

The County's Changing Face Brings Political Challenges; Candidates Differ on Illegal Immigration, Growth Issues

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Body

Illegal immigration, traffic and the pace of development are among the top **issues** for both **candidates** in Prince William **County's** delegate race in District 52 this year.

The incumbent, Del. Jeffrey M. Frederick (R), said that he has offered strong solutions to each of the problems since taking office in 2004 and that seniority in the General Assembly will make him even more effective if elected to a third term.

Frederick said his crowning achievement was helping to push a law that requires the Virginia Department of Transportation to conduct traffic studies before housing developments can be approved. Frederick said he also has held the line against higher taxes and urged stricter measures against undocumented workers.

"There's so much to do, and I've delivered tangible results to the 52nd District," Frederick, 32, said. "I've also kept my promises."

Christopher K. Brown, a Democratic challenger who served one term as mayor of Dumfries and more than a decade on its Town Council, depicted Frederick as a "rigid ideologue" who has been ineffectual in addressing the **issues** of a fast-growing suburb. Brown also criticized Frederick for supporting the controversial and recently enacted abusive- driver fees -- a position Frederick disputes.

"I've seen so many broken things in these past few years," Brown, 51, said.

District 52 covers part of Prince William east of Interstate 95, as well as a swath of voters stretching westward along Dumfries Road. **Growth**, crowding and rapid suburbanization have also **changed** the **political** currents as the county has grown 27 percent since 2000 to more than 357,000 people, according to the Census Bureau. About 20 percent of its residents are foreign-born, and officials say many are **illegal**. A study last year found that the county spent at least \$3 million providing services to **illegal** immigrants.

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Both Brown and Frederick talked tough about **illegal immigration**, saying it was time that state and local governments step in to fix a problem that has worsened because of the federal government's neglect. But they **differed** on tactics.

Frederick would strip local governments of state funding for economic and transportation development if they allow **illegal** immigrants to receive public assistance.

"Virginia has made itself too inviting to illegals," Frederick said, criticizing in particular Fairfax and Arlington counties for offering "sanctuary" to **illegal** immigrants.

Brown said Frederick's proposal to cut state funding to localities that serve **illegal** immigrants would backfire in their home district.

"We would be the biggest group of people harmed the most," said Brown, who said he would push for fines of as much as \$10,000 per offense against employers who knowingly hire **illegal** immigrants.

"I believe that you attack it from the demand side," Brown said.

Frederick said several bills such as the measure requiring traffic studies for new development demonstrate his ability to work across party lines. Frederick said that when Brown was the mayor of Dumfries, Brown left a divisive legacy. "The guys who know him best are all supporting me," Frederick said. "I think that's a testament."

Brown, a certified public accountant who also served on the Dumfries Town Council from 1985 to 1998, dismissed his opponent's assertion.

"You're going to have **political** adversaries no matter where you go," he said.

Brown served as mayor from 1998 to 2002 in the town of about 4,800 people.

Frederick is chief executive of GXS Strategies, a small IT consulting company he formed in 1998.

Graphic

IMAGE

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