

# FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

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Issue Date: April 4, 2016

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## Statistical Summary of 12-Month Campaign Activity of the 2015-2016 Election Cycle

Presidential candidates raised \$442.7 million and spent \$319.3 million in the first 12 months of the 2015-2016 election cycle, according to campaign finance reports filed with the Federal Election Commission that cover activity from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. Congressional candidates raised \$601.5 million and spent \$286.6 million in the same period. Political parties received \$481.9 million and disbursed \$383.8 million, and political action committees (PACs) received \$1.4 billion and disbursed \$1.1 billion. Disbursements for independent expenditures reported in this period totaled \$113.5 million. Communication costs reported to the Commission totaled over a half million dollars.

### Activity from Jan. 1 through December 31, 2015 (figures in millions)

<b>Filers</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>
2016 Presidential Candidates	\$442.7	\$319.3
2016 Congressional Candidates	\$601.5	\$286.6
Party Committees	\$481.9	\$383.8
PACs	\$1,397.4	\$1,061.2
<b>Communications Filings</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Independent Expenditures	\$113.5	
Electioneering Communications	<\$0.1	
Communication Costs	\$0.5	

This summary of campaign activity in the 2015-2016 election cycle provides a benchmark for comparison with the same reporting period in previous cycles. Supporting data tables are linked at the end of each summary section below.

### I. Presidential Candidates

As of December 31, 2015, 82 individuals had filed campaign finance reports disclosing financial activity in connection with the 2016 presidential election. These candidates reported raising \$442.7 million and spending \$319.3 million from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. Their combined cash-on-hand was \$127.6 million, while their combined debt was \$20.5 million as of December 31, 2015.

The following table summarizes campaign finance activity of presidential candidates through December 31 of the pre-election year since 2003.

**12-Month Financial Activity of Presidential Candidates\***  
(figures in millions)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Debts Owed</b>	<b>Cash on Hand</b>
2015	82*	\$442.7	\$319.3	\$20.5	\$127.6
2011	13	\$280.9	\$179.4	\$10.4	\$111.5
2007	20	\$581.5	\$489.5	\$64.8	\$101.7
2003	11	\$271.6	\$151.4	\$9.9	\$119.0

\*Includes activity from January 1 through December 31 of the pre-election year. Contribution limits are indexed for inflation every cycle. Note that this chart captures all candidates who reported financial activity in this period; press releases in earlier cycles captured only a subset of candidates who reported a significant level of activity, such as raising more than \$100,000 by the end of the cycle.

Data summary tables for reports submitted to the Commission through December 31, 2015 by 2016 presidential candidate committees can be found [here](#). Historical campaign finance activity for presidential candidates can be found [here](#).

## II. Congressional Candidates

United States House and Senate candidates running in the 2016 election cycle reported raising a total of \$601.5 million and spending \$286.6 million between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. Candidates for the two chambers reported combined total debts of \$52.9 million and combined total cash-on-hand of \$590.3 million as of December 31, 2015.

The following table summarizes campaign finance activity of House and Senate candidates through December 31 of pre-election years since 2003.

**12-Month Financial Activity of Congressional Candidates\***  
(monetary figures in millions)

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Cand.</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Debts Owed</b>	<b>Cash on Hand</b>
2015	1,048	\$601.5	\$286.6	\$52.9	\$590.3
2013	1,086	\$610.5	\$320.7	\$49.2	\$474.9
2011	1,218	\$637.1	\$299.7	\$71.8	\$516.4
2009	1,323	\$587.0	\$291.9	\$69.4	\$524.6
2007	992	\$490.5	\$231.8	\$48.0	\$438.0
2005	1,187	\$466.9	\$215.5	\$42.2	\$450.0
2003	1,242	\$389.2	\$186.6	\$54.0	\$373.8

\*Includes activity from January 1 through December 31 of the pre-election year. Contribution limits are indexed for inflation every cycle. The totals in the 2015 row may differ slightly from the sum of the numbers in the two subsequent paragraphs as the numbers have been rounded. The number of candidates reflects the number of candidate committees that filed reports with financial activity in a given election cycle.

The 122 candidates running for Senate in 2016 reported total receipts of \$213.1 million, disbursements of \$85.9 million, debts of \$8.9 million and cash-on-hand of \$222.2 million.

The 926 candidates running for the House of Representatives in 2015-2016 reported combined total receipts of \$388.4 million, disbursements of \$200.7 million, debts of \$44 million and cash-on-hand of \$368.1 million. In addition to the 2016 primary and general elections, these numbers encompass financial activity associated with the 2015 special elections for Illinois's 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Mississippi's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District and New York's 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, as well as the 2016 special election for Ohio's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Data summary tables for reports submitted to the Commission through December 31, 2015 by 2015 and 2016 congressional candidate committees can be found [here](#).

### **III. Political Party Committees**

National, state and local political party committees reported combined total receipts of \$481.9 million in federal funds, disbursements of \$383.8 million, debts of \$21.4 million, and cash-on-hand of \$124.6 million as of December 31, 2015. Of those totals, party committees other than the two major political parties reported receipts of \$2.2 million, disbursements of \$2.0 million, debts of \$22,222, and a combined cash-on-hand of \$73,731 as of December 31, 2015. (See the footnote in the following table for a list of these other party committees.)

The following table summarizes 2015-2016 campaign finance activity of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), Republican National Committee (RNC), National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) and National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), as well as each party's state and local committees and other party committees.

**Political Party Activity from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2015**  
(figures in millions)

<b>Party Committees</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Debts Owed</b>	<b>Cash on Hand</b>
DNC	\$64.3	\$65.0	\$6.9	\$6.1
DSCC	\$62.4	\$52.5	\$8.4	\$10.8
DCCC	\$68.2	\$41.1	\$0	\$29.3
State and Local Democratic <u>Party Committees (federal funds)</u>	<u>\$43.5</u>	<u>\$38.5</u>	<u>\$1.7</u>	<u>\$10.4</u>
Total*	\$229.2	\$187.8	\$17.0	\$56.7
RNC	\$105.6	\$91.9	\$1.8	\$18.7
NRSC	\$40.8	\$31.8	\$0	\$11.7
NRCC	\$69.3	\$40.6	\$0	\$30.1
State and Local Republican <u>Party Committees (federal funds)</u>	<u>\$41.0</u>	<u>\$35.7</u>	<u>\$2.6</u>	<u>\$7.3</u>
Total*	\$250.5	\$193.9	\$4.4	\$67.9
<u>Total Other Party</u> **	<u>\$2.2</u>	<u>\$2.0</u>	<u>\$0.1</u>	<u>\$0.1</u>
<b>Total Party Activity*</b>	<b>\$481.9</b>	<b>\$383.8</b>	<b>\$21.4</b>	<b>\$124.6</b>

\*The totals in this line may not equal the sum of the numbers in the corresponding columns as the receipts and disbursements have been adjusted to account for transfers between party committees and the numbers have been rounded.

\*\* Other party committees include the Libertarian National Committee, Libertarian National Congressional Committee, Green Party of the United States, Green Senatorial Campaign Committee, Constitution Party National Committee, and the Reform Party of the United States of America.

Individuals, for whom contributions to national parties are limited to \$33,400 per year this election cycle, were the largest source of federal funds for party committees' traditional accounts. Democratic and Republican party committees reported receiving \$163 million and \$156.2 million, respectively, from individuals. PACs and other political committees contributed \$27.9 million to Democratic party committees and \$33.3 million to Republican party committees as of December 31, 2015.

Democratic and Republican House campaign committees transferred \$12.5 million and \$16 million, respectively, from their campaign accounts to their national congressional party committees. Committees representing Democratic Senate candidates transferred \$716,000 to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. Committees representing Republican Senate candidates did not make any transfers to the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Provisions of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 83), signed into law in December 2014, enable national party committees to establish accounts to

defray certain expenses incurred with respect to Presidential nominating conventions, national party headquarters buildings, and election recounts and contests and other legal proceedings.

The resulting new accounts of national party committees reported receiving \$45.8 million between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. Of that total, the three new Democratic national party committee accounts received \$11.1 million, while the corresponding Republican national party committee accounts received \$34.7 million. New accounts established by other national political parties reported receiving \$17,508.

Headquarters accounts reported the highest receipt total across all the newly established national party committee accounts: \$25 million. New convention and recount accounts raised \$10.7 million and \$10 million, respectively, through December 31, 2015.

Data summary tables for reports submitted by political party committees to the Commission through December 31, 2015 can be found [here](#).

#### **IV. Political Action Committees (PACs)**

Based on reports filed with the Commission from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, 7,223 federal PACs reported total receipts of \$1.4 billion, disbursements of \$1.1 billion, debts of \$23.5 million, and combined cash-on-hand of \$824.3 million.

The following table summarizes campaign finance activity of PACs based on PAC type in 2015. This table includes both separate segregated funds (SSFs), which have connected organizations such as corporations or labor organizations that establish, administer or raise money on their behalf, and nonconnected committees.

**PAC Activity from Jan. 1 through December 31, 2015**  
(monetary figures in millions)

Committee Type	No. of PACs	Receipts	Disbursements	Debts Owed	Cash on Hand
<b><u>Separate Segregated Funds</u></b>					
Corporate	1,738	\$201.3	\$175.3	\$0.2	\$172.4
Labor	285	\$164.9	\$116.2	\$1.2	\$150.9
Trade	709	\$77.1	\$65.0	\$0.0	\$69.6
Membership	236	\$66.9	\$50.1	\$0.0	\$50.7
Cooperative	41	\$4.0	\$3.3	\$0.0	\$5.4
Corporations without Stock	99	\$8.2	\$7.5	\$0.4	\$4.5
<b><u>Nonconnected PACs*</u></b>					
Independent Expenditure- Only Political Committees	1,793	\$508.7	\$297.0	\$15.6	\$263.3
Committees w/ Non- Contribution Accounts	127	\$201.5	\$197.3	\$0.8	\$21.7
Leadership PACs	547	\$61.3	\$53.5	\$0.1	\$37.0
Other Nonconnected PACs					
	<u>1,648</u>	<u>\$103.4</u>	<u>\$96.0</u>	<u>\$5.1</u>	<u>\$48.8</u>
<b>Total SSF and Nonconnected PAC Activity**</b>	<b>7,223</b>	<b>\$1,397.4</b>	<b>\$1,061.2</b>	<b>\$23.5</b>	<b>\$824.3</b>

\*Nonconnected committees include Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees, Committees with Non-Contribution Accounts and Leadership PACs. Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees are committees that may receive unlimited contributions from individuals, corporations, and labor organizations for the purpose of financing independent expenditures and other independent political activity. Committees with Non-Contribution Accounts solicit and accept unlimited contributions from individuals, corporations, labor organizations, and other political committees to a segregated bank account for the same purposes as Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees, while maintaining a separate bank account -- subject to all of the statutory amount limitations and source prohibitions -- that is permitted to make contributions to federal candidates. The data above includes receipts and disbursements from both bank accounts of Committees with Non-Contribution Accounts. Leadership PACs are political committees that are directly or indirectly established, financed, maintained or controlled by a candidate or an individual holding federal office, but are neither authorized committees of the candidate or officeholder nor affiliated with an authorized committee of a candidate or officeholder. Like other multicandidate PACs, a leadership PAC may contribute up to \$5,000 per election to a federal candidate committee.

\*\*The totals in this line may not equal the sum of the numbers in the corresponding columns as these numbers have been rounded. Instead, the bottom-line totals correspond to [PAC Table 1](#).

Contributions by PACs to presidential and congressional candidates seeking office in the 2015-2016 election cycle totaled \$1.3 million and \$192.9 million, respectively, as of December 31, 2015. PAC contributions to Senate and House candidates totaled \$42.2 million and \$150.7 million, respectively. Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees are prohibited from making contributions to candidates.

Data summary tables for reports submitted by PACs to the Commission through December 31, 2015 can be found [here](#).

## **V. Independent Expenditures**

Independent expenditures reported to the Commission through December 31, 2015 in connection with presidential and congressional elections in the 2015-2016 election cycle totaled \$113.5 million.\* Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees accounted for \$102.9 million of all independent expenditures disclosed to the Commission, Committees with Non-Contribution Accounts reported \$2.8 million, and other PACs reported \$2.2 million. Independent expenditures made by persons other than political committees totaled \$5.2 million, and party committees reported independent expenditures totaling \$407,564.

Data summary tables for independent expenditure filings submitted to the Commission through December 31, 2015 can be found [here](#).

\* A political committee must itemize its payments for independent expenditures once the calendar-year total paid to a vendor or other person exceeds \$200 with respect to a particular election. Any other person (individual, partnership or group of individuals) must file a report with the FEC at the end of the first reporting period in which independent expenditures with respect to a given election aggregate more than \$250 in a calendar year and in any succeeding period during the same year in which additional independent expenditures of any amount are made.

## **VI. Electioneering Communications**

Electioneering communication filings totaling \$789 were reported to the Commission in connection with activity in the 2015-2016 election cycle. An electioneering communication is a broadcast, cable or satellite communication that refers to a clearly identified federal candidate and is distributed within 30 days prior to a primary election or within 60 days prior to a general election. These communications do not expressly advocate the election or defeat of a federal candidate.

The data summary table for electioneering communication filings submitted to the Commission through December 31, 2015 can be found [here](#).

## **VII. Communication Costs**

A provision of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended (the Act), allows corporations and labor organizations to communicate to a “restricted class” of individuals on any subject, including express advocacy of the election or defeat of any Federal candidate. The costs of such communications must be reported to the Commission when the cost exceeds \$2,000 per election. This provision of the Act pre-dates the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v.*

*FEC*, which struck down the ban on independent expenditures and electioneering communications financed by the general treasuries of corporations and labor unions.

The Commission received four such filings during the reporting period, disclosing spending of \$501,645 in costs for communications to organizations' restricted class between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015.

The data summary table for communication cost filings submitted to the Commission through December 31, 2015 can be found [here](#).

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