

## Breslin's Win or the IDC's Loss?

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The Independent Democratic Conference didn't have much luck in its one attempt to grow its conference this past Thursday. As Ken Lovett pointed out in his [column](#) today, nine-term Albany Sen. Neil Breslin destroyed challenger Shawn Morse. The IDC and its leader, Sen. Jeff Klein, sent the legal maximum contributions to Morse during his primary challenge.

Interestingly, the IDC's spokesman, Eric Soufer, attributed Breslin's win solely to the power of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's endorsement of Breslin. Note that Cuomo did not campaign for Breslin and only issued a press release. "It's a testament to the strength of the governor's endorsement," Soufer [told the Times Union](#). "Especially at a time when scandal is rearing its ugly head in Albany again, voters are going to rely on the endorsement of somebody that they trust. That person is clearly Gov. Cuomo."

But for political observers familiar with the landscape in Albany, it seems fairly clear that Breslin's win was simply Breslin's win. The Breslin family name is synonymous with Albany politics. Breslin's brother, Mike, served as Albany executive for years and his brother Thomas serves as a state Supreme Court judge. Breslin's overwhelming win likely has more to do with his years of institutional support and the backing of the local Democratic Party than it does with the weakness of the IDC, or the strength of Cuomo's endorsement.

However, the IDC's backing of Morse may have also hurt him more than their cash helped him. Breslin is seen in some ways as an Albany institution and Morse is part of the generally unpopular Albany County Legislature. Having outsiders who are associated with Republican leanings endorse the candidate running against said Albany institution was likely not a great thing for Morse. As much as Morse touted himself as a progressive, Breslin was able to paint himself as the trustworthy, familiar face running against an unpredictable outsider " just because the IDC inserted itself into the race.

Albany is a Democratic machine town with a growing progressive movement looking to unseat incumbents. Had Morse run without the IDC his candidacy may have played differently.

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*Photo of Sen. Neil Breslin, by Citizen Action*

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