

Senate selection

Bullard's best in 15th District

When you go shopping for a professional, say a doctor or a lawyer, a key consideration is likely to be experience. Has the doctor performed this surgery before? Has the lawyer argued a case before the courts?

It should be no different when shopping for a state senator.

We've little doubt that any of the four candidates who appear on the ballot in the special Republican primary election for the 15th State Senate district next week could eventually grow into the position.

But Willis Bullard Jr. would hit the ground running. That's why we're urging voters to pick Bullard Monday, May 13.

Voters will go to the polls in the first of two elections to replace David Honigman, who resigned the senate due to ill health.



Willis Bullard Jr.

The sprawling 15th District includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield Township and several other communities to the west.

The Republican field in the 15th is a strong one with three viable candidates in Bullard, state Rep. Barbara Dobb of Commerce Township and Farmington Hills Councilman Terry Sever.

Sever and Dobb have contributed much to their communities over the years, and we hope they continue their public service. But Bullard's experience makes him the Observer's choice.

Bullard has by far more experience than any other candidate on the GOP ticket. He started out in local politics, serving as a Highland Township trustee from 1979-80.

He then became township supervisor from 1980-82. He took office in the state House in 1982, and has been there ever since, now serving in his seventh term.

Bullard's legislative experience is particularly noteworthy. He has served on the powerful House Taxation Committee in almost every conceivable circumstance, starting out in the minority, working his way through a unique power-sharing arrangement in which he co-chaired the committee with his counterpart across the party aisle, and finally has become chairman.

That gives him great insight into the committee system in Lansing, which of course is where the real nitty-gritty of crafting state law takes place. Having a lawmaker in Lansing with that

kind of knowledge of the committee structure is definitely in the district's best interest.

Speaking of crafting state law, Bullard has been particularly effective at it, having sponsored some 41 bills in the past year, more than any other representative in Lansing.

Eleven of them have been signed into law. Bullard boasts — and rightly so — that he's had a hand in passing 21 tax cuts in the past four years. That kind of effectiveness should count highly with voters.

Bullard's finest hour, of course, was his work on Proposal A, which has trimmed homeowners' property tax bills in these parts on the order of 60-plus percent.

Bullard was at ground-zero in Lansing during the drafting of that school finance/property tax reform package. And however much bureaucrats have complained about it, Proposal A has been a hit with homeowners.

In the meantime, we've found Bullard to be responsive and accessible to his constituents: He's done his best to stay in close touch with the folks living in his House district. We've also learned over time that he listens to his constituents, and will adapt his views when offered a legitimate criticism.

We do have one concern with Bullard. It came to light last July that he may not live in his current House district. Bullard, of course, claims that he does and gives the address of his father-in-law as his home address.

In the meantime, he keeps a house just outside the district boundaries where his spouse of two years continues to maintain residence.

Bullard's Highland Township house would be in the senate district, so residency is not the issue. The idea that those who write the laws should also abide by them is.

That may not be enough of a concern to withdraw endorsement, but we would urge Bullard to make all efforts in the future to be sure he abides by the law, both in letter and in spirit.

Finally, we would urge him to stay in close touch with all the communities of his district and make a special effort to get to know those portions of the district he has not previously represented.

He should keep in mind that road funding is a critical, top priority issue for nearly every community in the senate district.

Overall, Bullard has the leadership qualities the communities of the 15th state senate district need. He has the ear of the governor, and he is well positioned to serve the district. Voters would be best served to promote Bullard to the state senate.

Oakland reaches out to Detroit

Small business owners and corporate officers alike are happy to ride the wave of economic prosperity rippling through Oakland County, a wave expected to leap skyward when Somerset North, and its wealth of new stores and jobs, opens on Aug. 16.

Amid this euphoria, which County Executive L. Brooke Patterson smartly played up in announcing his re-election bid last week, Oakland's business community is reaching out in a big way to its neighbors across Eight Mile Road in Detroit, the hub of southeast Michigan.

Bloomfield Hills entrepreneur Mike Hiltch has made it a personal crusade to revitalize Detroit's Entertainment District around the Fox Theatre. Farmington Hills restaurateur Mickey Bakst was among the first suburbanites to step forward after the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's warehouse complex in Detroit burned down 10 days before Christmas. Kimberly Johnson of West Bloomfield is managing director of the Detroit Opera House refurbishing project at the Grand Circus Theatre.

Last week, Southfield-based Lear Corp. announced it was forming a joint venture with Detroit-based Bing Manufacturing to build a manufacturing facility within Detroit's Empowerment Zone, creating 70 new jobs.

On Saturday, May 18, Oaklanders of all ages and backgrounds will join in Volunteer-A-Thon '96, the biggest annual fund-raiser for Volunteer Impact (VI). Volunteers will fan out to paint community centers, clean vacant lots, repair houses, plant neighborhood gardens and feed the hungry. The slogan for the fund-raiser says it all: "It's about getting things done, meeting people, having fun. And making a difference. Not bad for a day's work."

To sign up, call VI's Southfield office: (810) 659-4550.

Volunteer-A-Thon corporate sponsors include Oakland County-based New York Carpet World, World Wide Financial Services of Birmingham, WXYZ-Channel 7 of Southfield, Mi-

chael Flora & Associates of Troy and the Southfield law firm of Sommers, Schwartz Silver & Schwartz.

Taking part not only will help the less fortunate but also raise money for VI, a year-round outreach service run on a shoestring. Sponsor yourself or collect pledges from friends, family and co-workers. Recruit a team of at least 10 to have your own work site. If you're not up to manual labor, help with sign-up or publicity. Or simply make a contribution.

Volunteer Impact, 4,600 volunteers strong, improves lives by managing volunteer projects for its community-service partners. Projects include packing and delivering food for Focus: HOPE and Gleaners Community Bank in Detroit, preparing and serving meals at C.O.T.S. in Detroit, and building and repairing homes in Detroit through Habitat for Humanity and Motor City Blight Busters. Other projects include hosting activities for boys at St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center in Farmington Hills and for girls at Alternatives for Girls in Southfield.

VI community partners include Common Ground, a Royal Oak crisis intervention center, Greenery Health Care Center, a Farmington skilled nursing facility; JARC, a Southfield provider of group homes for developmentally disabled adults; Kenny Rehabilitation, a Southfield youth assistance service; and Lighthouse, a Pontiac rescue mission.

The goal for Volunteer-A-Thon '96: 1,000 volunteers who together raise \$40,000. "The Volunteer-A-Thon demonstrates the power of individuals united in a spirit of cooperation and community service," says Huntington Woods resident Liz Kantor Grookind, in whose Southfield insurance office VI came about in 1990.

"Volunteers will have a great day and learn that individuals can make an impact, one person, one day at a time. Most importantly, the funds raised will ensure another year of Volunteer Impact service to our community."

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

What do you want to be when you grow up?



'A pro tennis player. When I get through teaching, I'll have the time to devote to it.'

Dennis King
HHS science teacher



'Physical therapist. That's what I'm looking at right now.'

Andy Bockneck
North Farmington soprano



'Something having to do with science, I guess.'

Nick Jordan
North Farmington freshman



'I want to be just like Miss (Marty) Miller (who teaches English at North Farmington).'

Stephanie Zameck (with Miss Miller)
North Farmington junior

He thanks reporter

I would like to thank Larry O'Connor for the caring article he wrote about me as I approach retirement.

My family really enjoyed his article and I have received many positive comments from others.

Best wishes to him and continued success in his career as I go out chasing windmills in my retirement.

Bob Coleman, Farmington Hills

A taxing situation

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Farmington Observer for helping to make our AARP Tax-Aide Program — Tax Counseling for the Elderly — a success for another year.

We prepared 112 joint returns out of 741 separate interviews. Three hundred ninety-two federal tax returns and 1,106 state tax and credit forms were prepared.

Tax-related assistance was given to 109 clients. Seven senior citizens were given tax assistance at their residences due to their ill health.

Again, thank you for placing the notices in the Observer, noting the time and place of tax assistance, each week during the tax season.

John Antonilli,
local coordinator,
Tax-Aide Program

A vote for Bullard

Farmington Hills Councilman Terry Sever is presently running for state Senate.

Should he lose, he falls back on the race for the House. Should he lose that, which would make him a two-time loser (not to be construed as a criminal two-time loser), he would still have his cushioned seat on the council.

Las Vegas bookies would be well advised to emulate this manipulator in hedging their bets and straddle both sides of the fence.

A little analysis of Mr. Sever's political machinations reveals a person of chameleon quality: one day he is a Democrat, the next he is a Republican.

For instance, his flyer, in which he is endorsed by a former and now-gone city manager, boldly labels him as a Republican.

Yet, in paragraph three, he crowds about his success in helping to elect the current Mayor of Farmington Hills, an avowed, dyed-in-the-wool, Clinton-clone Democrat.

Furthermore, he supported passage of OCC millage, Walled Lake millage, police and fire proposal, and SMART. Terry Sever is a totally dedicated tax-and-spend fanatic Democrat.

In addition, the man just ran for council recently and already he is repudiating his com-

mitment to Farmington Hills by his crass attempt to hoodwink the electorate about his true political goal, namely as an opportunist who blows with the wind as he do his signs: one day this, the next day that.

The people of our district need a man of tried-and-true integrity, a man knowledgeable about state politics, and above all, a man who truly espouses the Republican Party platform of lower taxes.

And that man, who is above all others, is Bill Bullard.

Albert Rosen, Farmington Hills

An endorsement

Farmington school board elections will be held Monday, June 10. Priscilla Brouillette is a candidate who supports the basics in education, but who also understands future needs of students.

Priscilla Brouillette has been actively involved for years as a volunteer for the Farmington Public Schools.

She has enjoyed working with such programs as Junior Great Books, through which many children have had the opportunity to respond to classic literature of the world, and the Picture Lady Program, which has allowed her to foster an appreciation and understanding of art for hundreds of Farmington children over the past eight years. Her efforts have greatly enriched the quality of education for our children.

Priscilla is also involved with activities that will ensure future scholastic excellence for our students. Her work with the School Improvement Committees at Hillside Elementary and Duncel Middle School has given her a broad understanding of current issues that concern our schools at both the elementary and middle school levels.

Her involvement with the North Central Accreditation Committees at both schools has given her an awareness of how schools evaluate current performance and set goals for the future.

Priscilla has been a tireless worker, selecting volunteer opportunities that really make a difference in improving education. A strong advocate for quality schools, she is an extremely well-respected member of any committee.

When Priscilla speaks to an issue, her comments are thoughtful and well researched. She is a wonderful listener who is completely dedicated to whatever project she undertakes and in-touch with what is occurring in our schools.

Priscilla Brouillette has repeatedly proven herself to be an asset to the Farmington Public Schools.

Please join us in voting for Priscilla Brouillette for school board member. She will be an excellent addition to our board.

George and Susan Notarianni, Farmington Hills

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— Philip Power