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Democrats Sweeney, Burzichelli, Riley win Third Legislative District seats

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Democrat incumbents in the Third Legislative District swept the vote Tuesday, keeping State Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney and Assembly members John Burzichelli and Celeste Riley seated in the legislature for another term.

Sweeney defeated Republican challenger Michael Mulligan, and the Democrat Assembly members beat newcomer Republican Dr. Robert Villare, of West Deptford, as well as incumbent Domenick DiCicco, a Republican from Franklin Township. DiCicco currently holds a Fourth District Assembly seat, but his town was moved into the Third District when the district map was redrawn earlier this year.

Sweeney, of West Deptford, finished with 25,004 votes — 14,365 in the Gloucester County portion of the district; 8,280 in Salem County; and 2,359 in the Cumberland County portion of the district.

Republican challenger Michael Mulligan, of Pilesgrove, finished with 11,541 votes in Gloucester County; 7,016 in Salem County; and 1,552 in Cumberland County.

“We have made enormously difficult decisions this year on pension benefits and health care changes,” Sweeney said. “We angered a lot of people, and this was a low turnout election.”

Burzichelli, of Paulsboro, ended the Assembly race as the top vote-getter, consistent with pre-election polling released last week by the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey which found Burzichelli was favored by 42 percent of voters polled.

Tuesday, Burzichelli finished with 24,882 votes — 14,155 in Gloucester County; 8,405 in Salem County; and 2,322 in Cumberland County.

Riley received 21,494 votes — 13,412 in Gloucester County; 7,838 in Salem County; and 2,414 in Cumberland County.

Villare received 20,518 votes — 11,985 votes in Gloucester County; 7,054 in Salem County; and 1,479 in Cumberland County. DiCicco received 20,185 votes — 11,751 in Gloucester County; 6,890 in Salem County; and 1,544 in Cumberland County.

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