



Candidates face off in the 21st Assembly District

Republican Brian Curran challenged by newcomer, Democrat Travis Bourgeois

By MARY MALLOY
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Republican Brian Curran, a lifelong resident of Lynbrook, is seeking re-election to a New York State Assembly seat in Nassau County's 21st District. Democrat Travis Bourgeois is challenging him.

The 21st Assembly District includes Lynbrook, Rockville Centre and parts of Baldwin, East Rockaway, Franklin Square, Freeport, Hewlett, Malverne, Oceanside, South Hempstead and West Hempstead. It is a two-year term.

The incumbent

Herald: What are you most proud of during your most recent term in the assembly?

Brian Curran: On the legislative side, I'm most proud of sponsoring the Veterans' Buy Back Bill that would allow veterans, who are municipal employees, to purchase service time based upon their military service. This was particularly satisfying due to the fact that Gov. Cuomo had vetoed the legislation on two prior occasions.

Additionally, I am extremely proud that I, along with the Nassau Assembly Conference, was able to secure a record amount of state aid to Nassau County schools in each of the past two years, as well as pass into law one of the largest middle-class tax cuts in New York State history. On the local side, I am continually appreciative of my staff's efforts in helping constituents on issues ranging from post-Sandy relief, immigration issues, municipal services and so much more.

My office currently has over 250 active constituent files open. Additionally, I was proud of the fact that this past year my office held the first annual Run for Heroes (5K race), which raised more than \$30,000 for the veteran houses in Lynbrook, Malverne, East Rockaway and Rockville Centre.

Herald: What issues are most important to the constituents of the 21st Assembly District?

Curran: The top three issues to the residents of my district are taxes, education and ethics reform. With New York again leading all states in interstate migration, which means that New Yorkers are leaving New York State at a greater rate than any other state, Albany has to stop giving "lip service" to controlling spending and cutting taxes and start taking action that makes it more affordable to live and stay in New York State. With regards to education, parents in my district are still concerned with the ramifications of Com-

Brian Curran
INCUMBENT



REPUBLICAN

Political party: Republican, Independent and Conservative
Age: 47
Lives in: Lynbrook
Career: Partner at law firm of Nicolini, Paradise, Ferretti & Sabella in Mineola
Political career: Mayor, Village of Lynbrook, 2007-2010; Assemblyman from 2010 to present
Activities: Member of the St. Mary's Knights of Columbus, Lynbrook Elks Lodge, Ancient Order of Hibernians, basketball coach for Our Lady of Peace, Malverne Sons of American Legion, Oceanside Kiwanis Club
Family: Married, four children

mon Core in our curriculum. The Legislature still has to fight to ensure that changes are made to our educational system that will allow our kids to receive the best and most well-rounded education they can. Lastly, residents of the 21st Assembly District are demanding that true ethics reform happens in Albany to stop the corruption.

Herald: If re-elected, what would be your top priority?

Curran: If re-elected, my three main priorities will be to a) pass meaningful legislation that will eliminate or reduce costly mandates on our local municipalities, which drive up property taxes; b) to continue to fight for a state budget that allocates a fair share of state educational aid to Nassau schools, and c) push legislation that will seek to impose term limits on all

Travis Bourgeois
CHALLENGER



DEMOCRAT

Political party: Democrat
Age: 31
Lives in: Baldwin
Career: Election clerk
Political career: This is the first time that Bourgeois has run for a political office.
Activities: Legislative District Leader for LD 5; a judicial delegate and a committee member for the Democratic Party; Baldwin Democratic Club
Family: Tatjana Bourgeois (mother), Rose Bourgeois (grandmother), Kathy Budd (aunt) and Lawrence Budd (uncle)

state-elected officials.

Herald: Why do you believe you are the best individual to represent the district?

Curran: I believe that I am the best candidate for the 21st District because my only goal in this position is to work every day to make the lives of every person in my district better. By fighting to secure record school aid, passing middle class tax cuts and slowing property taxes by enacting the tax cap, I would like to believe that I am succeeding in making the lives of my constituents better while understanding that so much more needs to be and can be done.

The challenger

Herald: As a challenger, what attributes, talents or strengths do you think you will

bring to this position?

Travis Bourgeois: As someone who has grown up in the 21st assembly district, I understand the challenges that my constituents face. Having been raised by a widowed mother, I've seen firsthand how hard it can be to live on Long Island. Despite the difficulties she faced, my mother, as well as my aunt and grandmother, instilled in me a strong moral compass. I have always seen the need to help people and that is one of the major reasons I chose to run for this position.

Herald: What issues do you think are most important to the constituents of the 21st Assembly District?

Bourgeois: The two most important issues to the constituents in my area are taxation and ethics reform. In regard to taxation, the fact of the matter is that too much of our taxes are going to the state — and the state isn't giving back proportionally to us. This is the reason why many young people like myself cannot afford to live or raise a family on Long Island. This is especially true in Valley Stream, where the proposed PILOT agreement will increase property tax by 12.22 percent, and school taxes by 5.16 percent. On the matter of ethics, there needs to be more transparency in the state government so that corruption can be rooted out.

Herald: If elected, what would be your top priority?

Bourgeois: My top priority would be ethics reform. It would be to hire an independent commission to find where the problems of corruption stem from, and to work on fixing them. To that point I would also put forth legislation to stop pensions for corrupt officials and stop any pay until pending inducements are resolved. Although my opponent has put out litigation similar to this, it was only after former Sen. Dean Skelos (a close associate of my opponent) was convicted. I would also work on legislation to make committee minutes accessible online to create more transparency.

Herald: Why do you believe you are the best person to represent the district?

Bourgeois: I feel I am the best suited to represent this district because I have a good heart and I truly care about the constituents in my area and the problems that they face. Unlike my opponent, I will not pander to special interests, but instead I will actually work tirelessly towards the best interests of my constituents.