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Northampton County executive race turns up different campaign financing strategies

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By **BILL WICHERT**

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EASTON | Less than two weeks before the Democratic primary, Northampton County Executive John Stoffa and his challenger, County Council President Ann McHale, have taken sharply different approaches when it comes to campaign financing.

As they seek their party's nomination for county executive, Stoffa has not raised any campaign contributions but McHale garnered \$20,570 between the first of the year and Monday, according to campaign finance reports filed this week.

Democratic voters will choose between the two candidates on May 19. Republican J.C. Kelleher is running unopposed for his party's nomination.

The two single largest donations made to McHale's campaign were \$2,500 each from the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, and a New Jersey insurance agent named Ryan D. Graham, according to a report filed by Friends of Ann McHale. McHale loaned \$5,000 to her own campaign in February, according to a separate report. She also carried over about \$533 from her previous campaign finance report.

McHale's campaign committee also received donations from the political committees of the following Lehigh Valley elected officials: \$150, State Rep. Joseph F. Brennan, D-Lehigh/Northampton; \$200, Northampton County Councilwoman Diane Neiper; \$250, Lehigh County Executive Don Cunningham; \$150, Bethlehem Mayor John Callahan; and \$500, state Sen. Lisa Boscola, D-Northampton/Lehigh/ Monroe.

Over the last four months, McHale has spent \$8,586, leaving her with \$12,517 in cash, according to her committee's report.

Stoffa, who is seeking his second term, spent \$2,664 during the same time period and received an in-kind contribution of \$750 for Web site development, according to reports filed on his behalf. His campaign committee spent \$16 over the last four months, and currently has \$66 in cash.

Stoffa has said he still has \$14,000 in expenses from his first run.

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