors reported \$9.5 billion in contracts during 2019- a 4 percent drop.

YEAR	AMOUNT	CHANGE-%	YEAR	AMOUNT	CHANGE-%
2019	\$ 9,528,358,432	-4%	2012	\$ 5,954,013,939	8%
2018	\$ 9,915,068,587	-5%	2011	\$ 5,509,000,868	-6%
2017	\$10,383,217,280	19%	2010	\$ 5,831,430,755	-4%
2016	\$ 8,747,203,681	6%	2009	\$ 6,061,413,903	21%
2015	\$ 8,280,639,442	19%	2008	\$ 5,003,469,665	-12%
2014	\$ 6,982,725,369	3%	2007	\$ 5,686,393,016	-45%
2013	\$ 6,752,690,921	13%	2006	\$10,396,758,835	

The number of contracts for 2019 is 15,448, down 20 percent. The total number of business entities filing reports is 1,849- 12 percent fewer than in 2018.

Numbers in this report reflect information available to the Commission through April 23, 2020 and should be considered preliminary. Some contractors are likely to submit reports or amendments after that date that could change the totals. Numbers earlier than 2019 reflect similar revisions and could differ from those reported in prior press releases. All reports are available at ELEC's website at www.elec.state.nj.us.

Under pay-to-play laws, all businesses that have received \$50,000 or more through public contracts must indicate whether they have made any reportable contributions and if so, must disclose contracts and contributions to ELEC by March 30th for the previous calendar year.

With some exceptions, most firms with state contracts in excess of \$17,500 are barred from contributing more than \$300 to gubernatorial candidates, other candidates, state political parties, legislative leadership committees, county political parties and municipal political party committees. Firms that exceed this limit must seek refunds of excess contributions within a necessary time period or relinquish their contracts for four years.

The average contribution made by contractors in 2019 was \$1,063- down 13 percent from a year earlier. The largest average of \$1,222 occurred in both 2006 and 2007.

Two health insurance companies that service the state and/or other governmental entities in New Jersey dwarfed all other contract recipients.

The list also includes two banks, five firms or joint ventures involved in the construction business, and an energy firm.

The top ten contractors received \$7.5 billion worth of contracts- 79 percent of the reported total -while making \$108,654 in contributions- just one percent.

BUSINESS ENTITY	CONTRACTS	CONTRIBUTIONS
Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield Affiliates ³	\$5,298,019,992	\$30,800
AMERIGROUP New Jersey, Inc.	\$1,226,771,527	\$ 500
South State, Inc.	\$ 241,370,706	\$12,887
J. Fletcher Creamer & Son, Inc./ Creamer Sanzari- Joint Venture	\$ 134,698,294	\$16,850
Unity Bank	\$ 123,313,201	\$ 1,500
George Harms Construction Co., Inc.	\$ 107,985,268	\$14,800
Earle Asphalt/ The Walter R. Earle Corp.	\$ 99,302,099	\$14,307
Direct Energy Business LLC/Direct Energy Business Marketing LLC	\$ 94,124,380	\$ 1,000
Schifano Construction Corp.	\$ 88,996,071	\$ 6,140
Magyar Bank	\$ 78,070,317	\$ 9,870

*Only lists public contractors that made reportable political contributions.

State government as usual was the largest source of contracts in 2019. The New Jersey Department of Human Services was the top contracting agency.

³ Horizon Healthcare of NJ Inc., Horizon Insurance Co., Horizon Casualty Services Inc., and Horizon Healthcare Dental Inc.

Table 7		
Contracts by Public Entity Type in 2019		
PUBLIC ENTITY TYPE	AMOUNT	PERCENT
State	\$7,328,338,756	77%
Independent Authority	\$ 814,402,331	9%
Municipality	\$ 745,284,438	8%
County	\$ 328,852,265	3%
School Board	\$ 200,025,311	2%
No Information/Uncertain	\$ 55,590,896	1%
College/University	\$ 50,487,194	1%
Multiple jurisdictions	\$ 2,683,877	0.03%
Fire District	\$ 2,512,094	0.03%
Legislature	\$ 166,644	0.002%
Federal	\$ 14,624	0.0002%
Grand Total	\$9,528,358,432	100%

Table 8	
Top Ten Contracting Agencies in 2019	
CONTRACTING AGENCY	AMOUNT
New Jersey Department of Human Services	\$6,545,985,688
New Jersey Department of Transportation	\$ 636,096,440
New Jersey Turnpike Authority	\$ 295,408,854
Port Authority of NY and NJ	\$ 124,460,917
New Jersey Department of Treasury	\$ 100,831,697
Cape May County	\$ 48,789,988
New Jersey Transit Corporation	\$ 47,193,591
Philadelphia Regional Port Authority	\$ 43,043,404
Middlesex County	\$ 37,435,789
Monmouth County	\$ 32,546,599

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