

ELECTION 2008

Fitzpatrick to run for state House

The former congressman said he's not afraid of another run against Patrick Murphy but wants another challenge. This time, he'll face off with Chris King.

By CHRIS ENGLISH COURIER TIMES

Saying he is ready for a change in how he serves the public, former congressman and Bucks County commissioner Michael Fitzpatrick has announced he will run this year for the state representative seat held by Democrat Chris King, D-142.

The 44-year-old Republican said the job, if he gets it, will give him the chance to hold public office again but stay a little closer to his wife, Kathy, and six children, ranging in age from 7 to 18. Since being defeated by Patrick Murphy, D-8, in the 2006 Congressional election, Fitzpatrick has worked as an attorney at the Middletown law firm of Begley, Carlin and Mandio.

If elected, Fitzpatrick said he would continue his law practice but at a significantly reduced workload.

"I intend to change the way business is done in Harrisburg," said Fitzpatrick, who lives with his family in the Snowball Gate section of Levittown in Middletown. "We need to control the growth of spending in government, expand economic opportunities and restore honesty to the process. I will bring a unique perspective along with a proven record of accomplishment for the people I serve."

The Courier Times was unsuccessful in its attempts to reach King for comment. He would face Fitzpatrick in the Nov. 4 general election if both candidates get through the April 22 primary.

Bucks County Democratic Chairman John Cordisco also could not be reached. John Toth, chairman of the Democratic Party of Middletown Township, called Fitzpatrick's candidacy an act of desperation.

"I think he is afraid to run against Murphy because he knows he would lose and he's just looking for a paycheck," Toth said.

Fitzpatrick dismissed those assertions.

"I defeated Patrick Murphy in Bucks County when we ran," he said, referring to the fact that he garnered more votes from county residents than Murphy, but Murphy won more votes in Montgomery County and Philadelphia to defeat Fitzpatrick.

"We (Republicans) have a strong candidate for Congress (Tom Manion) and this would give me the chance to serve at a different level of government but with the same passion and a little closer to home," Fitzpatrick said.

County Republican Chairman Harry Fawkes said Fitzpatrick has a good chance to win.

"We have a good candidate running for Congress," Fawkes said. "Mike has been through that and has other things he wants to do."

Fitzpatrick didn't rule out another run for Congress at some point in the future but declined to be more specific.

"Can you predict the future better than I?" he said. "I'm looking forward to this challenge [running for state representative]. Much of my passion is in solving local problems and serving the local community. I believe people are looking for leaders to whom they can relate."

Fitzpatrick didn't have much to say about King or his performance in office so far. King, in his first term, defeated longtime Republican incumbent Matt Wright in 2006.

"There will be plenty of opportunity to compare our records and examine our backgrounds," said Fitzpatrick.

Murphy represents Bucks County, some districts of Abington, Upper Dublin and Upper Moreland in Montgomery County and two wards in Philadelphia. King represents Penn del, Hulmeville, Langhorne, Langhorne Manor, most of Middletown and most of Lower Southampton.

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Fitzpatrick



King