

ANNOUNCEMENT SPEECH OF DARCY DRAEGER FOR NEW JERSEY STATE ASSEMBLY, 25 TH DISTRICT

First, I'd like to thank Congresswomen-elect Mikie Sherrill for being here today. In my opinion, what set Mikie apart from her challengers was her relentless focus on the *issues* that affect CD11 residents, and her message that there is more to unite than divide us. During her run, Mikie had a long-term discussion with voters about what she would "do" if she were elected to Congress; clearly her message landed, and now we get to see her leadership in action. I for one cannot wait.

Second, I'd like to thank Congressman-elect Tom Malinowski for his mentorship and support. I believe his commitment pragmatic, bipartisan solutions is the embodiment of good governance, and I believe CD7 could not have a more effective, talented leader to represent us in the House. He will do New Jersey, and the nation, proud.

While I served as Morris County chair for Tom's campaign, any success I had in that role is entirely due to the tireless and prolific efforts of the volunteers in our communities, who answered calls to action again and again—spending hundreds of hours knocking on doors, phone-banking, and chasing VBM ballots.

The determination and commitment on display throughout 2018 in both CD7 and CD11 exemplifies the best qualities of citizenship and civic engagement, and I am proud to have been a part of this, not only on behalf of Tom and Mikie, but in support of the excellent Clerk, Freeholder, and local candidates who ran as well.

Today, I am proud to stand here with Dr. Lisa Bhimani as we announce our bid for State Assembly. Lisa is an impressive person, and a formidable candidate. I met her in March 2017, at the first meeting of the newly formed Democratic Committee of the Chesters. Lisa, Tom Moran, and Richard Corcoran had just declared the formation of their Senate/Assembly ticket, and we were the first municipal group they spoke to as a team. Although her bid for office fell short, Lisa gave Senator Bucco the race of his career: when all the votes were tallied, Senator Bucco narrowly held on to his seat by only four points, a 52%-48% margin. If this is what Lisa could accomplish as a first-time candidate, in a race

few believed could be competitive, I cannot wait to see what we can accomplish together in 2019.

In closing, with regard to my own political vision, I believe we reach the best possible outcomes by listening to each other. I value teamwork, cooperation, and respectful, vigorous debate.

I have nearly two decades of financial services experience, with a focus on project and change management; business analysis; regulatory analysis and implementation; and risk analysis and mitigation strategies.

My mandate was to bring opposing viewpoints and competing priorities together into flexible, sustainable solutions agreed upon by all stakeholders.

I will leverage these skills to build common-sense, bipartisan policies that will benefit LD25 residents.

One of the reasons I am running for office is because I believe there is a positive role for government in our society. I believe, particularly at the state level, that government not only can, but must, be a bold source of investment and innovation.

in my view, New Jersey can lead the nation in public-private sector innovation, given our world-class workforce, the diversity of our industry, and our key location within East Coast and US trade markets.

I look forward to speaking with all of you at length over the coming year, so I can share more about myself, the policies Lisa and I want to advocate for, and to hear your visions and concerns for our communities.

Thank you all for joining us today at the start of our campaign. I appreciate the time you've taken to share this day with us, and I ask for your support going forward.