

# THE NEW NORTH

This race pits incumbent Adam Ravenstahl against Republican Tom Fodi, although Fodi is a former Democrat and identifies as a Libertarian. The candidates have found common ground on several issues: Both are pro-life, and both support medical marijuana and same-sex marriage. But in a district encompassing parts of the city's northern neighborhoods and Lawrenceville, plus the suburbs of Avalon and Bellevue and portions of Ross Township, there is a varied swath of constituents to appeal to.

{COMPILED BY REBECCA NUTTALL}

CANDIDATE



BIOGRAPHY

A self-professed man of “many hats,” Fodi, of Bellevue, is an inactive officer in the U.S. Air Force, a minister at Emmanuel Christian Church and a business owner. His nonprofit, Liberty in Bellevue, is a community-advocacy organization championing greater transparency and accountability in government.

Two-term incumbent Ravenstahl, of Spring Hill, says elected office is in his “family’s blood.” But he’s often been criticized for ties to his brother, former Mayor Luke Ravenstahl. During his tenure, he says, Republican inaction in Harrisburg has been frustrating, but he’s focused his efforts on constituent services locally.

EDUCATION

Fodi isn’t as concerned with increasing funding for education as with looking more closely at how money is being spent. He says he would reconfigure the formula to ensure districts are receiving funding based on their needs, instead of being allocated the same amount year after year.

A strong ally of the teachers union, Ravenstahl aims to reduce class sizes and prevent teacher layoffs by increasing funding for education. One way he would increase funding is by closing the “Delaware loophole” that allows some businesses to avoid paying taxes.

LIQUOR SALES

According to Fodi, Pennsylvania is one of only two states that control liquor sales. Calling it a “wasted expense,” Fodi says liquor sales are “not something the state should be involved in.” He says privatizing liquor sales would bring much-needed revenue to the state.

While Ravenstahl doesn’t support privatizing liquor sales, he says he’d like to see a more modernized system that appeals to consumers. He says studies have shown privatization would “increase underage drinking” and could lead to the “proliferation of liquor stores on every corner.”

GUN CONTROL

With an endorsement from Firearm Owners Against Crime, Fodi is a “proud gun owner” and holds a conceal-carry permit. As a constitutionalist, he has vowed to uphold Second Amendment rights.

Ravenstahl supports a “common sense” approach to gun control. He recently voted to defeat a state measure that would have prevented local governments from passing their own ordinances to regulate firearms and ammunition.

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

Besides the firearms group, he’s been endorsed by the pro-life group LIFEPAAC. His cash on hand as of June was just shy of \$2,000, which included \$500 from Jim Roddey, the head of the county GOP. Fodi is also endorsed by the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

Ravenstahl has received endorsements from labor unions and education organizations, and his fundraising efforts reflect that. He’s also been endorsed by several fellow Democratic representatives. As of June, he’s raised close to \$20,000, more than half of which came from the steamfitters union.