

# Van Drew

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advantage of the system and illegal immigrants.”

Van Drew said more has been done with ethics reform statewide in the last two years than in the previous decade. He criticized Republicans for saying the political system needs reforming, but noted they have done little with ethics reform.

“Those guys will speak about ethics reform and they’ve done virtually nothing,” Van Drew said.

He pointed to reforms by the Legislature making the budget process “more transparent” than it has ever been in New Jersey. “Christmas trees” or pet projects funded by state money must be done

through a resolution and be sponsored by a state legislature.

“The whole budget process is more transparent. The legislators’ votes are going to be online in the state of New Jersey. They never were before. There are minimum penalties that were passed for corruption and fraud,” Van Drew said. “If you get lobbyists’ money, you have to report it and the lobbyists have to report it.”

Van Drew said he sponsored legislation forbidding gifts from lobbyists.

“If you want to buy dinner or lunch or go on a trip, pay for it yourself. You can even pay for it out of your campaign fund if it’s campaign-

related or government-related. Don’t take gifts from lobbyists,” Van Drew said.

Regarding stem cell research, Van Drew voted to put the issue on the November ballot so voters could decide whether to bond \$450 million for establishing two campuses in New Jersey for studying embryonic stem cell research.

“I think that God gives us the ability to make our lives better. If we believe that we shouldn’t use our brains and we shouldn’t use science, we would never advance and make life more compassionate for people,” Van Drew said.

Van Drew supports the promise of stem cell

research.

“There is a fiscal issue. I believe the good is so overwhelming in this case that even though we can’t afford it, I believe we need to do this,” Van Drew said. “This is something we should bond for.”

He also supports the ideas of civil unions, but doesn’t want to define it as marriage.

“I believe that the actual sacrament of marriage is something that is for a man and a woman. However, I believe legally and contractually that gay couples should have all the rights that men and women do as well,” Van Drew said.

Noting businesses have left the state, Van Drew said he’d

like to see incentives to get businesses to relocate to New Jersey.

He also wants to hold the executive branch accountable for cutting the budget instead of looking to taxpayers for revenue. He said the governor should reduce the number of nonessential employees of the executive branch within four years by 10 percent which Van Drew said would save \$500 million.

Van Drew also advocates a Constitutionally-mandated “Rainy Day Fund” where money would be saved.

“During the Whitman years we were going through the greatest economic expansion in the history of the United States of America. Revenues

exceeded what they expected. They spent it all,” Van Drew said. “Constitutionally, you should have to put that money away.”

Van Drew advocates a 4 percent cap on governmental spending in the state to mirror spending caps instituted on schools and municipalities.

“It’s going to hurt. It’s going to be hard,” Van Drew said. “I think we need to empower the state comptroller to go through department by department. There are duplicative functions and bureaucracy that could be cut back. There always has been too much bloat.”

# Spending

Senator Nicholas Asselta, voted for, Albano said even though he voted for the budget, both he and Van Drew oppose the sale or leasing of toll roads.

Albano said the monetization plan would be a “huge issue after the campaign.”

“The governor has a plan. Nobody knows what it is. We

don’t know what it is. It’s a plan on what he intends to do to raise revenue and fix budgets and roads and to get some of the funding for the DOT (Department of Transportation).” Albano said.

Albano called illegal immigrants “a huge problem” and noted the killings of three students in Newark by illegal immigrants in August points to real dangers that some have about those in the country illegally.

“Immigration has always been a problem because the people look at it that we are educating their children, paying for their health care and doing a lot to subsidize these people and they’re not doing their share,” Albano said. “That’s why it’s become more of an issue than ever.”

Albano said the federal government should enforce immigration laws.

“We’d like to see the federal government take the initiative and have the states follow their lead,” Albano said.

Milam said he’s learned how to cut costs with his business. He said he asked vendors who do business with his

trucking company for a 10 percent discount for

their services. In exchange, the vendors would be paid within 20 days. Milam said he was able to save his company more than \$250,000 annually by making his vendors partners and paying them quicker.

“I want to take that concept to Trenton,” Milam said. “You don’t need to raise money. They have enough coming in. It just needs to be spent smarter. You can do this. You make people doing business with the state partners with the state.”

Milam said the executive branch can save the taxpayer’s money by re-negotiating contracts. He advocated reducing the state workforce through attrition and retirement but not through layoffs. Offering incentives for early retirement is one way to accomplish this, he said. Milam said he would never layoff state workers.

“That’s people’s livelihoods. I was raised never to mess with people’s livelihoods,” Milam said.

Albano said the Legislature should find ways to reduce property taxes. He said the state government should cap its spending.

He noted if municipal spending is capped at 4 percent, why not state spending?

“What gives the state government the right to tell municipalities they have to cut their spending without the state doing it? The state has to put a cap on their spending,” Albano said.

Albano also wants the state to reduce its workforce in the executive branch by 10 percent over the next four years. He said the size of state government has grown by over 25 percent over the last decade and should be cut through attrition and retirements. He said each department should cut wasteful spending.

“You can’t tax the people in this state any more than they’re being taxed. We are the highest taxed state in the country. This has to come to an end,” Albano said.

He called the re-opening of the Beesley’s Point Bridge, a privately-owned span linking Cape May and Atlantic counties via Route 9, a “Cape May County issue.”

The bridge’s owners received \$900,000 in 1997 to repair the bridge. Years later, the bridge’s owners admitted the bridge was not repaired, leading to its closure. State and county representatives have wrangled over who should repair the bridge and whether it could re-open. The bridge is seen as a vital emergency evacuation route.

Under a tentative agreement between Cape May County and the DOT, the Cape May County Bridge Commission would operate the span as a toll bridge. The state would fund a portion of renovations with the county and pledge to keep the bridge open for 15 years. It would cost \$20 million to rehabilitate the bridge.

“We have a responsibility as the state to re-open that

bridge,” Albano said.

“It’s only important to Cape May County. When you have people from north Jersey who hear we want to spend millions to fix and open a bridge that connects one small highway to one little town like Ocean City, they say no way. South Jersey is the forgotten part of the state.”

Albano said New Jersey should create incentives such as tax abatements for enticing businesses to relocate here.

“I think we have to be more business friendly. We are known as probably the most unfriendly business-oriented state because of the amount of taxes on businesses,” Albano said.

Both Albano and Milam oppose a referendum for the state to borrow \$450 million to establish centers for studying embryonic stem cell research over the next 10 years in New Jersey.

Though Albano called stem cell research “the future” and a “huge business in the country,” he said the state should not invest money at this time. “The state has to prioritize what is important to the taxpayers of this state: property taxes, health care, education and senior care. How can we take a half a billion dollars and ignore the important things that are wrong with this state?” Albano said.

Albano said he supports adult stem cell research but opposes research on embryonic stem cells.

“I don’t want to see them in the future start growing

babies in templates so we can have stem cells we need. There are other ways we can achieve stem cells,” Albano said.

Milam, who is also opposed to embryonic stem cell research, said he only favors medical research with results.

“I don’t like paying for research. I like paying for more result-oriented things. If it was a cure I could see funding it,” Milam said.

Both Democrats say they support the concept of civil unions for gay couples but do not favor calling it “marriage.”

“Morally I was taught all my life that marriage was a sacred thing done under the eyes of God between a man and a woman. It was a special name put aside for the joining of a man and woman together,” Albano said.

Albano and Milam also favor ethics reform for government officials and ending dual office holding, which prevents state officials from being mayors or county representatives.

“When you take this oath for any public servant job or any political job where you represent people and break that trust you are committing the worst crime you can do because those people put their faith and trust in you and you betrayed them,” Albano said. “They should make penalties so severe it would make even the worst criminal think twice about doing anything with corruption.”

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