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# Democrats amass big war chest for Hawaii's Congressional races

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By Lynn Kawano, Anchor / Reporter [CONNECT](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Talk about a war chest.

Together, Democrats U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz, Colleen Hanabusa, and U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard have raised \$6.5 million for their Congressional races. That's 700 percent more than their Republican opponents.

The funding difference means the three Republicans, who together have raised \$90,000, face an uphill battle to get their message out.

"I've been pretty successful in certain aspects of politics but fundraising has to be the absolute worst thing," said John Carroll, the former State representative running against Schatz, "The money raising thing is something you pretty much have to deal with and I do now ask my friends to donate but as far as what we've gotten so far has been almost pitiful."

Carroll has raised about \$54,000 and almost half came out of his own pocket.

Schatz has raised more than \$3.5 million to fund his re-election campaign.

"The Republican party has a small presence here," said Hawaii News Now political analyst Colin Moore, "It's also really hard for them to raise money"

Moore says the discrepancy intimidates potential challengers and perpetuates a one-party dominance in the state.

"That is one of the foundations of democracy -- competitive elections," he said. "And we see very few of them so that's unfortunate because it means the public doesn't benefit from those debates, it means the politics tends to be less transparent because everything is decided behind closed doors."

Carroll says he knew challenging incumbent Schatz was going to be an uneven battle, but he felt like he had to try and wouldn't let the money scare him.

"I have 12 great grand children and I'm looking at their future and the future of this state and I figure, if I don't do this then I'm really a coward," he said.

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