

## RHODE ISLAND 1998 SUMMARY

By Sara Marino  
February 24, 2001

Total 1998 dollars raised: \$3,366,202

Total statewide dollars raised: \$2,570,734

Total legislative dollars raised: \$795,468

Total votes cast: 309,835

Average cost per vote: \$10.86

General election winners total dollars: \$2,121,357

General election losers total dollars: \$973,038

Primary election losers total dollars: \$271,807

Incumbent candidates total dollars: \$1,038,311

Challengers to incumbents total dollars: \$875,257

Open race candidates total dollars: \$1,452,634

<b>Office</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b># Candidates</b>	<b>Avg\$/Candidate</b>
Attorney General	\$1,021,304	5	\$204,261
Governor	\$954,725	9	\$106,081
Lt. Governor	\$254,384	5	\$50,877
Secretary of State	\$66,037	3	\$22,012
Treasurer	\$274,284	4	\$68,571
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$2,570,734</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>\$98,874</b>
House	\$469,653	162	\$2,899
Senate	\$325,815	103	\$3,163
<b>Legislative Total</b>	<b>\$795,468</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>\$3,002</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,366,202</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>\$11,568</b>

## THE RACES

<b>Office</b>	<b>Contested</b>	<b>Uncontested</b>	<b>Open</b>
Statewide	5	0	2
Legislative	79	71	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	84	71	20

In addition to five statewide races, the entire Legislature, which comprises 100 House seats and 50 Senate seats, was up for election. The attorney general and treasurer races were open as were 14 House and four Senate seats. The treasurer race was left open when former Treasurer Nancy Mayer ran for the attorney generals office, but lost to Sheldon Whitehouse in his first bid for an elected office.

All statewide races were contested, although just 53 percent of the legislative races had more than one candidate running. Additionally, in 22 of the contested legislative races, only one of the candidates actually raised money.

## THE CANDIDATES

<b>Office</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Third Party</b>	<b>Incumbents</b>	<b>Challengers</b>	<b>Open</b>
Statewide	5	9	12	3	14	9
Legislative	56	179	30	132	82	51
<b>TOTAL</b>	61	188	42	135	96	60

<b>Office</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Third Party</b>	<b>Avg/Republican</b>	<b>Avg/Democrat</b>	<b>Avg/Third Party</b>
Statewide	\$768,660	\$1,783,055	\$19,019	\$153,732	\$198,117	\$1,585
Legislative	\$95,588	\$660,032	\$39,848	\$1,707	\$3,687	\$1,328
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$864,248	\$2,443,087	\$58,867	\$14,168	\$12,995	\$1,402

Democrats held the majority in both the state House and Senate going into the 1998 elections, and made up 65 percent of the pool of candidates. Democratic candidates also generated more money than did candidates of other parties, raising 73 percent of the total dollars. Incumbents were up for re-election in 87 percent of the races.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Avg/Candidate</b>	<b>Avg/Incumbent</b>	<b>Avg/Challenger</b>	<b>Avg/Open Race</b>
Statewide	\$98,874	\$187,859	\$50,826	\$143,954
House	\$2,899	\$3,462	\$1,199	\$4,191
Senate	\$3,163	\$3,847	\$3,181	\$1,829
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,568</b>	<b>\$7,691</b>	<b>\$9,117</b>	<b>\$24,211</b>

In the statewide offices, incumbents outraised their challengers by a ratio of almost 4:1. In the House that ratio went down to nearly 3:1, and in the Senate 1.2:1. In the Senate there were seven districts in which the challenger raised more than the incumbent. In six of those cases the incumbent still won.

Candidates running for open seats raised, on average, about three times as much as either incumbents or challengers. Two of the statewide candidates did have the advantage of incumbency as they had left other offices to run in open races. Former state Sen. Paul Tavares went on to win as treasurer, and former Treasurer Nancy Mayer lost her bid for attorney general.

### **THE WINNERS**

Democrats held onto their majority in the Legislature, winning 86 percent of the House seats (86 seats) and 84 percent of the Senate seats (42 seats). Democratic candidates won 11 of the 13 open House seats, and all four of the open Senate seats.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Third Party</b>	<b>Incumbents</b>	<b>Challengers</b>	<b>Open</b>
Statewide	1	4	0	2	1	2
Legislative	21	128	1	128	4	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>

The Democrats also did well in the statewide races, winning all but the governors race, which went to Republican incumbent Lincoln Almond. This was quite a switch compared to the 1994 statewide elections in which Republicans held all but the secretary of states office. To accomplish this, Democrats won the two open races, treasurer and attorney general, and former Democratic state Sen. Charles Fogarty beat Republican incumbent Bernard Jackvony in the race for lieutenant governor.

Incumbents have the advantage of name recognition, a proven track record and media publicity, and they almost always win their elections. In the Rhode Island 1998 elections, incumbency resulted in an 84 percent re-election rate.

Money is also an important tool in winning an election. Four out of the five challengers who won raised more money than did the incumbent. And as previously stated, the winner in the lieutenant governor race had been an elected official, so he also enjoyed the advantages of incumbency. Out of the 20 open races, 15 of the winners raised the most money. Putting these figures together, 149 out of 155 winners -- 96 percent -- had the advantage of either incumbency or money.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Avg/Candidate</b>	<b>Avg/Winner</b>	<b>Avg/Loser</b>
Statewide	\$98,874	\$294,106	\$52,391
House	\$2,899	\$3,917	\$1,257
Senate	\$3,163	\$5,182	\$1,259
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,568</b>	<b>\$13,686</b>	<b>\$9,153</b>

The above figures illustrate a common trend on average, winners raise more money than losers, three times as much in House races and four times as much in Senate races. The statewide averages are skewed because two candidates, attorney general candidate Sheldon Whitehouse and gubernatorial candidate Myrth York, raised almost 50 percent of all the statewide dollars, and 10 statewide candidates did not raise any money.

#### TOP FUNDRAISING CANDIDATES & RACES

<b>Office</b>	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>\$ Raised</b>
Atty General	Sheldon Whitehouse	D	Won	Open race	\$700,393
Governor	Myrth York	D	Lost	Challenger	\$533,229
Governor	Lincoln Almond	R	Won	Incumbent	\$418,167
Lt. Gov.	Charles Fogarty	D	Won	Incumbent	\$156,362
Treasurer	Paul Tavares	D	Won	Incumbent	\$146,362

<b>Race</b>	<b>\$ Raised</b>
Atty General	\$1,021,304
Governor	\$954,725
Treasurer	\$274,284
Lt. Governor	\$254,384
House Dist. 76	\$110,830

Former U.S. Attorney Sheldon Whitehouse, who was victorious on his first try for an elected office, raised more money than any other candidate. Whitehouse contributed \$200,905 to his own campaign, the most self-finance money in the elections. In comparison, the next highest self-finance contribution was \$49,557 from Senate District 7 winner, David Iglizzi.

Looking at the money that Whitehouse raised, it is no surprise that the attorney generals race was the most expensive in these elections. He raised between five times as much as the next highest competitor and 11 times as much as the last competitor.

The gubernatorial race was the second most expensive. Out of the nine candidates, loser Myrth York raised 56 percent of all dollars in that race, and winning incumbent Gov. Almond raised 44 percent. Gov. Almond also beat York in 1994, and under Rhode Island term limits, this will be his last term as governor.

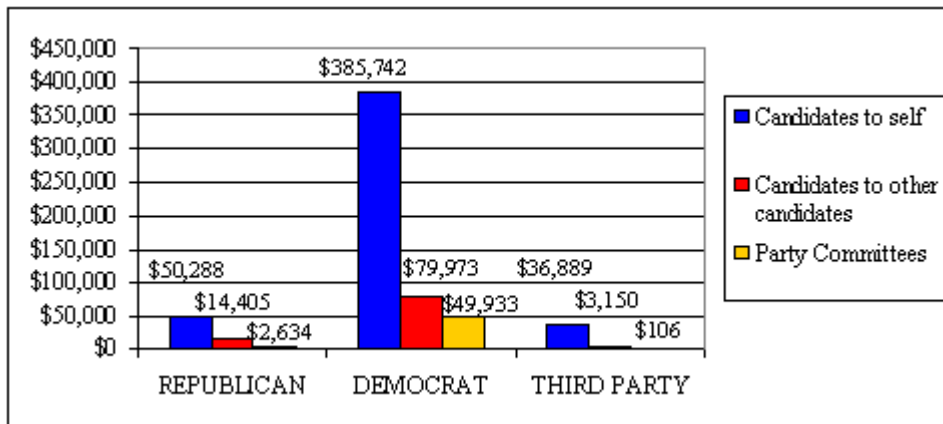
### WHO GIVES

The following table shows the breakdown of contributions by major sector, sorted from the largest percentage of total dollars to the smallest. It does not include almost \$300,000 that could not be identified by business interest.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>\$ Amt</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Candidate	\$472,919	15%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$467,209	15%
Other	\$425,914	14%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	\$404,528	13%
General Business	\$380,168	12%
Labor	\$240,345	8%
Construction	\$162,340	5%
Party	\$150,201	5%
Health	\$144,434	5%
Transportation	\$78,241	3%
Communications/Electronics	\$63,830	2%
Energy/Natural Resource	\$44,486	1%
Agriculture	\$26,670	1%
Ideology/Single Issue	\$26,174	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,087,459</b>	<b>100%</b>

Contributions from candidates donating to their own campaigns are unlimited, except for statewide candidates who elect to receive public funding. Candidate self-finance was the highest source of funds in this election cycle. Democratic candidates contributed 98 percent of the

\$472,919 in this category. Democrats also received the most party money, as shown in the chart below.



Democrats out-raised Republicans by a ratio of more than 7:1

Lawyers and lobbyists were the second-highest source of funds, contributing 15 percent of total dollars. More than \$400,000 came from individuals and almost \$23,000 from law firm PACs or the Rhode Island Lawyers PAC. They gave \$370,254 of their donations to Democratic candidates and \$96,255 to Republican candidates. Former state Sen. Myrth York benefited the most from lawyers and lobbyists, receiving \$112,875. York lost the gubernatorial race to incumbent Lincoln Almond, who received \$53,400 from this sector. Another top beneficiary was Attorney General Whitehouse, with \$86,883 in donations from lawyers and lobbyists.

The "Other" category, which made up 14 percent of contributions, includes those involved with education and the military, as well as retired persons, public employees and clergy. Retired persons donated \$213,474, followed by public employees with \$109,857.

### TOP CONTRIBUTORS

<b>Contributor</b>	<b>\$ Amt</b>
RI AFL-CIO	\$15,795
ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL 99/IBEW	\$15,450
NATL RIFLE ASSOC POLITICAL VICTORY FUND/NRA	\$14,910
RI LABORERS POLITICAL LEAGUE	\$14,085
TEAMSTERS/DRIVE	\$13,015
RI EDUCATION PAC	\$12,880
BROTHERHOOD OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS	\$12,600
RI STATE ASSOC FIRE FIGHTERS	\$11,180
FLEET BANK CIVIC AFFAIRS COMM	\$11,100
RI CARPENTERS PAC	\$10,860

Above is a list of the top 10 contributors, excluding any candidate or party money. All came from PACs, and eight of them are labor unions. Seven of the PACs listed above gave more than 90 percent of their total contributions to Democratic candidates. The three exceptions were the NRA , the RI Laborers Political League, and Fleet Bank Civic Affairs, which all gave at least 70 percent of their donations to Democratic candidates. All of the top 10 put their money mostly behind incumbents and therefore, behind winners.

### **ABOUT OUR INFORMATION**

The National Institute on Money in State Politics obtained the 1998 campaign-finance data in electronic form from the Rhode Island Board of Elections Campaign Finance Division. Institute staff then researched the backgrounds of contributors.