Hal Wirths

Hardyston, New Jersey

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I've made the decision to run for the State Assembly on a ticket with incumbent Republican Assemblyman Parker Space in the 24th Legislative District. In doing so I will be taking a pay cut, because if elected I will give up my current employment with the State. Nevertheless, I feel very strongly that it is vitally important for **Sussex, Warren, and Morris Counties** to have the right legislative team in place to protect the interests of the people of northwest New Jersey.

As you may know, I served as a Sussex County Freeholder back when the Freeholder Board worked together to balance budgets and cut spending and debt. Making government run more efficiently was what we were about and we accomplished much. After Republican Chris Christie was elected Governor in 2009, I was asked to join his cabinet as the Commissioner of Labor.

Working with a lot of good people, we were able to reform the operations of the Labor Department and put it on the right financial track. We got the Department solvent again and ensured that New Jersey's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund,would be able to meet the new and great demands placed on it in the aftermath of the Great Recession.

Now New Jersey is leading the nation when it comes to combating unemployment insurance fraud. Using common-sense approaches, we have been able to stop nearly $700 million from being taken from the Trust Fund and recover more than $100 million from those who have collected unemployment benefits improperly. These measures will ensure that the Trust Fund remains solvent for years to come.

We eliminated a $213 million federal tax hike that New Jersey employers were facing in January 2014.

Due to the growing health and solvency of the Trust Fund, New Jersey employers have realized $380 million in tax relief – the largest single unemployment tax reduction in modern New Jersey history.

It is all about team work because it takes the political muscle of a region to get things done in Trenton for the benefit of that region. If we face the nightmare scenario of a liberal Democrat occupying the Governor's office next year along with continued Democrat control of the Legislature, we are going to need the strongest team of conservative legislators to represent us. We are going to have to fight day in and day out for our shared conservative values and against Trenton's liberal progressive agenda which is at odds with the needs of the residents of our region to maintain livelihoods, grow businesses, and create jobs.

Our first task will be to fight the Democrats and preserve the tax cuts won for us by Senator Steve Oroho: The end of the estate tax will prevent small businesses and family farms from being broken up to pay the tax collector. The cut in the tax on retirement income means that it will now make financial sense to remain in New Jersey after retirement and stay close to family. There is a new income tax deduction for veterans and there are the cuts to the sales tax for consumers and a tax credit for low wage-earners. And we must continue the implementation of the business tax cuts Senator Oroho championed in 2011 and keep them from being eliminated.

I will stand with our county and municipal officials and work with them to ensure that our communities here in northwest New Jersey continue to receive local property tax relief, whether it is in the form of state and federal funding for road and bridge maintenance and repair, 9-1-1 System Trust Fund, or the Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief Fund. Along with other forms of county and municipal aid, every dollar we get from Trenton is one less we need to raise locally through property taxes.

Speaking of money from Trenton, it is time that rural and suburban counties like ours get our fair share of the revenue derived from the state income tax. Fair School Funding legislation has been proposed by Steve Oroho in the Senate, Parker Space in the Assembly, and has been discussed by Governor Christie and some of the Republicans running to succeed him this year. The liberal mainstream media and the Democrats used to argue that we were taking money away from poor children in urban areas, but that argument doesn't cut it anymore. Over a decade ago the State Supreme Court's Doyne Report showed that half of the state's economically distressed children lived outside the urban *Abbott* districts that get most of our income tax revenue for education spending. Studies by the Brookings Foundation show that since the Great Recession, rural and suburban poverty growth has outstripped that of urban areas. It is time to get beyond the stereotype and help all children in need, regardless of where they live.

Of course, if liberal Democrats take over all the reigns of state government unchecked, adding more gun control laws to New Jersey's already draconian laws will

be front and center. Funding for Planned Parenthood will be in their first budget. I am proudly pro-gun and pro-life and will work with Senator Oroho and Assemblyman Space to protect the constitutional rights of all New Jerseyans, born and unborn!

Finally, we need to preserve the fine work of our District 24 legislative office. It is a source of comfort to thousands who are trying to negotiate the intricacies of government and provides a helping hand to come to grip with a citizen's problem and get it resolved. After serving on the Governor's cabinet for seven years, I want to add my weight to shift the bureaucracy and resolve our residents' concerns in their favor.

I look forward to meeting every one of you personally during the campaign, and I humbly ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Hal Wirths

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