



21st District News New Jersey's Tax Crisis and Looming 'Exodus Crisis'

Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, Westfield

During the past three months, I have been told many stories concerning our wealthiest citizens. New Jersey's highest earners are rapidly changing their primary residence because of the on going barrage of new and higher taxes being launched from Trenton.

Hedge fund executives, who do most of their business by telephone and online, have declared their utter contempt with this latest assault from Trenton and are executing their plans to relocate their residence. These individuals will continue to maintain a second home in our state, but will pay their taxes to another state.

It is incumbent upon our governor to immediately ask the Legislature to reduce some of the onerous taxes. The historic argument that it is cheaper to live in New Jersey versus New York no longer holds water.

Below find some real examples of high earners who will soon no longer pay substantial taxes to our state:

A New Jersey financial leader making \$50 million, a longtime resident of New Jersey, has announced to friends that he is changing his domicile.

A New Jersey money manager, who

has offices in both New Jersey and New York, had kept records to avoid onerous New York taxes on days he did not visit his New York office. The difference is now so minimal he no longer keeps the records and simply pays New York's taxes. The approximate income of this person is \$15 to \$20 million.

We are also all aware of the average working families and their exodus from our state. How many of us have heard the conversation, "...I can't wait to retire so I can move out of this state, these taxes are 'killing' me." Many people do not even have the option of waiting until retirement, they are being forced out by the wasteful spending habits of those elected to protect them.

During this special session, the governor must call for across the board income tax reduction, even if only by 1 percent, and cut spending by billions as outlined in the Republican Anti-Tax plan. He must also put a hold on the \$500 Million of "pork" from this year's budget.

We have a crisis and mission control better respond quickly before New Jersey's government realizes that tax revenues are rapidly descending.

By GOP Freeholder Candidate Glenn Mortimer Checks and Balances at the County

The American system of government relies on checks and balances. The founding fathers saw government service as a noble calling. They did not envision it as a money making opportunity, but as the chance to help one's fellow citizens. It was something that was to be done in addition to one's regular occupation. The founding fathers were themselves a collection of farmers, lawyers, merchants and others. They were not career politicians. Government officials are to do what is best for the general public. The system of checks and balances helps to ensure that this is done.

What is the price we pay for not having proper checks and balances?

Sometimes it is when elected officials sell their influence or votes. This leads to unfair completion which adversely affects the public. Lately, behavior like this has kept U.S. Attorney Chris Christie very busy. Democrat power broker John Lynch is just the latest New Jersey politician to be sentenced to prison.

Sometimes it is the misuse of public funds. An example of this is Sharpe James

Vets' Memorial Gala

Set for November 30

HOLMDEL — The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation's Salute to Patriotism gala will be held on Thursday, November 30, at 6 p.m.

Governor Jon Corzine will be recognized for his service in the United States Marine Corps Reserve (1969-1975). Other honored guests will include New Jersey veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gala supporters may "Sponsor a Veteran" by donating a table or ticket to a volunteer, active duty military personnel and/or wounded New Jersey National Guardsmen who will be in attendance.

Money raised from the event will be used to provide educational programming provided at the Memorial and adjacent Vietnam Era Educational Center. Tickets are \$300 per person, or a table can be purchased for \$2,500.

For more information call (732) 335-0033 or visit www.njvnmf.org.

recent trip to Rio. This may have not been illegal but was certainly unethical and imprudent during the last days of his administration. Another example is the all-Democrat Union County Board of Freeholders trip to a convention in Chicago. The Union County delegation was more than twice as large as any other delegation from New Jersey. The trip has already cost the taxpayers nearly \$19,000 with one third of the expense accounts still to be submitted. This was certainly not illegal, but it was not fiscally prudent.

Sometimes it is in the form of a person receiving a promotion or raise for the purpose of padding their pension. An example of this is when former Governor Codey's brother received a job and a \$40,000 raise from the all-Democrat Union County board of Freeholders. He was on the job for one year and his pension increased \$12,000 annually for the rest of his life. Again this action was not illegal, but once again it was not fiscally prudent.

Sometimes it is public officials holding more than one public job. Sharpe James was the classic example of this. At one time he was the highest paid public official in America, when all his salaries were added together. Congressional candidate Linda Stender has a full-time position with Union County's Ruml's hospital and is an assemblywoman. There is nothing illegal or even unethical about this. The question remains how many full-time and near full-time jobs can one person perform effectively?

Sometimes it is a situation where a public employee benefits using information that is not available to the general public. Examples of this include the recent Union County Sheriff's sale of three luxury autos for \$300. Nothing illegal was done, notice of the sale was properly placed in the sheriff's office. The problem is how many people pass through the sheriff's office looking for auction notices? Wouldn't it be better to require the sale to be advertised?

Union County needs a system of checks and balances. My running mates and I pledge to act in a fiscally responsive and ethical manner, and to bring checks and balances to Union County.



SMG OPENING...Summit Medical group formally opened their 250,000 square-foot medical facility in Berkeley Heights. Pictured at ceremonies, left to right, are: Berkeley Heights Mayor David Cohen, SMG Board Chairman Jeffery LeBenger, SMG Exec. Dir. Andrew Mintz and Union County Freeholder Bette Jane Kowalski.

By GOP Freeholder Candidate Patricia Quattrocchi Kowalski Avoided Concert Switch Issue

Freeholder Vice-Chairwoman Bette Jane Kowalski's response to one of my commentaries in a local paper is more than a little puzzling as she appeared to be defending the county summer music events as if that was what I had written about. Did she miss the point of my musings? It certainly appears that way.

First off Freeholder Kowalski can rest assured that I am not in the habit of lurking around reading other people's e-mails; however this was not a personal e-mail. The e-mail in question was just one piece of the public record pertaining to a performing artist switch, which was necessary for the Rhythm & Blues concert this past June.

The change necessitated an increase in costs for the event and this single e-mail appeared to be the only existing written record of any discussions, which may have taken place regarding the expenditure.

Democrats Kick Off Fanwood Campaign

FANWOOD - An enthusiastic group of local supporters, family members and elected officials, including Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr and Assemblyman Gerry Green (LD 22, Plainfield) gathered September 14 at the Sun Tavern in Fanwood to enjoy pizza and support Council President Donna Dolce and her Democratic running mate Dave Valian in their campaign for two seats on the Fanwood Borough Council in the November 7 general election.

Also attending the event were borough council members Joe Higgins, Kathy Mitchell, Jack Molenaar and Joan Wheeler. For more information about the Committee to Elect Dolce and Valian, visit www.fanwooddems.com or call Bill Populus at (908) 789-7577.

of additional taxpayer dollars. Ms. Kowalski put her request for eight VIP passes to the event in the e-mail, and I merely pondered just who the beneficiaries of the taxpayers' largess were. She has since indicated that she attended the event with four family members and that they brought their own refreshments. It is certainly very nice that they spent quality time together, but, that still leaves the eight passes floating around somewhere. By not mentioning them in her letter to the editor I am sure that by now others are curious to learn where they ended up and how they too can qualify to be a VIP at a county taxpayer-funded event.

Secondly I did not criticize the concerts taking place, nor indicate in any way any opinion of how seriously Ms. Kowalski or any other elected county official for that matter viewed their responsibilities or how hard they believed that they worked or how well they believe that they provide the services that they see as necessary. So I fail to see what was slanderous about my comments. Like anyone else I am entitled to my opinion regarding the various special privileges our elected officials on all levels appear to afford themselves, their friends and their families.

During these times when wasteful spending by government, increased taxes, bloated budgets, inflated pensions, over-staffing, no show jobs, hiring unqualified family and friends, bending the rules for buddies and mismanaging funds is all over the news those who are sitting in these positions would do well to make sure that their actions are on the up and up and that they are not taking advantage of their positions. They should make a special effort to remember that there is a little guy out there who is struggling to foot the bill and who deserves a fair shake.

Union County News

County Benefits by Attendance at 'Free' Concerts Like MusicFest

By Bette Jane Kowalski
Union County Freeholder

Congratulations to all who participated in Union County's MusicFest on Saturday, September 16. The music was fabulous, the atmosphere was congenial, and the thousands of people in the audience looked like they were having a great time.

The day began with Roman Candle, then Mike Peters and the Alarm. By the time the Fab Faux came on at 4, the crowd was growing, and singing along to the familiar Beatles tunes. LaBamba and the Hubcaps got many people dancing, and Southside Johnny's singing got a big hand. The evening ended with the well-known songs of Cheap Trick, and fireworks, literally.

Some critics of the Board of Chosen Freeholders who attended our meeting on Sept. 14 expressed opposition to our approach to MusicFest and other free concerts. Patricia Quattrocchi (who is running for freeholder on the Republican line) said she didn't think Union County should make information about the concert available to people who don't live in our area. She questioned the need for a shuttle bus from the train station to Nomahegan Park.

Maybe Ms. Quattrocchi has not noticed, but Union County benefits when people come to visit us from out of town. When people come here for a concert,

they eat in our local restaurants and shop in our local stores.

They see what nice towns we have here in Union County, and they often plan to come back here - on a short-term or even a long-term basis. Quite a few of our residents have origins in New York and other places outside New Jersey.

To imply in any way that we wouldn't want to bring people from "outside" reflects the sort of closed, xenophobic mentality that we cannot afford in Union County. The Board of Chosen Freeholders promotes an open, inclusive approach of welcoming new residents and new businesses to our county.

Especially now, when we are looking for every possible way to attract new enterprises and give the voters some property tax relief, we cannot afford to ignore the benefits that tourism can bring.

We welcome all who attended MusicFest. And please check our website (www.ucnj.org) for listings of our upcoming activities - including next Sunday's Harvest Festival at the Trailside Museum.

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Smart Wines From Everywhere at Every Price

ALDERBROOK OLD VINE ZINFANDEL 2003 \$16.99

In a perfect world every cheeseburger made with cheddar would come with a glass of this. All bright and zesty, with lovely peppery spice and violet notes, it just melts into your palate. Tons of blackberry and blueberry fruit and enough acidity to make it food friendly. A real steal.

MARA DOLINSEK RANCH OLD VINE ZINFANDEL \$41.99

No place on earth produces better Zin than the Russian River Valley. Old vines yield less and produce more intensity. This over flows with black raspberry, chocolate and dark cherry. Perfectly structured and balanced, you could do almost anything with this. A buffalo steak, a piece of prime rib, or some rich black forest cake topped with cherries.

MARAMONTE SYRAGE Lot #7 \$13.99

This is what we continually ask for from California wine and only rarely get. An amazing blend of three grapes that grow well in the climate and compliment each other in the bottle. Petite Sirah, Syrah and Petite Verdot. Plums and dark red fruit, spice and a little earth. This is a winner, and a clear staff favorite. Give it about a 30 minute and it will blossom.

Your Favorite Wines

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------|
| Blackstone Merlot | \$8.99 | 750ml |
| J Lohr Chardonnay | \$10.99 | 750ml |
| Simi Chardonnay | \$12.99 | 750ml |
| BV Coastal Cabernet/Merlot | \$7.99 | 750ml |
| Hess Select Chardonnay | \$9.99 | 750ml |
| Toasted Head Chardonnay | \$10.99 | 750ml |

Your Favorite Value Wines

| | | |
|---|---------|------|
| Mondavi Coastal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay | \$16.99 | 1.5L |
| Beringer Founders Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay | \$15.99 | 1.5L |
| Woodbridge Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay | \$10.99 | 1.5L |
| Vendange Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay | \$6.99 | 1.5L |
| Fetzer Cabernet/Chardonnay | \$12.99 | 1.5L |
| Cavit Pinot Grigio | \$11.99 | 1.5L |
| Walnut Crest Cabernet | \$8.99 | 1.5L |
| Cesari Pinot Grigio | \$10.99 | 1.5L |
| Bolla Soave | \$10.99 | 1.5L |
| Beringer White Zinfandel | \$8.99 | 1.5L |
| Franzia Burgundy/Chablis/Chianti | \$10.99 | 5L |
| Carlos Rossi Burgundy/Chablis/Paisano/Sangria | \$8.99 | 4L |
| Opici Homemade Barbarone | \$11.99 | 4L |

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Wine Of The Week Laughing Jack Shiraz 2003 \$29.99

The Barossa Valley is Australia's Napa. Black pepper and plum tones, eucalyptus and cedar. Like in Napa, sometimes in Barossa, the wine can be too much. This keeps its' dignity and balance. The rich black fruit lingers with the spice and it invites the last great grilled steak of the summer.

Your Favorite Cordials

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|-------|
| Baileys | \$17.99 | 750ml |
| Romana Sambuca | \$17.99 | 750ml |
| Kahlua | \$15.99 | 750ml |
| Southern Comfort | \$13.99 | 750ml |
| Amaretto Di Saronno | \$18.99 | 750ml |

Your Favorite Vodka

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|-------------|---------|-------|
| Absolut 80 | \$32.99 | 1.75L |
| Ketel One | \$34.99 | 1.75L |
| Grey Goose | \$26.99 | 750ml |
| Smirnoff | \$19.99 | 1.75L |
| Stolichnaya | \$30.99 | 1.75L |
| Sky | \$24.99 | 1.75L |
| Wolfschmidt | \$13.99 | 1.75L |
| Gordons | \$14.99 | 1.75L |

Your Favorite Scotch

| | | |
|----------------------|---------|-------|
| Dewars White Label | \$29.99 | 1.75L |
| Chivas Regal | \$53.99 | 1.75L |
| Johnnie Walker Black | \$56.99 | 1.75L |
| Johnnie Walker Red | \$29.99 | 1.75L |
| Clan MacGregor | \$16.99 | 1.75L |

Your Favorite Whiskey

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|--------------|---------|-------|
| Jack Daniels | \$35.99 | 1.75L |
| Jim Beam | \$24.99 | 1.75L |
| Seagrams 7 | \$15.99 | 1.75L |

Your Favorite Gin

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|-------|
| Bombay Sapphire | \$34.99 | 1.75L |
| Tanqueray | \$30.99 | 1.75L |
| Hendricks | \$27.99 | 750ml |
| Beefeater | \$28.99 | 1.75L |
| Gordons | \$14.99 | 1.75L |
| Seagrams | \$15.99 | 1.75L |

Your Favorite Rum

| | | |
|----------------|---------|-------|
| Captain Morgan | \$24.99 | 1.75L |
| Bacardi Silver | \$19.99 | 1.75L |
| Bacardi Gold | \$19.99 | 1.75L |
| Malibu | \$23.99 | 1.75L |

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