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Balles is the
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Republican Assembly incumbents John Amodeo and Chris A. Brown face two Democratic mayors, Nick Russo of Longport and Vince Mazzeo of Northfield. Neither mayor has statewide experience but both say they are hungry for it.

The competitive Second District includes Absecon, Brigantine, Margate, Mullica, Pleasantville, Somers Point, and Ventnor City. At its center is Atlantic City, home to a dozen casinos that provide jobs for 95,000 in the region, including ancillary businesses, and most of the county's tax revenue.

But the nearly \$3 billion gambling industry has struggled in recent years because of new casinos in Pennsylvania and New York. About 10,000 casino jobs here have been pared since 2006.

"District 2 [voters] seem ready to split their ticket between Chris Christie for governor and Jim Whelan for state Senate," said Daniel J. Douglas, director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Douglas said that in the 2011 Senate contest, Whelan beat his Republican challenger, Vince Polistina, by nearly 8 percentage points.

Undecided voters are expected to play a pivotal role on Tuesday. In the Oct. 22 Stockton poll of 626 likely voters, Whelan was leading Balles by 21 points, with 11 percent undecided in the Senate race. Among Assembly candidates, Amodeo was ahead, with the rest separated by two to three percentage points, and 15 percent undecided.

Here's where they stand on major issues.

Property taxes.

"Unquestionably, how to grow our stalled economy is our number-one priority," Whelan said at a candidates' round table sponsored by the Greater At Casino & Resort. "And the number-one complaint I hear related to that is over t

Five of the six candidates support reducing property taxes by 10 percent to help property tax relief including Christie's 10 percent income tax credit.

Mazzeo and Russo said shared services among municipalities was another wa

The economy. "Our government taxes too much," Balles said during a debate environment for business will bring back jobs."

Balles, 51, who became sheriff in 2008 after climbing the ladder at the Pleasan sheriff's department with a \$10.5 million budget and knows how to do more witt

Amodeo and Brown supported incentives to attract business, while Russo and to job growth.

Whelan, who turns 65 on Nov. 8, touted a pro-business, pro-development reco entrepreneurs can create jobs that pay a good wage with decent benefits," he s education, which has always been the ladder by which our poor have climbed c

Minimum wage. Raising the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.25 and installing index is a ballot question. Whelan, Russo, and Mazzeo all favor an increase tie

Amodeo and Brown support Christie's conditional veto of the minimum wage bi time, instead of all at once, and adjusted to changing economic conditions.

Whelan has accused Balles of wanting it both ways. On Tuesday, Balles said ir and Gov. Christie was right to veto the proposal on the ballot because tying the business, increases the cost of consumer goods, and makes New Jersey unco

Atlantic City. Republican Amodeo, of Margate, a semiretired crane operator, is Assembly Regulatory Oversight and Gaming Committee, he sponsored the me next month from servers housed at Atlantic City casinos. He views I-gaming as "Let's face reality," Amodeo, 63, said. "Gaming revenues are never going to be redefine ourselves.

"We need to create the environment where we have transportation from our air offseason is key to keeping our facilities busy and our venues going."

Amodeo has proposed a hotel tax holiday during off-peak months to attract mo neighborhood revitalization tax credit program to Atlantic City, and expanding tl so it can offer tax credits to businesses near the hubs.

His running mate, Brown, a lawyer from Ventnor, has worked closely with the n Assembly Tourism and the Arts Committee.

"Nongaming attractions are the key to the future," said Brown, 49, a former mu diversify how we attract different businesses through incentives."

Brown is a sponsor of the New Jersey Economic Opportunity Act, which revise better reflect regional differences in population and industry to benefit South Je

"I believe that my approach to government is a reasonable, commonsense app Brown said.

Mazzeo, 49, who runs a family grocery in Northfield, said the creation of the Atl along the Boardwalk to aid tourists, and better marketing by the Atlantic City Al

"I believe Atlantic City is the economic train for all of us in Atlantic County," Ma: elected officials need to work together."

Russo, 64, mayor of Longport since 2008, is a former Atlantic City police office. He teaches online criminal justice courses at the University of Phoenix.

He supports promoting residential or commercial development on the bay side tourist attraction, attracting more conventions, and making better use of Boardv

Russo supports the year-old tourism district, "but . . . we cannot look at Atlantic "Atlantic City is first a community district and then a tourism district."

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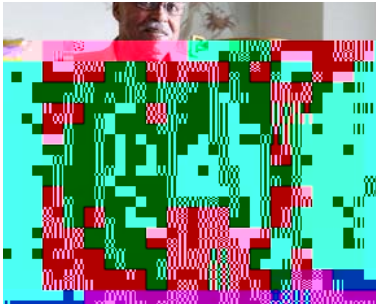
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