From: salem_update-bounces@lists.oregonstate.edu on behalf of Mills, Jock
To: CAS DeanStaff; CAS Unit Leaders; Salem Update Listserv
Subject: [Salem Update] March 11th candidate filing deadline sets theballots for May and November
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2008 12:21:18 PM
Attachments: Legislative Candidates May 2008 Primary.doc
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Tuesday, March 11th was the deadline for candidates to file for office in order to be on the May 20th primary ballot. (If you're not a political junkie, you may as well close this e-mail and move on to more productive endeavors. If you ARE a political junkie, I expect to hear from you regarding your prognostications regarding the 2009 legislative session.)

Yesterday, there was a rush of candidates filing for legislative seats as both parties sought to field candidates so that the opposition would not have "cakewalks" in the November election. Despite these efforts in both chambers many incumbents, and even some brand new candidates, face no general election opposition in November. For example, Representative Diane Rosenbaum is seeking to move over from the House to fill a vacancy in the Senate, and faces no primary opposition and no opposition in November. Nor will with winner of the Democratic primary to fill the vacancy created by Senator Avel Gordly's retirement.

When they convene next January, both chambers will also exhibit a significant degree of turnover. Of the 75 legislative seats up for election (60 in the House and 15 in the Senate) 21 races will involve candidates who are either filling open seats or who have never faced the electorate before because they were appointed to fill a vacancy. Of these, 15 are in the House (25% of the membership) and 6 are in the Senate (20% of the membership). If you consider "incumbents" to include those who have been appointed, then the percentage of open seats declines significantly. If none of the incumbents lose, the House will have at least a 17% turnover, while the Senate will see at least a 13% turnover.

In the Senate:

The Senate is considered relatively tame compared to the House.

The Democrats. Two Democrats are moving on to run for statewide offices (Brown for Secretary of State and Westlund for State Treasurer). Three other Senate Democrats are vying for Secretary of State – Avakian, Metsger, and Walker – but are all mid-term and will stay in the Senate in the event that they are unsuccessful.

Democrat Diane Rosenbaum faces no primary or general election opposition in her bid to fill behind Brown, while most analysts think Westlund's Central Oregon seat will fall into Republican hands. (Westlund was elected to that seat as a Republican but later evolved to an Independent and then a Democrat.) Two Democrats and two Republicans are vying to replace Westlund.

Although the Democrats may lose Westlund's seat, they will technically pick up the seat currently held by NE Portland Independent Avel Gordly who is retiring. Two Democrats are battling in the May primary to fill that seat – Representative Jackie Dingfelder and Gordly's aide, Sean Cruz. No Republican filed, so the winner in May

has a cakewalk in November.

Democrat Mike Hass who was appointed to fill a vacancy created by Ryan Deckert's resignation will face a Republican opponent in November -- Lisa Michaels, a "community access producer" who ran unsuccessfully for the legislature in 2000.

Portland incumbent Ginny Burdick faces Republican John Wight whom she defeated four years ago.

Five Democrats – Verger, Rosenbaum, Carter, the winner of the Dingfelder and Cruz race, and Monnes-Anderson will face no Republican opposition in November. General election cakewalks give party organizations more flexibility to funnel money toward the hotly contested races.

The Republicans. Senate Republicans have but one cakewalk – Doug Whitsett in Klamath Falls. Nevertheless, Republican incumbents Kruse and Atkinson are expected to win their races. Atkinson's opponent, Richard Koopmans, has lost twice in House races against Republican Dennis Richardson. Kruse's opponent, Eldon Rollins, is a Democratic precinct person based in Coquille.

Republican Fred Girod, who was appointed in February to fill the vacancy created by Roger Beyer's resignation, faces two primary opponents as well as a Democrat in November. That race has attracted a total of five candidates, more than any other race in the Senate.

The only truly open Republican seat in the Senate to replace retiring Gary George involves a race between Republican Brian Boquist who is seeking to move over from the House against Democrat Kevin Nortness. Nortness is a Willamina City Councilor, and a "litigation consultant."

Most political pundits predict the Senate will be 18 Democrats and 12 Republicans when it convenes next January.

In the House:

The House will attract a great deal of attention as Democrats try to increase their two vote majority. If they gain five seats--without losing any in the process--they will control 36 seats, the magic number needed to approve revenue measures on the floor of the House.

The Republicans. Republicans show a great deal of turnover, with 11 of their current 29 seats 38% involving either retiring members or incumbents who were appointed and have not previously faced the electorate. At least three of these seats will be hotly contested:

- With former Speaker Karen Minnis retiring, three candidates (one Republican and two Democrats) are vying to replace her. In 2006 Minnis narrowly won the most expensive House races ever, and this East Multnomah County district has a 9% Democratic registration edge.
- Republican Patti Smith, whose district includes Hood River, Clackamas, and Multnomah Counties, has also chosen to retire. The race to replace her involves two Republicans and two Democrats. That district has a very narrow (.5%) Democratic registration edge.
- Republican Jerry Krummel is retiring from his Wilsonville seat, leaving a race

between Democrat Jessica Adamson, a former lobbyist for the Associated General Contractors, and Republican Matt Wingard, whose name recently hit the news as a result of previous legal issues.

Other open Republican seats include those currently held by retiring Wayne Scott (Canby), Brian Boquist (Dallas), Susan Morgan (Myrtle Creek), and Donna Nelson (McMinnville). The race to replace Nelson has drawn former Republican Congressman Jim Bunn, now a Yamhill Deputy Sheriff. Three of these open Republican seats involve contested primaries between Republicans, and all include Democrats in the November general election. Contested primaries draw down precious campaign funds, potentially weakening candidates for the November contest.

In November six House Republicans have no Democratic opponents. Several of these races involve contested primaries, however.

The Democrats. In comparison, Democrats have a total of only four open seats, and three of these have no Republican opponents in the general election. In addition, three Democrats who unseated Republicans in 2006 face no primary and no general election opponents: Brian Clem (Salem), Chris Edwards (Junction City), and Jean Cowan (Newport).

A total of 17 House Democrats (55% of the seats they currently hold) drew no Republican opponents, although several of these races involve contested primaries. This fact, combined with the low number of open Democratic seats, will provide campaign strategists with a number of opportunities in November to target campaign funds into key districts currently held by Republicans.

Most political pundits are not offering predictions on the final count between Republicans and Democrats in the House, though most predict some Democratic gains. Predicting legislative races during presidential election years is a hazardous venture given the manner in which macro political issues can influence local races.

I have attached a complete roster of legislative candidates with key races highlighted. Please note – there could be a number of changes, as several last minute candidates may ultimately find that for one reason or another they are not be qualified to run.

<<Legislative Candidates May 2008 Primary.doc>>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, predictions, or concerns.

Jock

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