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Governor-Elect Chris Christie Names Experienced, Innovative Leaders to Head Education and Environmental Protection Efforts Christie appoints Bret Schundler to DOE and Bob Martin to DEP

Thursday, January 7, 2010

Tags: [Appointments](#)

Trenton, NJ – Today, Governor-Elect Chris Christie named two experienced, innovative leaders to execute the administration's vision on education and environmental protection. Christie announced Bret Schundler as Commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE) and Bob Martin as Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Schundler is the chief operating officer of The King's College in Manhattan, having previously served as an adjunct professor of public policy. Formerly the Mayor of Jersey City, Schundler championed innovative policies that became a national model for urban reform. Schundler's background is in sync with Governor-Elect Christie's commitment to urban education.

Martin brings to DEP extensive experience in all aspects of planning, business transformation and change management. He also helped direct Governor-Elect Christie's energy policy during the campaign and brings to DEP not only the strong background necessary to make the department run more effectively, but a firm commitment to putting the environment first.

Governor-Elect Chris Christie stated, "Education and our environment are critical to our state's well-being and economic future. It's time to change the way we approach these fundamental issues and I am confident that with Bret and Bob's strong credentials and innovative ideas, we will be able to enact meaningful change."

Bret Schundler, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education

Bret Schundler is the Chief Operating Officer of The King's College in Manhattan. Prior to his appointment as COO, he served at the College as an adjunct professor of public policy and was the Managing Partner of People Power America, LLC, which licenses TeamVolunteer, an online utility used by political campaigns and non-profit organizations.

At the age of 33, Bret Schundler became the first Republican since the First World War to be elected the Mayor of Jersey City, New Jersey – a community of 250,000 that is 65% minority and only 6% Republican. In 1993, he was re-elected with 69% of the vote, the largest margin of victory for a Mayor in that city's history. In 1997, he was re-elected in another landslide to become Jersey City's longest serving Mayor in 50 years.

In the years prior to Bret Schundler's initial mayoral election, soaring property taxes in Jersey City threatened residents with the loss of their homes. Unable to pay their bills, over one-fifth of property owners faced tax foreclosure. Property values were plummeting and property abandonment was surging. Jersey City was also leading New Jersey in job loss and unemployment and crime were sky-high. With an ever-increasing percentage of taxpayers in default on their taxes, Jersey City faced bankruptcy.

Bret Schundler's innovative policies, called a "national model for urban reform" by Time Magazine, reversed these trends. His policing policies reduced crime by over 40%. His tax cuts saved residents their homes. His pro-growth economic policies slashed unemployment. Indeed, during his tenure, Jersey City enjoyed ten times the job growth of New Jersey's five other largest cities combined and, according to a Harvard University study, led the 100 largest cities in America not only in job growth, but also in poverty reduction. By the time he left office, far from the brink of bankruptcy, Jersey City's property values had sky-rocketed and its tax collection rate had risen to over 99%.

Schundler credits these successes to his introduction of market mechanisms into the provision of public services. In his first full term in office, Schundler pioneered the securitization of property tax liens – an initiative that Investment Dealers Digest named one of the top financial innovations of the year in 1993. He also orchestrated the successful fight to pass charter school legislation in New Jersey and led Jersey City to becoming the first governmental entity in the United States to institute medical savings accounts. He then introduced business and neighborhood improvement districts to Jersey City and helped to coordinate a successful effort to de-monopolize garbage disposal in New Jersey. And towards the end of his first term, Bret Schundler implemented a public-private water utility partnership that was honored by the United States Conference of Mayors as the best public-private partnership in the country that year.

Similar achievements characterized Bret Schundler's second full term. He won a New Jersey Supreme Court ruling affirming a municipality's right to reassign police officers from desk jobs to street patrol, and a second Supreme Court ruling helping to preserve the appointment powers of the executive branch of government. He led Jersey City to structuring a unique public-private partnership to manage its libraries, opened one of New Jersey's largest charter schools, and built a spectacular school facility for a fraction of the per square foot costs being paid by local school

districts. Additionally, Bret Schundler raised almost \$1 million in scholarship money so that low-income Jersey City families could afford to enroll their children in the government or privately-managed school of their choice, and spearheaded three statewide efforts amongst New Jersey mayors: the first, to raise funds for the United Negro College Fund; and the second, to encourage community participation in organ donor programs; and the third, a successful effort to pass state legislation relating to property tax relief aid.

Nationally, Bret Schundler is also known as a promoter of ethnic and religious toleration. He was honored by the National Conference of Black Mayors for having one of the best programs in the country for promoting racial brotherhood. And he was awarded the prestigious Canterbury Medal for Religious Liberty after he won a United States Federal Court of Appeals decision (*ACLU v. Schundler*), written by now United States Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito, that protects religious expression in the public square.

Bret Schundler was born in Morristown and grew up in Woodbridge Township and Westfield, New Jersey. He was an All-State football lineman at Westfield High School, studied at the University of Haifa in Israel, and graduated with honors from Harvard University.

Bret and Lynn Schundler have a daughter, Shaylin, and a son, Hans Otto III.

Bob Martin, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Bob Martin retired in 2008 as a partner with over 25 years of experience with Accenture LLP. Accenture is the largest business & technology consulting firm in the world, with over 140,000 employees worldwide.

While Mr. Martin has extensive experience consulting to numerous types of businesses and industries, most of his consulting work has been in the utility and energy industry. He has extensive experience in all aspects of business and management consulting, including business strategy & planning, business transformation & re-engineering, IT strategy, systems implementation and change management. He also has extensive experience project managing large systems integration and business reengineering projects.

Bob also has extensive international experience. He lived in England for 5 years (1991–1995) and worked with several large UK water and electric utilities as the companies privatized and the markets deregulated. He also spent extensive time working with utility and energy companies throughout Europe and Canada.

Bob is also actively involved in the community. Bob ran unsuccessfully for State Senate in New Jersey's 15th District in 2007. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Finance Committee for the Mercer County Republican Committee. He has served as Chairman of the Salvation Army Advisory Board of Greater New York since January 2007, and currently serves on the Princeton Healthcare System Foundation Board. Mr. Martin served on the Board of Trustees at the Chapin School in Princeton, NJ, from 1996-2008, and on the Finance Advisory Committee for Hopewell Township, NJ from 2005-2007. He has been active in coaching youth soccer and lacrosse in Hopewell Valley for over 13 years.

Bob was a policy advisor to Chris Christie since Chris announced his candidacy for Governor in February 2009. Bob assisted the Governor-Elect in shaping and drafting the Governor-Elect's Energy policy and Environmental policy, in addition to most other policy areas. Bob has also advised several other U.S. Senate, Congressional and Gubernatorial candidates in other elections in recent years, primarily in energy policy.

Mr. Martin has a BA in Economics and Sociology from Boston College (1979) and an MBA from The George Washington University (1982).

Bob was born and raised in Massachusetts. He and his, Brenda, have lived in Hopewell Township for over 14 years. They have three children, Andrew (24), Sara (21) and Caroline (12). Brenda is a teacher at the Cambridge School in Pennington, NJ.

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