



A Republican cash machine

Fundraising strong for 2 seeking open seats in Congress

Written by Maureen Groppe

7/17/11

WASHINGTON -- Republicans running for Indiana's two open congressional seats were among the most successful fundraisers in the second quarter of the year, according to disclosure reports filed Friday.

The reports also show that GOP challenger John McGoff outraised Rep. Dan Burton, R-Indianapolis, in the 5th District race, and the two Democrats hoping to unseat freshman Rep. Larry Bucshon, R-Newburgh, in the 8th District are willing to bet their own money on the race.

The most successful fundraiser among the state's House candidates was former state Rep. Jackie Walorski, who raised \$229,202 from April through June in the race for the open 2nd District seat. Walorski last year unsuccessfully challenged Democratic Rep. Joe Donnelly, who is running for the Senate.

Walorski is the only Republican in the north-central Indiana district who has created a fundraising committee. Democratic lawyer Andrew Straw, Goshen, has raised about \$4,300, most of it his own money.

Walorski has been tapped by House Republicans for their recruitment and training program, as she was in 2010. Her donors include House Majority Leader Eric Cantor of Virginia, whose political action committee gave Walorski \$5,000 last month.

The 2nd District had been fairly evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, but new boundaries drawn after the 2010 census made it more Republican.

The other open seat is in east-central Indiana, where GOP Rep. Mike Pence is giving up the 6th District post to run for governor. Former state Rep. Luke Messer raised \$200,540, the most among Democrats and fellow Republicans eyeing the seat.

Republican Don Bates Jr., a Richmond businessman who unsuccessfully ran for the Senate in 2010, raised \$55,246 in his 6th District bid. Republican Travis Hankins, a Columbus developer who lost a race for Congress in the 9th District last year, has raised \$71,879 since January.

The district favors Republicans, and fundraising has been slow on the Democratic side. Lane Siekman, an attorney from Rising Sun, reported raising \$725, mostly from himself.

Among the seven House incumbents seeking re-election, only Burton and Bucshon face challengers who have raised much money.

Burton is being challenged for a third time by McGoff, a former Marion County coroner, who raised \$146,046 in the past three months, compared with Burton's \$94,065.

Burton still had about a \$130,000 cash advantage over McGoff at the end of June.

But Burton's vulnerability shows in the amount of money he has raised from Hoosiers since January. Of the \$92,206 Burton raised in large-dollar contributions from individuals, \$22,800 came from Indiana residents. Of the \$127,200 that McGoff raised in large-dollar contributions from individuals, \$113,400 came from Indiana residents. Campaigns do not have to report the identities of people who give less than \$201.

Former Rep. David McIntosh is exploring a primary challenge to Burton but has not had to file a campaign disclosure report yet.

In southwestern Indiana, Warrick County Democratic Party Chairman Terry White has raised \$117,150 -- including a \$100,000 personal loan -- in his bid against Bucshon in the 8th District.

The other Democrat running for the seat, former state Rep. Dave Crooks, has loaned his campaign \$50,000 and raised an additional \$65,723.

Bucshon raised \$208,110 in the second quarter. That was one of the best quarterly showings in the state and came after Bucshon raised the least among the state's incumbents in the first quarter.