

NORTH DAKOTA

Voters in North Dakota will elect a governor and treasurer this cycle. Forty-seven (47) out of the 94 house seats are on the ballot as well as 23 out of the 47 senate seats. The governor seat is open, and Republicans are expected to maintain control of this office as well as the legislative chambers.

Governor

Democratic Nominee

State Senator Merrill Piepkorn

State Senator Merrill Piepkorn (D) is the Democratic candidate for governor looking to replace Governor Doug Burgum (R), who opted not to seek re-election. Piepkorn has served in the state senate since 2016. He is the current Senate Assistant Minority Leader and has served on the Employment, Energy and Natural Resources, Finance and Taxation, Agriculture, and Human Resources Committees.

Piepkorn's campaign has named several priorities on the campaign trail including agriculture and energy, public education, small business, reproductive rights, and access to health care.

He supports expanding **housing** options, with incentives for developers to renovate and build housing in small towns. He also stressed the need to reduce North Dakota's workforce accident rate, which is currently one of the highest in the country.

Piepkorn does not believe in getting rid of property taxes in the state, but instead has encouraged freezing **property taxes** for low-income seniors over 65 and making the existing low income "cash back rebate program" automatic.

In terms of his **education** platform, he proposes providing school lunches for all children, keeping tax dollars for use by public schools, and offering enrollment incentives to keep campuses competitive with other states.

On the health care front, he is promoting mental health care and treatment for addictions and working with insurance companies to expand coverage.

Polling shows Piepkorn is behind his opponent, U.S. Congressman Kelly Armstrong (R), by at least 35 points. The Cook Political Report and Sabato's Crystal ball have rated this race as Solid Republican.

Trivia: Piepkorn is a musician with experience in radio broadcasting.