

D-Sen.

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license registry would have hurt the local economy.

"Marinas came to us, bait and tackle shops came to us. We were able to change the mindset of the DEP and the governor's office on that. We worked in a bipartisan way. We were the only state back then to have a fishing registry that was free. That helped our economy," Van Drew said.

Coordinating colleges and technical schools to produce jobs tailored to specific local employment is crucial, Van Drew said.

"We want to lock in the educational component that we're really producing people trained in the jobs that are needed. That means we have to combine the private and public sector," Van Drew said.

He said property taxes inhibit job growth in New Jersey, but he worked with Christie to trim business taxes "about a half billion dollars."

Van Drew supported the New Jersey Economic Opportunity Act of 2013, which was signed into law in September. The act consolidates five economic development incentive programs into two programs; the Grow New Jersey Assistance (Grow NJ) Program and the Economic Redevelopment Growth (ERG) Program. The New Jersey Economic Development Authority will administer both programs. The act offers broader incentives and tax credits for businesses locating to New Jersey. Each business or project must meet certain thresholds to qualify. The thresholds are reduced for businesses relocating to southern New Jersey counties.

Van Drew said the act is "south Jersey centric."

"We're really going to be able to compete more with

other states," Van Drew said.

He also supports Christie's proposal for a 10 percent tax credit to those who earn \$400,000 or less, capped at \$10,000 and phased in over four years.

"We're going to push for that property tax cut because that needs to be done. High property taxes disincentivizes people from being in the state of New Jersey. We need to look across the board in other ways we need to get the economy going," Van Drew said.

Van Drew also said he's taking aim at cutting redundancies of fees and red tape frustrating business growth.

"When a business needs to get something done, there's so many layers of bureaucracy to go through. Very often that's counterproductive," Van Drew said.

While his opponents paint him as a "Corzine Democrat" binging on taxing and spending, Van Drew said the comparison is unfounded.

"I don't necessarily want to be a good Democrat or a good Republican. I want to be a good New Jerseyan, a good leader and a good American," Van Drew said. "What we see in Washington today is the result that you get when you have hyper-partisanship... You have men and women who are serving who are more loyal to their political party than the American people. At times there are people in New Jersey in the State Capital who do the same thing."

Van Drew voted against state budgets for 2006-2007 and 2009-2010, while Corzine was governor. He voted for every state budget in the last four years during the Christie Administration.

He said he opposed sales tax hikes, room tax hikes, realty transfer taxes and Corzine's toll hike.

"We're taxed to death in New Jersey. We can't keep

taxing people the way that we are," Van Drew said.

Regarding gun control and firearms legislation, Van Drew, a self-labeled "Second Amendment advocate" and National Rifle Association member, supported a bill to amend the state's concealed-carry law to make it easier for residents to carry handguns following a background check.

He said violence and mental health are related, and recent instances of public shootings aren't the result of "sane gun owners."

"We have to really do more about gang violence, more about mental health and the drug war. That's what's driving the violence and the gun violence in this country and this state. It's not legal gun owners. They've had enough rights taken away from them," Van Drew said.

Van Drew said he voted against establishing a state-wide health insurance exchange under the National Care Act, or "Obamacare." He said the law would be "costly" and a "boondoggle."

Van Drew said he did vote for a public information campaign website to educate voters on the law.

"Whether you like it or not, we're stuck with it, so we might as well explain to the poor folks that are trying to navigate this thing and that they're forced into it," Van Drew said.

He said Democrats such as Howard Dean and labor unions also have concerns with Obamacare's implementation.

"The way it's structured, it's encouraging, in some cases forcing businesses to drop the number of hours that they employ their people. That's very unfortunate. We want people to have more opportunity, not less," Van Drew said.

He said some of Obamacare's changes are positive, such as allowing those 26 or under to remain on their parent's health coverage and allowing for coverage for pre-existing conditions.

Van Drew said the nation's infrastructure deserves higher priority and funding than creating new programs.

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the Cape May County Airport, Vineland Industrial Park and several downtowns in various municipalities.

"There are great downtowns that can really use that additional boost of having these businesses come in and compliment the services and businesses that are already there," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

Another proposal would be to establish a website to communicate the district's strengths to job seekers and try to entice businesses to relocate here.

"Those people who want to get jobs locally, there would be an information site for them to get that information. Part of that portal would be to roll out the red carpet for businesses who want to move into the district, give them a feel for the towns that are here, the talents that are here, the educational aspects that are here and the incentives that are here," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

She said the state should control taxes, or risk families leaving New Jersey. She favors Gov. Chris Christie's proposal to give a 10 percent income tax credit to those earning \$400,000 or less, capped at \$10,000 and phased-in over four years. Senate Democrats rejected the proposal, saying collected revenues fell short and haven't justified a tax credit.

"Once I get into the Senate, I want to see these pieces of legislation move forward so we can help to ease the property tax burden on our residents. We are losing population here, particularly in Cape May County. We're losing businesses here because we're not competitive with other states.... People just can't afford to live here anymore from a property tax standpoint and from a business tax standpoint," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

She said when Van Drew ran for state Assembly in 2001, he promised to bring jobs to the district and reduce property taxes. She said it's a promise he hasn't kept.

"Our property taxes have gone up 70 percent since he's been in the Legislature. It's important for people to realize when you're voting for someone, you're voting for a

mindset. After 11 years, he's demonstrated in his capacity as assemblyman and senator that he's going to continue to vote for new taxes and new fees," Adelizzi-Schmidt said. "I am the regular person who is trying to raise my family, raise two kids in the district, running a business in the district, and I think I am so representative of so many people who are just trying to live and stay here. With Senator Van Drew at the helm, he's making it very difficult for me to stay here as well as many other families."

In her conversations with various business owners, the topic of "burdensome fees" and bureaucratic red tape arose. She said if elected, she would work to streamline the regulations and reduce "nuisance delays" and "onerous fees" hampering business growth.

"It's alleviating all of this unnecessary regulation, all of these unnecessary hurdles," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

The Affordable Care Act, commonly known as "Obamacare," would cause "major changes" for businesses and employees, she said.

The law's individual mandate requires every American to have health insurance. The health insurance exchange marketplace allows consumers to purchase health insurance coverage online by comparing plans.

People should "tread carefully" and inform themselves of these health care changes, according to Adelizzi-Schmidt.

"It's not good for economic development and for businesses. I think a lot of businesses are looking at this very cautiously. They're already making changes in terms of probably not hiring employees or reducing the number of hours for their current employees," Adelizzi-Schmidt said. "It's the hand that we've been dealt. I'm not in favor of it, but it's the law of the land right now and we have to deal with it as small business owners."

A referendum on the November ballot seeks to set the minimum wage at \$8.25, a \$1 increase. The wage would be adjusted automatically to yearly increases based on the Consumer Price Index.

Adelizzi-Schmidt said although she's in favor of raising the minimum wage, she opposes tying it to the CPI.

"If it was just to increase it a dollar, I'd probably vote in favor of that. I think \$7.25 is a low wage. We need to be more competitive in terms of our minimum wage. Certainly the seasonal workers feel the brunt of that low wage," Adelizzi-Schmidt said. "The fact that it's tied to the CPI and the fact that we don't know eventually where this is going to end up makes this a flawed question."

A self-proclaimed advocate of "Second Amendment rights," Adelizzi-Schmidt said the issue of gun control frequently arises on the campaign trail. She met with gun owners throughout the district and even fired a shotgun at the Bayshore Gun Club in Lower Township.

"We have a lot of gun own-

ers, we have a lot of gun clubs. People enjoy the opportunity to be able to have their guns for recreational purposes," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

She said Democrats want to implement additional gun control while Republicans don't. She said she would evaluate each piece of legislation on its individual merits if elected.

On Sept. 27 New Jersey Superior Court Judge Mary Jacobson ruled the state should permit marriage for same-sex couples, citing a Supreme Court case which struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional. Jacobson ruled the state shall permit marriage between same-sex couples on Oct. 21.

Gov. Chris Christie said the voters, not the Legislature or courts, should decide the issue of same-sex marriage. Senate Democrats oppose the public referendum, saying matters of civil rights should not be decided by a public ballot. In 2012, Christie vetoed a bill legalizing same-sex marriage. Currently, New Jersey permits civil unions between same-sex couples.

Adelizzi-Schmidt said she supports settling the issue via public referendum.

"If we looked at this issue 10 years from now, it wouldn't be an issue. More states are adopting laws that are allowing for marriage between same sex individuals. My feeling on it is this: I think government shouldn't be making those decisions. I think people are smart enough to make the decisions for themselves whether or not they want to engage in a same sex or heterosexual marriage," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

The district's environment is a "fragile situation," a precarious balancing act between development and preservation.

"We know we have to preserve our coastline and our farmland. There's so many beautiful, pristine places we have here in our district," Adelizzi-Schmidt said. "Those areas that have been preserved enable us to have our tourist industry. It's so incredibly vital to our livelihoods right now."

Adelizzi-Schmidt said though the First Legislative District is geographically the largest, it doesn't receive the attention it should from Trenton.

"I think there is a culture that we have developed here that we accept because we're at the southernmost portion of the state that somehow we shouldn't be getting our fair share or that we should accept the fact that we have the highest unemployment in the state, that we should be getting other people's prisoners or we should accept a high crime rate. If there's one message I would fight for, it's to change that."

She blamed Van Drew's lack of leadership with stymieing any discernible change.

"You have to have the passion to enhance and change that mindset that we shouldn't be settling for what we have right now because it could be that much better if we had the right leaders in place," Adelizzi-Schmidt said.

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Bringing shining hope to homeless

On Oct. 15 STARS from Cape May County gathered for Family Promise's annual gala and in the process

brought Shining Hope to homeless families throughout the county. In addition to a gourmet food station, wine tasting bar, and dancing to the music of BLT, the STARS also took full advantage of a premier silent auction. Among the STARS who gathered at the spectacular Windrift Resort in Avalon were NFL great Dan Klecko, holder of three Super Bowl rings; NBC 40 Health Reporter, Robin Stoloff; author and inspirational speaker, Danny Bader; writer and performer, Mary Ann Castagnetta; "Philly Bill" Culp of the legendary WIBBAGE; and volunteer auctioneer, Roy Steinberg of Cape May Stage. Director Laurie Johnson reported that the event was an overwhelming success and especially wanted to thank the Windrift Resort for their continued support and hospitality. For more information about Family Promise and to learn how you can be one of our stars, call (609) 846-7862 or on the web: www.FamilyPromiseCMC.org.