



DECISION 2008 **NEW JERSEY GENERAL ELECTION GUIDE**

PROMOTING THE AWARENESS OF KEY ISSUES SURROUNDING ADDICTION
PREVENTION, TREATMENT, AND RECOVERY PROGRAMS

GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

- RECOVERY VOICES COUNT
- POINTS TO SHARE AND QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES
- CANDIDATES FOR SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
- ELECTION FAQ'S

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

- VOTING AND THE DISENFRANCHISED
- ACCESS TO TREATMENT
- INSURANCE PARITY
- CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND TREATMENT FOR ADDICTED OFFENDERS

IMPORTANT GENERAL ELECTION DATES



OCTOBER 14, 2008

Last day to register to vote for the November general election.

OCTOBER 28, 2008

Last day to apply for an absentee ballot application by mail. (For information on how and where to obtain an absentee ballot, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section of this guide.)

NOVEMBER 3, 2008

3 p.m. deadline for obtaining an absentee ballot application in person at the County Clerk's Office for the general election.

NOVEMBER 4, 2008

General Election Day. Polls open 6 a.m. until 8 p.m.

You may also access this guide free of charge, along with candidate survey responses and other election related information, at NCADD – NJ's Website: <http://www.ncaddnj.org>.

2008 NEW JERSEY GENERAL ELECTION GUIDE

The [2008 New Jersey General Election Guide](#) represents the non-partisan efforts of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – New Jersey (NCADD – NJ) to identify key issues affecting addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery programs, and to educate the public about these issues.

NCADD-NJ works in partnership with and on behalf of individuals, families, and communities affected by alcoholism and drug dependence to promote recovery through excellence in prevention and treatment. The agency's expertise has contributed to the creation of laws and public policies that promote recovery, eliminate discrimination, and remove systemic barriers that impede ready access to treatment.

The agency is also dedicated to reducing the stigma surrounding the diseases of alcohol and drug addiction. Mistaken beliefs about addiction being a moral failing or character flaw circulate throughout the community as well as through the government. These misconceptions have proven a formidable barrier to the implementation of programs to address addiction and prevent addicted individuals from seeking and receiving the treatment they need.

As New Jersey's 2008 General Election draws near, voters and candidates might want to contemplate how addicted individuals have been stigmatized and consider pursuing sound public policies that recognize addiction for what it is: a preventable and treatable disease. Educated voters are one of the most important means of pursuing such policies. NCADD-NJ was chosen to participate in the national Recovery Voices Count campaign, an initiative that focuses on voter education as well as voter registration and a get out the vote effort. The campaign is described at length on the following page.

The 2008 New Jersey General Election Guide highlights some important issues pertaining to prevention, treatment of and recovery from alcoholism and drug dependence. Please be aware of the issues brought forth in this guide and remember to vote on Election Day. For additional information, please visit Decision 2008 on NCADD – NJ's Web site, www.ncaddnj.org.

RECOVERY VOICES COUNT

Growing numbers of recovery community organizations and recovery advocates across the country are getting involved in nonpartisan voting activities so that their voices can be heard in the local, state and national arenas. They are conducting voter registration, education, and participation activities, sponsoring candidate forums and getting candidates for political office on record about critical policies that will make recovery a reality for even more Americans.

This year The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - New Jersey (NCADD-NJ) / Friends of Addiction Recovery - New Jersey (FOAR-NJ) will lead New Jersey as one of ten states selected by Faces and Voices of Recovery (FAVOR) in its Recovery Voices Counts Campaign.

This Campaign anticipates raising the profile of the recovery community as an organized constituency that is engaged in our state's civic life. The Campaign is also part of a national movement to make recovery possible for even more family members, friends, and neighbors by building recognition of the recovery community as a constituency of consequence.

As recovering individuals are registered, educated, and encouraged to vote in growing numbers, they will become a political force to advance policies affecting people who still need help with their addiction or who have faced stigma during their recovery. For more information or to register to vote, visit www.recoveryvoicescountnj.org.

POINTS YOU CAN SHARE WITH CANDIDATES

- Addiction is a public health issue and impacts people of all walks of life. One in three New Jerseyans have a family member with a drug or alcohol problem.
- Thousands of people in New Jersey are in recovery and leading productive lives. People in recovery are an organized constituency of consequence, and vote. They also have friends, family members, and allies that vote.



QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CANDIDATES:



Do you know someone who is in recovery or has been affected by addiction?

Do you agree that addiction is a preventable and treatable disease and public health issue, or do you believe that addiction is a moral issue, social issue, or a criminal issue?

VOTING AND THE DISENFRANCHISED

An issue closely tied to the policy shifts seen in the area of non-violent crime is restoring the right to vote of people with criminal convictions. The “war on drugs” has disenfranchised a significant portion of citizens who have the disease of addiction. More than five million Americans are prohibited from voting as a result of an indictable conviction. Seventy-four percent of these individuals live in and are active members of their communities.

In New Jersey, individuals on probation or parole for an indictable offense are not permitted to vote for the

duration of their sentence. More than 98 thousand disenfranchised probationers and parolees are currently deprived of the right to vote in the state.

Congress has the authority to standardize rules in federal elections and should act to ensure voting fairness. People on probation or parole for an indictable offense who live in their communities deserve the right to vote, which is a foundation of citizenship.

POINTS YOU CAN SHARE WITH CANDIDATES

- ❑ Disenfranchisement laws affect a growing population. Given that 80 percent of prisoners have extensive substance use histories, disenfranchisement laws have dramatically impacted those with the disease of addiction. Many individuals on probation or parole have been rehabilitated and productively contribute to their communities.
- ❑ The number of people released to the community from New Jersey prisons in 2002 was nearly four times the number released two decades ago. Denying the right to vote to millions of people who live in the community, work, and raise their families undermines emerging policies that are designed to assist reentry.
- ❑ Voting promotes public safety because people who vote are more likely to feel connected to their communities and therefore avoid criminal acts. Research shows consistent differences between voters and non-voters in rates of subsequent arrest, incarceration, and self-reported criminal behavior. In a study published in the Columbia Human Rights Law Review in 2005, it was found that, between 1997 and 2000, 16 percent of non-voters were arrested, compared to 5 percent of voters. For persons with a prior arrest, the analysis of the data indicates that 27 percent of non-voters were rearrested, compared to 12 percent of voters.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CANDIDATES:

Do you believe Congress should act to standardize rules in federal elections and restore the right to vote to people with felony convictions who have either finished their sentence or are on probation or parole?

Once a person with a felony conviction demonstrates they have been rehabilitated, should their right to vote in federal elections be restored?



ACCESS TO TREATMENT

Most New Jerseyans erroneously assume that treatment is readily available. According to the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), approximately 23.6 million people were in need of addiction treatment. Of these, 21.1 million people did not receive treatment. Currently, four out of five Americans who need drug and alcohol addiction treatment are unable to get it.

The lack of access to quality care has been well documented in New Jersey. The New Jersey Division of Addiction Services reports more than 21,000 people who sought addiction treatment in 2007 could not access it as a result of limited capacity.



POINTS YOU CAN SHARE WITH CANDIDATES

- Addiction is a preventable, treatable condition. Research shows that addiction treatment works and saves billions of dollars. Addicted patients have compliance rates comparable to, or better than, patients who are receiving treatment for other chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, and hypertension. For every dollar spent on treatment, society realizes a savings of \$7 arising from a reduced need for health care and mental health services, curtailed criminal activities and incarceration, and improved worker productivity.
- Untreated substance use disorders are a major health problem that impacts society on multiple levels. They cost our nation more than \$484 billion per year in health care expenditures, lost earnings, lower work productivity, overcrowded jails and costs associated with crime and accidents and broken families. Yet millions of Americans can not access the treatment and recovery services they need.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CANDIDATES:



Will you support an increase in funding to ensure treatment and recovery services are available to all who need them?

Do you agree Medicaid should be flexible enough to finance those needed services for substance use disorders?

HEALTH INSURANCE PARITY

One way to expand treatment capacity is to provide health insurance parity. Parity requires health insurers to provide the same coverage for the disease of addiction as is offered for other illnesses. Parity saves both lives and money by ending the discrimination that exists in private health plans. It creates a fair environment in which appropriate health services, so crucial to combating America's drug problem, are accessible. Millions of people who seek treatment experience insurance discrimination, which means they have been denied life saving treatment.

In the current Congress, the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives passed different versions of federal parity legislation. A compromise was recently reached between the two bills, preserving many of the elements from the House legislation, which was the stronger measure in terms of patient protections.



POINTS YOU CAN SHARE WITH CANDIDATES

- Health insurance parity will help put an end to cost-shifting from the private sector to the public sector for mental health and addiction treatment, which occurs when insurers deny or limit care. This cost-shifting has the effect of exhausting scarce public resources. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), taxpayers now pay for more than three-quarters of all treatment, while private insurers are only paying 10 percent, resulting in the public sector having to assume billions of dollars in addiction care costs that should be covered by the private sector.
- A study of the Vermont Parity Law found that overall spending for mental health and addiction treatment actually declined by as much as 8 to 18 percent in the first two years after the parity law took effect. A SAMHSA study evaluating parity for federal employees found that mental health and substance abuse insurance benefits have been expanded without increasing costs and also resulted in less out-of-pocket expense.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CANDIDATES:

Should health insurance providers be permitted to reject or limit treatment for addicted individuals?

Do you support efforts to have addictive illnesses treated like heart disease, cancer, and other physical illnesses for insurance purposes if doing so would mean ending day and visit limits for addiction care?



CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND TREATING ADDICTED OFFENDERS

The link between substance use and criminal activity is well documented. Approximately 80 percent of prisoners have extensive substance use histories. Many violated drug or alcohol laws, were under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time they committed their crimes, stole property to buy drugs, have a history of substance use disorders, or share some combination of these characteristics. Despite high levels of substance use disorders, relatively few prisoners receive drug treatment while incarcerated.

The Second Chance Act reauthorizes (but does not appropriate funds for) \$300 million in grant programs to facilitate successful reentry. No resources will be available until Congress votes to allocate

funding for the Second Chance Act. The Second Chance Act is designed to reduce recidivism by coordinating reentry services and criminal justice policies at the federal, state, and local level. The law, if funded, will help connect people released from prison and jail to mentoring programs and mental health and substance abuse treatment services, expand job training and placement, and facilitate transitional housing and case management. The law authorizes funding to implement or expand drug treatment programs as an alternative to imprisonment and provides for substance abuse treatment for incarcerated individuals. It also requires states receiving federal funds to provide residential substance abuse treatment for state prisoners to provide aftercare services.

POINTS YOU CAN SHARE WITH CANDIDATES

- Each year, approximately 650,000 inmates are released from prison. Within three years of their release, an estimated two-thirds of them are rearrested. In contrast, of those who graduated from Drug Courts in New Jersey, only 15 percent were rearrested within three years of completing the program.
- Despite the drug war's \$40 billion annual cost, drug use in the United States has not decreased. America's mayors, along with law enforcement officials, are pushing for a new approach that puts the emphasis on treatment and alternatives to prison.
- Drug Courts hold nonviolent drug offenders accountable for their actions and offer effective treatment services under the close supervision of a specially trained judge and court team. A study conducted by The Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center, "To Treat or Not to Treat: Evidence on the Prospects of Expanding Treatment to Drug-Involved Offenders," shows:
 - \$515 million (of which only a fraction is federal) is spent annually on 55,000 Drug Court participants, yielding a substantial reduction in crime and more than \$1 billion in annual savings;
 - Treating all eligible arrestees would cost \$13.7 billion and return benefits of about \$46 billion. This approach would save taxpayers \$3.36 for every dollar invested.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CANDIDATES:

Do you support an increase in federal funding for Drug Courts so they can potentially admit an estimated 1.47 million nonviolent offenders?

Do you agree with the mayors and law enforcement officials' approach emphasizing treatment as an alternative to jail?



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

❑ WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

If you are a United States citizen of the age of 18 or older, a resident of New Jersey for at least 30 days prior to the election, and a registered voter, then you are able to vote.

❑ HOW AND WHEN DO I REGISTER?

In order to be able to vote in a New Jersey election, you must register at least 29 days prior to the specified election date. To register, you can visit www.recoveryvoicescountnj.org. You can also register in person through your Municipal Clerk or County Commissioner of Registration. Registration can also be completed by mail, by obtaining an application from the Municipal Clerk, the County Commissioner of Registration, public libraries, public assistance offices, or the motor vehicle agency, and returning the specified form 29 days prior to the next election.

Note: You *must* re-register to vote if you have had a change of address or name since the previous election.

❑ WHERE DO I VOTE?

The locations for polling places are printed on the sample ballot mailed to all registered voters one week prior to the general election.

❑ WHAT TYPE OF IDENTIFICATION IS NEEDED AT THE POLLING PLACE?

New Jersey does not require voter identification in order for registered voters to vote. A voter's signature, however, is required before a vote can be cast.

❑ HOW DO I JOIN A POLITICAL PARTY?

You can join a political party by voting in the primary election or by obtaining and completing a party affiliation card from the Commissioner of

❑ HOW AND WHERE DO I APPLY FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT?

Registered voters who cannot vote in person during the specified election date may obtain absentee ballots from the State of New Jersey. Absentee ballots may be picked up at the County Clerk's Office no later than 3 p.m. the day before the general election. Absentee ballots may also be obtained via the New Jersey Division of Elections by calling (609) 292-3760 or by visiting their website at www.state.nj.us/state/elections/forms_doe.html#forms. Reasons for applying for an absentee ballot include:

- absence from the State of New Jersey on the date of the election;
- illness or physical disability (including pregnancy);
- observation of religious holiday, resident attendance at school, college, or university; or
- nature of employment that prevents one from voting during polling hours.

❑ CAN I CHANGE PARTY AFFILIATIONS?

Yes, you can change party affiliations by obtaining a party affiliation card from the Commissioner of Registration and returning it at least 50 days prior to the primary election.

❑ DO I GET TIME OFF TO VOTE?

Private businesses are not required to give time off for employees to vote on Election Day. State employees in New Jersey are given the day off to cast their ballot. Registered voters who are unable to vote due to the nature and hours of





MAJOR PARTY CANDIDATES FOR SENATE &

UNITED STATES SENATE

Frank Lautenberg (Democrat) *
P.O. Box 960
Cliffside Park, NJ 07010

Richard Zimmer (Republican)
P.O. Box 225
Colonia, NJ 07067

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Rob Andrews (Democrat)
P.O. Box 327
Haddon Heights, NJ 08035

Dale Glading (Republican)
P.O. Box 38
Barrington, NJ 08007

SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Frank A. LoBiondo (Republican) *
P.O. Box 550
Vineland, NJ 08362

David Kurkowski (Democrat)
P.O. Box 2391
Cape May, NJ 08204

THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Chris Myers (Republican)
28 Knotty Oak Drive
Medford, NJ 08055

John Adler (Democrat)
61 Cameo Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08008

FOURTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Chris Smith (Republican) *
P.O. Box 3184
Hamilton, NJ 08619

Joshua Zeitz (Democrat)
P.O. Box 560
Bordentown, NJ 08505

FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Scott Garrett (Republican) *
P.O. Box 905
Newton, NJ 07860

Dennis Shulman (Democrat)
P.O. Box 3
Demarest, NJ 07627

SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Frank Pallone (Democrat) *
P.O. Box 3176
Long Branch, NJ 07740

Robert McLeod (Republican)
226 Maple Place
Keyport, NJ 07735



SEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Leonard Lance (Republican)
P.O. Box 5240
Clinton, NJ 08809

Linda Stender (Democrat)
P.O. Box 730
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

EIGHTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Bill Pascrell (Democrat) *
441 9th Ave.
Paterson, NJ 07514

Roland Straten (Republican)
P.O. Box 43254
Monclair, NJ 07043

NINTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Steven R. Rothman (Democrat) *
P.O. Box 714
Hackensack, NJ 07602

Vincent Micco (Republican)
452 Riverside Avenue
Rutherford, NJ 07070

TENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Donald Payne (Democrat) *
P.O. Box 2406
Newark, NJ 07114

No Republican Challenger

ELEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Rodney Frelinghuysen (Republican) *
P.O. Box 826
Morristown, NJ 07960

Tom Wyka (Democrat)
P.O. Box 350
Lake Hlawatha, NJ 07834

TWELFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Rush Holt (Democrat) *
P.O. Box 782
Pennington, NJ 08534

Alan Bateman (Republican)
7 Cross Brook Court
Holmdel, NJ 07733

THIRTEENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Albio Sires (Democrat)
P.O. Box 300
West New York, NJ 07093

Joseph Turula (Republican)
50 Christopher Columbus Dr., Apt. 2605
Jersey City, NJ 07302

* Incumbent



If you would like to receive additional copies of this election guide please contact us at:

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THINK ADVOCACY

Together There's Nothing We Can't Change

For more information on becoming a Think Advocacy Member visit us online at:
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