



Gloucester  
County **Times**

## County GOP backs Sabrin for Senate

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MANTUA TWP. The votes are in and Gloucester County Republicans are backing Murray Sabrin in his run for U.S. Senate.

Sabrin, a professor of finance at the Anisfield School of Business, beat out Joe "Jersey Joe" Pennacchio, currently a state senator from Morris County.

Saturday, the two faced off at the Sewell Fire Co. in a debate on topics facing New Jersey and the nation.

Both Sabrin and Pennacchio came out firing against the No Child Left Behind program.

"The cost of education has skyrocketed because of the unfunded mandates Washington and Trenton put on local school districts," Sabrin said. "What we need is to let teachers be teachers."

Sen. Pennacchio said the NCLB program was born out a feeling of frustration and lack of spending accountability in providing quality education to students.

"New Jersey, quite frankly, does a good job, but there's a lot of places that here and in this county don't," Pennacchio said.

The Senator said the government really never put its money where its mouth is when it came to funding the programs it mandated.

To combat the rising costs of health care, Pennacchio said he wants to implement a detailed plan to allow citizens to pick and choose who their insurance provider is on their own, unencumbered by state or federal regulations.

"Open it up to free market forces," Pennacchio said. "The reason Pennsylvania is cheaper is there's different rules and regulations. I'm a big boy; let me make that decision for myself. Everyone is responsible, they can make that same decision."

Sabrin said doctors should be allowed to be medical practitioners. He pointed toward instances where physicians rebelled against HMOs by having cash-only practices as means to reduce health care costs.

"If we just continue on the same course we're on, health care costs are going to bankrupt America," Sabrin said. "That means young people will have to spend half their income on taxes just to fund Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security."

On the topic of homeland security, Sabrin calls for a mobile force to make sure our borders secured "in case there's terrorists somewhere lurking around that may threaten us."

"If we had border security before 9/11, we wouldn't have had 9/11," Sabrin said. "Somehow, some way, people who were on the watch list got through and our national defense failed us."

Pennacchio lost friends during the 9/11 attacks and could see the smoke rising from ground zero from his Morris County home.

"It's disingenuous to say we have to fight the war on terror and then not give the security people we put in charge the tools to do that," Pennacchio said. "If it requires a standing military, that's what it requires. If it requires overt or covert military actions, then that's what it requires."

At the end of the debate, delegates from Gloucester County voted on their endorsement of who would take a run at longtime incumbent Democrat Frank Lautenberg's seat in the Senate.

Voters statewide will have a chance to choose between Sabrin and Pennacchio in the June 3 primary.

"We have a very good opportunity to take Frank Lautenberg's seat," county GOP chairwoman Loren Oglesby said.

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