

Kerry Breaks Bush Record For Pace of Fundraising

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(Thursday, June 17, 2004; Page A01)

Since locking up the Democratic nomination on March 2, Sen. John F. Kerry (D-Mass.) has raised more than \$100 million, or over \$1 million a day -- a pace breaking all presidential campaign records, including those set by President Bush.

The Kerry campaign announced the figures yesterday, before filing with the Federal Election Commission later this week. The disclosure shows that Kerry led Bush in fundraising from March through May almost 2 to 1: \$100.4 million to Bush's \$55.2 million. In May alone, Kerry raised \$26 million compared with \$13.2 million by Bush, according to calculations by CNN that Bush officials described as accurate.

Throughout the campaign, however, Bush has outraised Kerry by an estimated \$214 million to \$145 million, according to FEC records and data released by the Kerry campaign.

Later this week, the Bush and Kerry campaigns will file complete, detailed reports of fundraising and spending for the month of May.

Kerry's success has turned on its head what had been an almost universally accepted political axiom: that a Democratic presidential candidate cannot compete with a Republican in the race for cash.

Together, the Kerry and Bush campaigns are on track to raise a total of more than \$400 million by the end of the summer in a demonstration that the 2002 McCain-Feingold campaign finance law has not constrained presidential spending.

Instead, the law encouraged both candidates to reject spending limits and public subsidies because individual contribution limits were raised from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

The single largest source of money for Kerry was the Internet, according to his campaign. It produced \$44 million from March through May, compared with the \$31 million raised through direct mail and phone solicitations, and \$25 million from high-dollar events and major donor solicitations.

"When John Kerry essentially secured the Democratic nomination on Super Tuesday, the Bush campaign immediately launched a negative attack campaign, declaring that within 90 days they would 'bury' our campaign," Kerry campaign manager Mary Beth Cahill said in a statement. "I'm happy to report that 90 days later, they failed."

In a second display of fundraising prowess, the Democratic National Committee released the names of 17 "Trustees" who have collected at least \$250,000 for the party, and 171 "Patriots" who have raised at least \$100,000.

Kerry's fundraising achievements in recent months pose a long-range question for his party and for future Democratic candidates:

Does the flow of cash signal a source of money for the future, or is it the momentary result of the intense animosity toward President Bush among Democratic activists?

Many Democrats have privately given Bush most of the credit for the surge in Democratic cash, but yesterday Democrats argued that the gains may be permanent.

DNC Chairman Terence R. McAuliffe contended that Kerry and the party are building a "sustainable" fundraising base, while acknowledging the importance of the backlash to Bush's policies: "This is a perfect storm for fundraising, a visceral dislike of George Bush's policies, a great nominee, and a unified and energized party."

Kerry treasurer Bob Farmer was optimistic about Democratic prospects, saying: "What has happened is the little guy has been empowered, and I think they like it. The Internet gives them a piece of the action."

Simon Rosenberg, president of the New Democrat Network, an independent group promoting the Democratic Party in Hispanic communities, said the gains are "long-lasting and momentary."

"It's reacting to the moment, the view that Bush is not just a bad president but a threat to our values," he said, adding that "there is a whole generation of people who have become politically active, our system has been reinvigorated."

Bush-Cheney '04 spokesman Scott Stanzel did not address the question of whether the Kerry fundraising signals sustained Democratic fundraising success. But he said that "we have always indicated we will be outspent by the Democratic nominee and the liberal soft-money groups."

In fact, when money raised by the parties, the two presidential candidates and by "soft money" committees known as "527s" is added, the total on the Republican side is \$574 million and on the Democratic side \$421 million, a \$153 million GOP advantage.

Many of the DNC's Patriots and Trustees have already raised large sums for the Kerry campaign. Some of the new names include former vice president Al Gore and Washington lobbyists Thomas Hale Boggs Jr. and R. Scott Pastrick, who have achieved Patriot status.

Researcher Lucy Shackelford contributed to this report.