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STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE, DECEMBER 4, 2001

The Big Apple's $69-million mayor

Bloomberg sets a record, spending $92.60 for each of the 744,757 votes he received

By TIMOTHY WILLIAMS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Billionaire political novice Michael Bloomberg spent nearly $69 million of his fortune in his successful bid to become the next mayor of New York City, campaign finance records show.

The Republican's campaign was more expensive than any other self-financed campaign in the nation's history.

In the five weeks leading up to Election Day, Bloomberg spent $28 million — double the $14 million spent by his Democratic rival, Public Advocate Mark Green, during the entire campaign.

Documents filed late yesterday afternoon with the Board of Elections showed Bloomberg spent $68,968,185.

"It's an astronomical number," said Rachel Leon, executive director of the public interest group Common Cause, which tracks campaign spending. "It breaks all previous records that we know of."

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ADVANCE FILE PHOTO
Mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg

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Spend

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To put the Bloomberg expenditures into perspective, Texas billionaire Ross Perot spent $62 million on his failed bid for president in 1992 — about the same figure spent by Wall Street multimillionaire Jon Corzine, who won a Senate seat from New Jersey last year.

The old spending record for a campaign in New York state was set last year, when Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton and Republican Rick Lazio spent a combined $69.3 million in their U.S. Senate race. Bloomberg and Green spent a combined $83 million.

Bloomberg, the owner of a financial information company, paid for the campaign entirely with his own money. He declined to take part in the city's campaign finance system, which would have provided him public funds with strict spending limits.

Bloomberg had no immediate comment yesterday, but in the past he has made no apologies for his spending.

"If somebody wants to go out and take their own money to try to make the world a better place, I can only tell you my hat is off to them," he said during the campaign.

Bloomberg, who spent $92.60 for each of the 744,757 votes he received, takes office Jan. 1 as the successor to Rudolph Giuliani.

Giuliani, whose endorsement of Bloomberg is credited with helping the billionaire win the election, was barred by the city's term limit law from running for a third consecutive term.

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