

Republican Assembly hopeful to have hands full

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FAIRFIELD - June will be easy for Manny Cosme. November, not so much.

Cosme, the Republican candidate for the 8th Assembly District, is running unopposed for the GOP nomination. That means clear sailing in the June 3 primary election, but Cosme will face an uphill battle in the Nov. 4 general election in a heavily Democratic district.

Cosme is running to succeed Assemblywoman Lois Wolk, D-Davis, who is termed out. He will face either Yolo County Supervisor Mariko Yamada or West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon in the November general election.

Cosme cites the issue of health care as one that sets him apart from his two potential Democratic challengers. Both Cabaldon and Yamada have advocated government-managed universal health care, which Cosme opposes.

'Government in health care is a solution, but it's not the right one,' Cosme said. 'When you have government-run (programs), you're talking about a lot of bureaucracy.'

A native New Yorker, Cosme joined the U.S. Navy in 1970. He attended college after leaving the service in 1974 but 'got sick of New York' and moved to California.

He met his wife in San Francisco and settled on Vacaville when looking for a place to raise their son. The couple now have three grown children.

Cosme is a relative newcomer to Solano County politics, but he has long been involved in the local business scene. He is a former president of the Solano County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, a former executive officer of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and is on the advisory board for the National Federation of Independent Businesses.

With a resume like that, it's no surprise Cosme makes small business development the core of his campaign.

'I'm interested in fighting against the overburdening of small businesses and fighting for a much better environment for small businesses to start up and expand,' he said.

Cosme said the state since the 1990s has been creating a more and more difficult business environment by piling on mandates and regulations. The election of Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has 'helped turn that around,' Cosme said, but more is needed.

'We don't know who the next governor will be,' Cosme said. 'Who's to say that environment will not continue?'

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