



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 11, 2021

New Jersey Senate President Steve Sweeney Concedes to Truck Driver in Upset Victory

New Jersey Senate President Steve Sweeney, a Democrat, [conceded on Wednesday](#) that he lost his reelection bid to truck driver and political novice Edward Durr. It was an upset victory that made headlines across the land and likely sets the stage for a dramatic Republican victory in the midterm elections in November.

Sweeney blamed his loss on a “red wave” that cost him the election. What really cost him the election was the 12,000 new voters who made their voices heard last Tuesday, erasing Sweeney’s lead and providing Durr with the additional 2,298 votes he needed to win.



AP Images
Steve Sweeney

Sweeney’s delayed concession, more than a week after the election and nearly a week after the *Associated Press* called the race for Durr, caused many to wonder if election fraud was afoot in New Jersey — that a recount would somehow miraculously rescue Sweeney from defeat.

But the four-percent margin was too much to overcome, and Sweeney, a long-time politician dating back 20 years and considered a major “power broker” in the state, finally conceded on Wednesday: “I, of course, accept the results. I want to congratulate Mr. Durr and wish him the best of luck.”

It wasn’t luck, unless luck is defined as the providential conjunction of the right man recognizing the right time and seizing the opportunity.

Durr says of himself:

I believe in God. I am hard working, trusting and very loyal. I believe in fiscal responsibility, transparency, and lower taxes ... We have taxed the people to the verge of death....

I also support the Second Amendment.

That second point is important. Back in 2015, an effort from Second Amendment supporters to remove Sweeney from office over his infringement of their rights failed. But his anti-gun record remained resonant with New Jersey gun owners.

It also helped that, after serving more than 10 years as president of the New Jersey Senate, he had accrued to himself a mantle of superiority. Said Durr:

It was the combination of a governor [Phil Murphy] who acts like a king, and a senate president who acts like a court jester and does nothing.

That made it very easy to convince people they were not being paid attention to. And when they got ignored, they got angry.



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Money didn't matter. Durr spent \$153 in winning the primary. In total, he spent between \$8,000 and \$9,000, compared to Sweeney's campaign spending more than \$600,000.

Because of his job as a truck driver for a local furniture company, he could only go door-to-door on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. On Saturdays and Sundays he walked six to eight hours — so much so that his feet hurt. Said Durr: "Trust me, plenty of days I did not feel like walking. It was too hot, my ankles and my feet hurt — I'm not a young man anymore [he is 58], and I have gout, and plantar fasciitis — it was a hard thing."

But it was worth it:

It allowed me the opportunity to talk to every person I could possibly talk to, and understand what they were feeling, and get the pulse.

Durr takes positions that warm the hearts of conservatives. He calls himself a "constitutional conservative" and advocates for cutting taxes — income, corporate, state, and property. He says that "abortion is wrong and should be stopped" and is a supporter of Texas-style "heartbeat" laws.

He's also a fan of conservative media: "I watch a lot of Greg Gutfeld, Newsmax and One America." He listens to Dan Bongino and Steven Crowder. He watches Mark Levin's *Life, Liberty and Levin* on Sunday nights.

The main issue in the campaign was rights, said Durr:

The main issue was rights. People talk about how New Jersey has the highest taxes, and we're the worst state for business, with high debt, and so on.

But the bottom line is rights. It's family.

When someone is messing with your family, you'll do anything. The governor was messing with people's families. When you mess with somebody's job, their livelihood, their home, their children — people just won't take that.

Durr tapped into the growing discontent among voters over what Democrats are doing to the country. With Republican victories in Virginia and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy's near-death experience thanks to an unknown Republican challenger, analysts, pollsters, and commentators are considering Durr's victory a harbinger for Republicans and a bad omen for Democrats a year from now.

As Durr himself noted:

It didn't happen because of me. I'm nobody. I'm absolutely nobody. I'm just a simple guy.

It was the people. It was a repudiation of the policies that have been forced down their throats.



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