

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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Spending by legislative candidates rose in 1998, according to OCPF study

Spending by candidates for the state Legislature reached almost \$10.7 million in 1998, an increase of 29 percent over the record lows of two years before, according to a study released today by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

Aggregate receipts showed a similar increase: the \$10.6 million raised was an increase of 22 percent over 1996. Both 1998 totals, however, are less than the record highs of \$12 million in receipts and \$12.3 million in expenditures recorded in 1992.

The study is the fifth and final installment in a series published by OCPF over the past year. Previous studies have addressed activity by candidates for statewide office, the public financing system, state ballot question committees, and political action committees.

The study released today covers activity reported by 367 candidates for the General Court: 71 for the Senate and 296 for the House. Figures for each candidate are provided; this is the first time House candidates' figures have been included in the report.

Figures for each chamber also showed substantial increases, especially in the House. Total receipts by candidates for representative rose 31 percent, while expenditures rose 36 percent over 1996. Total Senate fundraising rose 8 percent from two years before and spending rose 18 percent.

While total figures were up from 1996, the average receipts and expenditures for each chamber showed varying levels of change. The most striking changes were in the House, where the \$22,855 raised by the average candidate was an increase of 24 percent over 1996 and the average spent, \$23,229, was a 28 percent increase. The two averages were the highest ever recorded by House candidates.

The numbers were mixed in the Senate, where the average raised, \$53,656, was a drop of 4 percent from two years before and the average spent, \$53,606, was an increase of 5 percent. The averages were still several thousand dollars lower than the Senate highs recorded in 1994.

As was the case in previous studies, the highest level of financial activity was reported by incumbents, Democrats and those who won their races. However, substantial activity was reported by candidates for open Senate and House seats, which traditionally draw many contenders. In general, candidates for those seats raised and spent more than those in races featuring an incumbent.

Fundraising and spending by incumbents varied, depending on whether the candidates were opposed and the amount of the expenditures not directly related to campaigning, such as constituent and legislative services and transportation that was not reimbursed by the Commonwealth.

The study tracks activity by candidates as reported to OCPF. While it reflects many amendments as a result of audits by OCPF, figures are always subject to change. Those wanting the most current figures concerning a particular campaign are advised to check the relevant files at OCPF.

Both the Senate and House sections are followed by tables listing summary balances for each candidate, including starting and ending balances, receipts and expenditures.

The General Court study may be accessed through OCPF's web site, www.state.ma.us/ocpf. Disclosure filings by legislative candidates and all other political candidates and committees reporting to OCPF are available for public inspection at the agency's office at Room 411, McCormack Building, One Ashburton Place, Boston.

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