

# The Save Jersey Blog

## Special Guest Op/Ed: "Christie Off to Great Start with Webber Selection"

Dan Gallic | June 11, 2009

In less than two weeks Chris Christie has won the primary, led by 10% in the polls and, now, chosen one of the state premier conservatives to lead the state GOP. Those of us who have been fighting for the heart and soul of the party against weak-minded, push-over, compromise-crazy liberals have to be pleased with this selection.

Just so that we understand the history of the State GOP Chairs, here is a list of the last forty years worth of them (courtesy of Wikipedia):

- 1974-1976: [Webster B. Todd](#)
- 1977-1980: [David A. Norcross](#)<sup>[19]</sup>
- 1981-1985: [Philip D. Kaltenbacher](#)
- 1985-1987: [Frank B. Holman](#)
- 1987-1989: [Bob Franks](#)
- 1989-1990: [Kathleen Donovan](#)
- 1990-1992: [Bob Franks](#)
- 1992-1995: [Virginia Littell](#)
- 1995-2001: [Chuck Haytaian](#)
- 2001-2004: [Joseph M. Kyrillos](#)
- 2004-: [Tom Wilson](#)

Consider that the state GOP chair has been in the hands of the Whitman/Todd faction of the party since at least 1985. Webber marks a fresh break from this trend. Has the establishment been officially thrown out? Christie's LG choice will make that definitive.

In 2001, Bret Schundler had the chance to name a chair that could remake the party, instead he choose Sen. Joe Kyrillos, his opponent's campaign chair. I have to guess that this might have been Schundler's greatest regret. Senator Kyrillos, who is a very nice guy, did not have the heart or time to lead the party and left after one term. In 2004, Tom Wilson defeated Dick Kamin in a close vote. Interestingly, when Kyrillos first took the job he appointed Bob Frank's, Schundler's primary opponent, campaign manager for State GOP Executive Director, Michael DuHaime. DuHaime has since gone on to be the RNC Political Director and most recently is the heading up the Christie Campaign.

Essentially the choice for chair gives an indication of they type of choices Christie will make, and even more importantly, the type of leadership the State GOP will enjoy over the next four years.

For those who do not know Jay Webber, he is defined by his pro-life, fiscal-conservative, Reganesque style, who first gained entry to politics by running a primary against the

greatest RINO who have ever graced the NJ Senate Chamber, Bob Martin. Martin makes Specter look like Gingrich. The nasty primary was punctuated by a bizarre moment when Martin's campaign manager screaming "LIAR" in the middle of a candidates forum because Webber defended himself against an attack formulated by Martin's political consultant, none other than the infamous Jamestown Associates, saying he didn't live in the district. Webber responded with a mailer in black and white with the word "LIAR" on one side and the proof of Webber's residence on the other. The mailer was crafted by Schundler's campaign manager Bill Pascoe.

Jay went onto win a grueling primary fight when an assembly seat opened up after Martin retired and Joe Pennacchio moved up.

Through each of these primary fights and general election wins, Jay has proved his mettle. He is indeed fit to lead this party and his selection marks a tremendous sea change for the State Republican Party, one that many of us have been waiting for, for many many years.