



Money in Politics Research Action Project

917 SW Oak St. #422, Portland, OR 97205 • (503) 283-1922 • Fax (503) 283-1877
miprap@oregonfollowthemoney.org • www.oregonfollowthemoney.org

For immediate release:
 October 27, 2006

Contact:
 Sarah Wetherson, 503/756-8537

Overall Competition in State House, Senate Races Remains Low While a Few Highly-Competitive Races Drive Major Fundraising Increases in the House

While two-thirds of fundraising frontrunners for the House and Senate are unopposed or face nominal competition, overall fundraising for House seats has increased by 36 percent in real dollars since 2002.

Chart 1: Comparison of Fundraising through 2nd Reporting Period, 2002, 2004 and 2006 General Elections, in millions of dollars

Senate Races Through 2nd report contributions			House Races Through 2nd report contributions			All Legislative Races Through 2nd report contributions		
2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006
\$4.9	\$5.7	\$4.1	\$7.0	\$8.2	\$9.5	\$11.9	\$13.9	\$13.6

MiPRAP compiled data from reports filed with the state Elections Division. Data for 2006 could change due to auditing and amendments. Data for 2002 and 2004 are adjusted for inflation. Cash totals include beginning cash balances and contributions reported in the 1st and 2nd Pre-General Election period for each year.

This 2006 increase in fundraising accompanies a 2 point decrease in the percentage of races in the House that were unopposed or drowned out in 2002. And 2006, as compared to 2002, has an 8-point increase in the percentage of races where the runner-up fundraising candidate has raised at least 75 percent of the lead fundraising candidate's total.

Compared to 2002, fundraising for the Senate has decreased in terms of real dollars by about 20 percent, while the percentage of races where a candidate faces no or only nominal opposition has increased by 33 points.

Elections in 2002 and 2006 share important characteristics. They are both mid-term, non-presidential elections featuring hotly contested gubernatorial races in Oregon.

Chart 2: Competition Analysis of 2002 General Election Races through the 2nd Reporting Period

Competitiveness	# of Senate races	% of 15 Senate Races	# of House Races	% of 60 House Races	# of Legislative Races	% of 75 Legislative Races
Unopposed	1	7%	6	10%	7	9%
Drowned Out	4	27%	34	57%	38	51%
Lopsided	2	13%	8	13%	10	13%
Struggle to Keep Up	3	20%	5	8%	8	11%
Equal Opportunity	5	33%	7	12%	12	16%

MiPRAP compiled data from reports filed with the state Elections Division. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Chart 3: Competition Analysis of 2004 General Election Races through the 2nd Reporting Period

Competitiveness	# of Senate races	% of 17 Senate Races		# of House Races	% of 60 House Races		# of Legislative Races	% of 77 Legislative Races	
Unopposed	4	24%	65%	6	10%	70%	10	13%	69%
Drowned Out	7	41%		36	60%		43	56%	
Lopsided	2	12%		6	10%		8	10%	
Struggle to Keep Up	1	6%		7	12%		8	10%	
Equal Opportunity	3	18%		5	8%		8	10%	

MiPRAP compiled data from reports filed with the state Elections Division. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Chart 4: Competition Analysis of 2006 General Election Races through the 2nd Reporting Period

Competitiveness	# of Senate races	% of 15 Senate Races		# of House Races	% of 60 House Races		# of Legislative Races	% of 75 Legislative Races	
Unopposed	1	7%	67%	7	12%	65%	8	11%	66%
Drowned Out	9	60%		32	53%		41	55%	
Lopsided	1	7%		6	10%		7	9%	
Struggle to Keep Up	1	7%		3	5%		4	5%	
Equal Opportunity	3	20%		12	20%		15	20%	

MiPRAP compiled data from reports filed with the state Elections Division. Data for 2006 could change due to auditing and amendments. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

“Competition among House races has improved a little over 2002, but not enough to explain a 36 percent inflation-adjusted increase in fundraising. At the same time, we see less competition among Senate races without the same kind decrease in political fundraising. This election has raised the fundraising bar for high-profile legislative races. Our broken campaign finance system discourages people without access to deep-pocketed donors from running for office, and gives voters fewer real choices on the ballot.” said Sarah Wetherson, research and outreach associate with the Money in Politics Research Action Project.

(In cases where there are three or more candidates, MiPRAP calculated the difference between the two highest fundraisers. See charts at www.oregonfollowthemoney.org and follow the link to “Who is Running?”)

###