

# Thompson making bid for third term

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland County Prosecutor Richard Thompson has made it official.

Pledging to continue his tough-on-crime policies, Thompson Monday announced he will seek a third four-year term as county prosecutor.

Thompson also filed nominating papers with the clerk's office, making him the second candidate for prosecutor on the ballot. The other is Democrat Steve Kaplan of West Bloomfield.

Thompson is thus far the only Republican in the prosecutor's race, but David Goreyca, a former assistant prosecutor, has announced his candidacy and is expected to file before Tuesday's 4 p.m. deadline.

"Being prosecutor means more to me than just putting criminals behind bars," Thompson told about 125 supporters at a reception in Troy. "It gives me an opportunity as a concerned parent to fight for a safe future for our families and children."

Thompson, who turns 69 next week, said he is running on his record, including his controversial policy of refusing to plea bargain except in rare occasions. Plea bargaining is the practice of agreeing to a reduced charge in a criminal case in exchange for a guilty plea.

While many prosecutors in Michigan and the nation plea bargain routinely, Thompson has a policy of going to trial on the original charge rather than negotiating — something critics claim clogs the courts.

Even with his no plea bargaining policy, Thompson said his office has a conviction rate of nearly 99 percent — statistics both Goreyca and Kaplan say they challenge.

As if to acknowledge his prosecution of Dr. Jack Kevorkian may be a campaign issue, Thompson reiterated his claim that charging the retired pathologist known as "Dr. Death" for violating state laws against assisted suicide was his duty as the county's chief law enforcement officer.

"Nobody has the right to disobey the law," Thompson said, referring to Kevorkian, whose trial in Oakland Circuit Court is in its fourth week. "We are a nation of laws."

Thompson said his tenure in office has been characterized by more than being tough on crime and enforcing state laws against assisted suicide. Among the accomplishments he cited are developing a video conferencing warrant request procedure — saving an estimated \$1 million annually — and establishing specialized units on child sexual



Running again: Richard Thompson announced he will run for reelection.

assault, domestic violence and auto theft.

Sheriff John F. Nichols Monday announced he is endorsing the incumbent's bid for reelection. "Your tough policy against plea bargaining is a key reason that Oakland County is such a safe place (in which) to live, work and raise a family," he said in an endorsement message.

"I am honored to add my name to the long list of endorsements for your reelection," Nichols said in his message.

Other county officials to endorse Thompson are county clerk Lynn Allen, treasurer C. Hugh Dohany and drain commissioner George Kuhn.

County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, Thompson's friend and former mentor, did not attend Monday's campaign kick-off. Patterson has previously said he will remain neutral in the GOP primary

# Lockwood celebrate tax freedom

Rodney M. Lockwood Jr., president of The Lockwood Companies on Bingham Farms, gave company employees a paid day off May 7 — Tax Freedom Day — to draw attention to tax issues.

In a joint press conference announcing the special day, the residential builder was joined by Senate candidate Ronan Romney, who bills herself as a strong fiscal conservative advocating a meaningful reduction in the size and scope of the federal government by reducing spending and cutting taxes.

The efforts of Lockwood, who was the first to come up with the paid day off plan, have caught the attention of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

At least one Lockwood employee agrees. "It's a great way to make people understand how tax policies affect them and the

businesses they work for," said Debbie Andreoli. Lockwood said the damage done by current taxation policies can be seen most clearly given some historical perspective.

"In 1950, the average total tax burden was about 12 percent. Last year that number was almost 45 percent. That's almost

a 400 percent increase in years.

The Lockwood Companies, founded in 1944, consists of seven companies, including construction, housing material procurement and development services groups.

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