



## **New Analysis of Campaign Contributions Finds:**

### **Less Than 1 in 4 Campaign Donations to 19 NYS Senate Democratic Leaders Are From People in Their Districts**

### **5 Senators Received Less Than 10% of Their Contributions From In-District Residents; Senator Comrie Does Best With 53%**

### **Senate Leaders Must Now Appoint Members to Public Financing Commission and Introduce Public Matching Bills**

Just 23% of donations to State Senate majority leadership came from individuals living in their districts, according to a Reinvent Albany analysis. Corporations, unions, and associations – many doing business with state government – provided about 40 percent of their contributions. [Yet the Senate leaders overall raised 44 percent more contributions in-district than the Assembly leaders \(23 to 16 percent\)](#). Reinvent Albany used State Board of Election data for the 2017-2018 election cycle for this analysis available via the Attorney General's [New York Open Government](#) website.

#### **Findings**

Some Senate leaders received a significant proportion of their contributions from people in their districts. Leroy Comrie, representing St. Albans and communities in southeast Queens, was the top in-district fundraiser, raising 53 percent of his donations from in-district residents. Velmanette Montgomery was second, raising 49 percent, followed by Senators Hoylman, Mayer and Krueger, all with 40 percent or more of their contributions from in-district residents.

[Senate Deputy Majority Leader Mike Gianaris](#) and Senators Neil Breslin, John Liu, Gustavo Rivera and Jose Serrano all raised less than 10% percent of their donations from people in their districts, though Liu had a relatively high number of in-district individual donations and Serrano hardly fundraised.

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## Worst to First - Percentage of In-District Individual Donors (People)

| Senate Leader                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Number of Unique Donors | Number of Individual Donors | Percentage of Individual Donors | Number of In-District Individual Donors | Percentage of In-District Individual Donors |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Serrano                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 7                       | 1                           | 14%                             | 0                                       | 0%                                          |
| Rivera                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 214                     | 103                         | 48%                             | 3                                       | 1%                                          |
| Gianaris                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 346                     | 113                         | 33%                             | 23                                      | 7%                                          |
| Liu                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 1310                    | 1218                        | 93%                             | 106                                     | 8%                                          |
| Breslin*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 213                     | 34                          | 16%                             | 20                                      | 9%                                          |
| Parker*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 416                     | 314                         | 75%                             | 54                                      | 13%                                         |
| Stavisky                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 201                     | 80                          | 40%                             | 28                                      | 14%                                         |
| Martinez                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 766                     | 611                         | 80%                             | 108                                     | 14%                                         |
| Kennedy*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 710                     | 382                         | 54%                             | 121                                     | 17%                                         |
| Kaminsky*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 872                     | 516                         | 59%                             | 209                                     | 24%                                         |
| Addabbo                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 243                     | 123                         | 51%                             | 63                                      | 26%                                         |
| Benjamin*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 701                     | 544                         | 78%                             | 182                                     | 26%                                         |
| Persaud                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 130                     | 99                          | 76%                             | 37                                      | 28%                                         |
| Stewart-Cousins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 882                     | 583                         | 66%                             | 253                                     | 29%                                         |
| Krueger                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 73                      | 50                          | 68%                             | 29                                      | 40%                                         |
| Mayer*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1058                    | 871                         | 82%                             | 425                                     | 40%                                         |
| Hoylman*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 419                     | 342                         | 82%                             | 171                                     | 41%                                         |
| Montgomery                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 69                      | 46                          | 67%                             | 34                                      | 49%                                         |
| Comrie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 314                     | 261                         | 83%                             | 165                                     | 53%                                         |
| <b>Average Per Member</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>471</b>              | <b>331</b>                  | <b>61%</b>                      | <b>107</b>                              | <b>23%</b>                                  |
| <p>* - indicates Senator did not itemize all contributions. Contributions from donors giving \$99 or less can be grouped together and reported as "Total Unitemized Contributions," meaning the donors and amounts given are anonymous. Reinvent Albany's analysis is based only on itemized contributions. Members with unitemized contributions have more contributions from people and may have more in-district individual contributions. However, this is impossible to determine from public records.</p> <p>Senator Mayer reported \$28,074 in unitemized individual and partnership contributions in 2017-2018. Senator Kennedy reported \$11,675; Senator Benjamin reported \$3,147; Senator Kaminsky reported \$1,990. Senator Hoylman reported \$1,144; Senator Breslin reported \$825; and Senator Parker \$130. We will adjust this analysis if members report their unitemized anonymous contributions.</p> |                         |                             |                                 |                                         |                                             |

[Senate President Andrea Stewart-Cousins received contributions from 253 constituents](#), the second highest among Senate leaders by number of contributions. Contributions from in-district residents were 29 percent of her total donations.

Reinvent Albany is part of the [Fair Elections](#) coalition advocating for passage of a public financing system, modeled on New York City's, that matches small-dollar contributions to encourage fundraising from everyday New Yorkers. A public financing system would enable elected officials and candidates to rely more on constituents in their districts, rather than companies and organizations, to raise funds for campaigns. Constituent-based fundraising practices would be incentivized under a public financing system like New York City's, which matches donations from ordinary New Yorkers. [Research by the Campaign Finance Institute](#) shows virtually all elected officials would raise more funds under a public matching system than they did last election cycle.

In the 2019-2020 budget, the Governor and legislature created a Public Financing Commission. It will establish a binding public financing program by December first, unless its proposed program is amended by the legislature afterwards.

[The Commission members have not been chosen yet by the state's leaders even though three months have passed since its creation](#), with the Commission to deliver its binding recommendations in 5 months. Neither Speaker Carl Heastie or Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins have introduced their public matching bills this session, despite they and Governor Cuomo having all backed public financing of elections in past years.