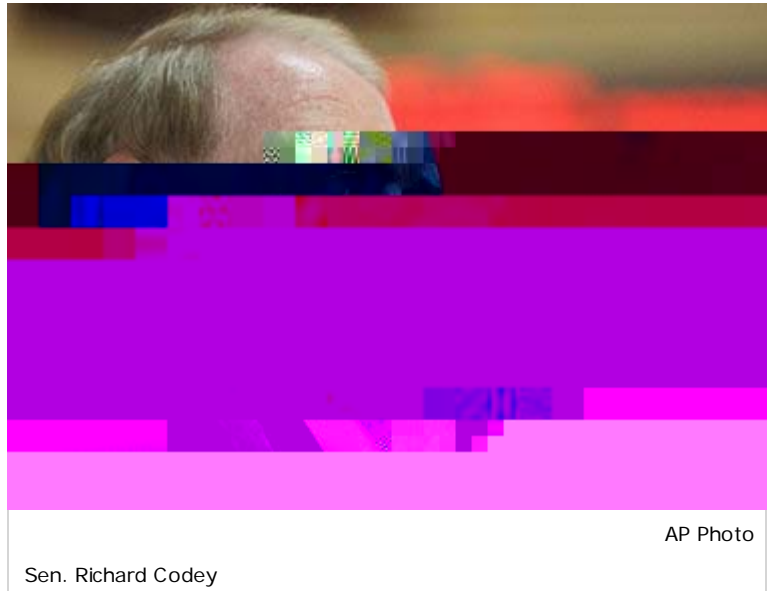




Everything Jersey

Op-ed: Crafty Richard Codey brings N.J. bosses back to reality



AP Photo

Sen. Richard Codey

Codey upped the ante last week when he came to the defense of Middlesex County State **Sen. Barbara Buono** who'd been dissed by party leaders and denied delegate status at the convention.

"This," Codey said, "is why someone needs to run against the machine."

The governor's alliance with Norcross, DiVincenzo and Aduato has never been hidden. He's appeared at numerous public events with them; they've been effusive in their praise of Christie and he of them.

The alliance has been bolstered frequently by Hudson County Sen. Brian Stack who routinely breaks ranks with his party and votes with Christie, including supporting two of the governor's nominees to the state Supreme Court — both of whom were rejected by the Democrat controlled Judiciary Committee.

While Codey's comments exposed a rift in the party, they'll have no impact on the November election. President Barack Obama has a comfortable lead in New Jersey, as does U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez in his re-election bid.

Codey could only be looking toward the gubernatorial and legislative election of 2013, suggesting the party's chances of retaining legislative control and re-taking the governor's office will be diminished if they are perceived as responding to "party bosses" rather than addressing the needs of their traditional constituencies.

Codey, of course, has been mentioned as a gubernatorial candidate, so his comments could be construed by some as an opening move to position himself as an outsider — ironic in light of his 38 years in the Legislature — but one unbossed and not indebted to regional or county power brokers.

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