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State candidates face off at forum

about 3 hours ago

by Laura Freeman

Reporter

Hudson -- Local candidates for the State Senate and House of Representatives faced off in front of approximately 50 people Oct. 1 at a forum hosted by Hudson Economic Development Corp.

HEDC hosted the event at the Country Club of Hudson to provide a venue for the candidates to talk about issues.

Candidates for the 42nd Ohio House of Representatives district and 27th State Senate district discussed the economy, state budget and school funding.

Race for the House

In the 42nd district, Kristina Daley Roegner (R-Hudson) is challenging one-term incumbent Mike Moran (D-Hudson).

Both have experience on Hudson City Council.

Roegner, at-large Hudson Council member, described herself as a staunch fiscal conservative and said she would cut government spending.

"Ohio taxes everything," Roegner said. "Why? To pay for all the government spending."

Roegner said she signed a taxpayer protection pledge so "tax hikes are off the table."

Moran, current state representative for 42nd district and former Hudson City Council president, pointed out that the state has phased out corporate franchise and tangible personal property taxes and phased in a commercial activity tax, but the impact has been hard to determine in a recession.

He said during his two years in office, he sponsored a bill to improve state regulatory processes for businesses.

"I sponsored a common sense regulatory act to increase efficiency and the performance of state government agencies," Moran said.

Roegner said she would pursue regulatory reform to make it easier to do business in the state.

Moran said he supports tax incentives to bring businesses into the area and increase the quality of life.

Roegner, on the other hand, called tax abatements "a bandage on a head wound," and wants the tax rate lowered across the board.

Moran said his top three priorities for economic development and job creation are education and work force development, state programming to help create new businesses, and continued regulatory reform.

Roegner said her top priorities include performance-based audits, streamlining government, which she says is the No. 1 employer in Ohio, and addressing entitlements.

Moran said he supports public schools. He said he fought for more state funding for public schools to take the pressure off property taxes.

"Last summer I, and my colleagues, passed a new school funding formula," Moran said.

Roegner supports competition in the educational system.

"I am a fan of school choice," Roegner said.
"Competition is a very good thing."

Roegner is on the board of Seton Catholic School in Hudson, she said, and would spend fewer dollars on administration and more dollars in the classroom.

Race for the senate

In the 27th State Senate district, Frank LaRose (R-Fairlawn) and Frank Comunale (D-Akron) seek the seat being vacated by Kevin Coughlin (R-Cuyahoga Falls). Coughlin cannot run because of term limits.

LaRose, 10-year army veteran and bronze star recipient, is new to politics, while Comunale is serving his second term as District 4 representative on Summit County Council.

LaRose said he would decrease taxes but maintain the standard of life by making government more efficient and working with less money.

"The role of government is to establish the foundation -- public safety, infrastructure and good education, paired with low taxes and common sense regulatory environment -- for the private sector to grow," LaRose said.

Comunale said he worked with innovative legislation to keep Goodyear and Bridgestone Firestone in Summit County.

"We need to protect jobs, correct education and move our community forward," Comunale said.

Comunale said he would use an evidence-base model to make sure charter schools meet the same rigid standards as other schools.

Although the governor and current assembly fixed the state's funding formula, according to LaRose, schools are not yet funded by the new formula, which is being phased in. He said future assemblies would have to approve \$4 billion in the

next 10 years to fund schools.

The state needs to define what is an adequate and equitable school and allow communities to raise additional funds if they want to have schools above the state standard, LaRose said.

E-mail: lfreeman@recordpub.com

Phone: 330-688-0088 ext. 3150