

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS** →

- <<< ABOUT
- <<< TAKE ACTION
- <<< POLICY REPORTS
- <<< POSITION PAPERS
- <<< CAPITOL TALKS
- <<< DECISION 2003
- <<< HOME

Click Here for  
More Information

**NCADDNJ.ORG**

**RELATED LINKS**

- [2003 Election Guide PDF Version](#)  
Download the pdf version of "At a Crossroads of Addiction Policy: NJ General Election Guide"  
<< [2003 election guide pdf](#) >>
- [NJ News](#)  
Collection of NJ newspaper articles concerning alcohol and drug addiction and related issues.  
<< [nj news](#) >>
- [In Action Photo Gallery](#)  
View pictures of concerned citizens and policy makers making a difference.  
<< [photo gallery](#) >>

# Candidate Response Form

**CANDIDATE SURVEY RESPONSES/RESULTS**

**Ryan Reyes (G), District 21, Assembly Candidate**  
37 Hilltop Ave.  
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922

**I. General Views of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Policies to Address Stigma**

There has been an increasing national dialogue about the nation's "war on drugs." In addition, studies have found that the stigmatization of alcohol and drug addiction persists and that the public acceptance of the "disease model" of addiction, though seemingly broad, is at the same time quite shallow.

**Indicate which principles you would agree with (if any) regarding your general views of alcohol and drug addiction and policies to address the stigma surrounding addictive illnesses by placing a check mark next to the statement(s) which correspond with your views.**

<b>X</b>	Alcohol and drug addiction are preventable, treatable, chronic diseases and are as consistently diagnosable as other illnesses such as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.
	Alcohol and drug addiction treatment are very effective and work as well as other established medical treatments for illnesses such as diabetes, asthma and hypertension
	On the issue of drug use, the nation and state should more heavily emphasize strategies of interdiction and prosecution, which aim to control the problem by reducing the available supply of drugs.



X	The nation and state should more heavily emphasize strategies that favor a public health approach to alcohol and drug addiction and target demand reduction activities, such as prevention and treatment.
X	The state should legalize: ___ all illicit drugs <u>X</u> marijuana ___ heroin ___ cocaine
X	The state should permit the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes.
	Other:

### II. Preventing and Reducing Youth Alcohol and Drug Use

According to the 2001 New Jersey Middle School Substance Use Survey – conducted by the state Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Addiction Services – New Jersey’s youth continue to use alcohol, marijuana, and other illicit drugs at rates that should alarm all concerned citizens in the Garden State. According to the survey, alcohol was the most frequently used substance by New Jersey middle school students, with nearly 45 percent of them reporting that they had used alcohol in their lifetime and 16% reporting that they had used alcohol in the past 30 days. The survey also showed that six percent of 7th and 8th graders reported marijuana use in their lifetime and three percent used it in the past 30 days.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning the prevention and reduction of youth alcohol and drug use by placing a check mark next to the statement(s) which correspond with your views.

	Increase taxes on alcoholic beverages in order to reduce their use by youth.
	“Zero tolerance” policies for alcohol and drug use.
	Drug testing for students involved in athletics and co-curricular activities.
X	Develop and implement a counter-marketing campaign that parallels current national anti-drug media campaigns that seeks to combat underage drinking and illicit drug use.
X	Conduct non-compulsory student surveys without the consent of a parent or guardian, as allowed for by federal law, to measure youth use and develop programs/policies.
	Other:

### III. Public Capacity for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment

In August 2001, the New Jersey Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Advisory Task Force found that about one-half (71,000) of those adults and two-thirds (9,400) of adolescents who demanded treatment for alcohol and drug addiction could not access it through the state’s treatment system due to limited capacity. By comparison, according to the most recent data published by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Addiction Services, in 2002 only 56,000 individuals in New Jersey were able to obtain treatment for their addictive illnesses.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning expanding public capacity for alcohol and drug addiction treatment by placing a check mark next to the statement(s) which correspond with your views.

X	Enact treatment on demand initiatives that aim to offer all those seeking publicly funded substance abuse treatment immediate entry into a program.
X	Appropriate additional alcoholic beverage taxes to expand treatment capacity (the state currently dedicates \$11 million of roughly \$93 million collected from these taxes to the Alcohol Education, Rehabilitation and Enforcement Fund).

X	Appropriate additional state general revenue to expand treatment capacity.
	Dedicate drug forfeiture funds to expand treatment capacity.
	Other:

#### IV. Private Health Insurance for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment

The New Jersey Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Advisory Task Force found in its 2001 report that the implementation of managed care has made access to treatment more difficult for privately insured persons with an addiction problem, as well as for privately insured families trying to secure access for family members. The Task Force also found that these experiences have led many privately insured persons and family members to seek access to publicly-funded services as an alternative.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning expanding private health coverage for alcohol and drug addiction treatment by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

X	Provide parity for alcohol and drug addiction treatment so that when an insurance plan includes such coverage in a contract, the contract must include both inpatient and outpatient treatment at the same level as for other medical services.
X	As part of the federal substance abuse block grant, require the state to establish an addiction treatment services ombudsman to assist consumers of addiction treatment services in navigating the private health plan appeals process.
X	Require health insurance providers to utilize a neutral assessment instrument such as American Society of Addiction Medicine – Patient Placement Criteria (ASAM – PPC) or Addiction Severity Index (ASI) for addiction treatment determinations.
	Other:

#### V. Criminal Justice and Treating the Addicted Offender

The New Jersey Department of Corrections reports that roughly 50 percent of the inmates in New Jersey were incarcerated as a result of a drug-related offense. Over 57 percent of these inmates were reported to have a moderate to extreme problem with drugs and/or alcohol abuse. In addition, approximately 85 percent of the current inmate population has a drug or alcohol problem. New Jersey's Juvenile Justice Commission reports that nearly 70 percent of the juvenile offenders who are currently part of residential and community-based rehabilitation programs have screened positive for alcohol and drug use disorders.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning the criminal justice system and the treatment of the addicted offender by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

	Support mandatory minimum sentences.
X	Expand Superior Court drug courts to all of New Jersey's counties.
X	State support for municipally based drug courts to intervene earlier in an offender's criminal behavior and drug use.
X	Allow first- and second-time, non-violent, simple drug possession offenders the opportunity to receive substance abuse treatment instead of incarceration.
X	Establish treatment of criminal offenders as a key part of the entire criminal justice system that encompasses incarceration, probation and parole.
X	Other: <b>Develop alternatives to the criminal justice system such as treatment program for alcohol and drug addiction.</b>

## **VI. Other**

On an attached page, in a total of seventy-five (75) words or less, please explain any other legislative priorities you will have in relationship to the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug addiction if elected.

New Jersey must be a leader in development and full implementation of a Single-Payer Universal Health Insurance plan with the right of Freedom of Medical Choice. Currently, an individual must either have health insurance as a benefit from employment, dependent, civil-marriage spouse or as a same- or opposite-sex partner through a domestic partnership benefits program which is taxed. Others are given limited benefits based on age or income from various government agencies or charitable organizations.