



District 1's choice is between culture warriors and true public servants

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By Jim Jones



As a Republican for most of my adult life, including the eight years I served as Attorney General in the 1980s, I did not always toe the party line in the voting booth. Let's face it, sometimes the Republican on the ballot is not capable of governing. George Washington warned in his Farewell Address that political parties would lead to extreme partisanship and corruption. His warning has proven to be true in recent years.

District 1 voters have a clearcut opportunity to reject culture warriors, who have no inclination to address serious problems facing Idaho – adequate funding for roads, schools, wildfire suppression and all of the other things that ordinary voters need.

On the other hand, voters do have three legislative candidates who will do the hard work of responding to their needs—Steve Johnson, Karen Matthee and Kathryn Larson.

Steve Johnson is running against Scott Herndon for the District 1 Senate seat. He will win the race, if voters study the candidates and turn out to vote. Reliable information about both candidates can be ^{if} ^ at Idahovoters.com.

Herndon is a culture warrior who cares little about the everyday struggles facing Idaho families. He pushes an extremist agenda. Herndon calls for the complete elimination of property taxes without saying how police, fire and other essential local services will be funded. On the other hand, Johnson wants to double the homeowners' exemption to \$250,000, which will provide tax relief without crippling vital local services. He wants to tackle and remedy the affordability issues that are plaguing District 1 families.

Karen Matthee is running against Jane Sauter for House Seat A. Matthee has a remarkable record of service above self. Her priorities are lowering the cost of living, improving access to quality affordable healthcare for everyone and funding aging public school facilities. In 2005 the Idaho Supreme Court ruled that the State had chronically failed its constitutional mandate to provide adequate, safe public school facilities. I was a member of the Court. The Legislature has continued that failing record and needs a legislator like Karen to push it into compliance. Sauter has the endorsement of the wretched Idaho Freedom Foundation, which shows that she is a culture war extremist.

Kathryn Larson pledges to improve the services critical to the people of District 1 – emergency services, fire protection, safe roads and bridges, clean water, strong public schools, and access to qualified health care providers. She wants their kids and grandkids to be able to afford to live and work there. She says the money generated in District 1 should stay and circulate there to provide jobs and fuel the local economy. Her platform can be found at Larsonforidaho.com. Her opponent, the amiable Cornel Rasor, is consumed with following the dictates of the Boise-based Idaho Freedom Foundation, instead of addressing the particular needs of his constituents.

These three candidates are the kind that I would have supported in the sanctity of the polling booth back when I was a Republican official. Their opponents do not stand up for traditional Republican values. They are undeserving of public office. I believe George Washington would warn us against voting for someone solely because of their party label. Voters should do their own research and cast an informed vote.

Jim Jones is a Vietnam combat veteran who served 8 years as Idaho Attorney General (1983-1991) and 12 years as Justice of the Idaho Supreme Court (2005-2017). He also publishes at substack.com/@jjcommonmtater.

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