

# Democrats 11th hopefuls split on choice, limits

BY GREG KOWALSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Michael Meyer and Walter O. Briggs IV are both Democrats, but they have their differences.

The two are facing off for the Democratic nomination in the 11th U.S. House district, a Republican area that ranges from Highland to Birmingham and Redford to South Lyon.

Meyer, 46, is a teacher in Novi while Briggs, 45, is an accountant with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan.

"I don't support the Freedom of Choice proposal," said Meyer, a former seminary student who was asked about the abortion issue. "There's another individual involved, I like to say an unborn citizen."

Meyer is pro-life. "I endorse freedom of choice," said Briggs. "It is not the government's business to legislate relationships. I would hope my wife would discuss that decision with me, however, if we do not, government should not be in a position to make that relationship better."

They also split over term limitations for elected officials.

"I agree," Meyer said. "Not just for two years but perhaps three terms (six years). I think it would be important to let new blood come in."

Meyer said the framers of the Constitution thought it was important to have new people come into the system.

"I oppose it," Briggs answered. "It doesn't address the real problem — the cost of elections."

Briggs said all candidates should have equal access to the media and candidates should be required to debate each other.

Meyer did agree with Briggs, however, that all candidates should have access to their message to the voters.

Ironically, Briggs ran against



Walter O. Briggs IV: Favors freedom of choice and opposes term limitations.

Rep. William Broomfield two years ago. Broomfield is the longest serving Republican in the House. Broomfield, who has been in office for 37 years, announced his retirement when the 11th district was created.

The candidates also split on their opinion of Broomfield.

"I think Broomfield did a good job," said Meyer. "A lot of reps don't represent the people. I would address the concerns of the district. I would be aware of what's going on and that we don't have to watch America slowly die."

Briggs said, "I thought Broomfield had a lot to say in 36 years in Congress, but he did provide consistent services with the district. He knew how to handle an individual's problems with a welfare check, how to get a problem solved. That would be my first priority."



Michael Meyer: Is pro-life and favors term limitations.

Meyer and Briggs also disagreed — somewhat — on the Persian Gulf War.

"I supported it based on information I had at the time," Meyer said. He said the United States went in to stop a tyrant who had captured Kuwait and was threatening surrounding territory. "He is a man who is not acting on a rational basis." Since the war, however, he said his opinion has changed.

Briggs said, "I was opposed to the invasion. We didn't have a clear set of goals. . . . We never gave sanctions a chance. We are very willing to send other's people sons and daughter's off to war."

"We went in for our own selfish motivations," he said. He added war costs increase the national deficit. He said people might not be so eager to go to war if there was a "war tax" to finance it.

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# Candidates give views on major issues

Democrats Walter Briggs IV and Michael Meyer discussed several other issues:

• **The deficit/economy:** "It is a major crisis," said Briggs. He suggested cutting government programs, such as military spending.

"There are programs that have wonderful objectives but just don't work anymore," he said, citing Welfare as an example. "There are 60 departments that operate educational programs. Why do we have so many?" Briggs urged an overall program to start the economy, including infrastructure redevelopment and the whole economic industrial

policy. Meyer said trimming government waste is a way to cut the deficit. "One of five dollars is wasted on paperwork," he said.

Meyer recommended a Marshall Plan, as was enacted after World War II to rebuild Europe, to revitalize American cities and the economy. "We need to strike a balance

with all the money we give to other countries." But he added, "there is no easy plan to do this."

Both opposed the proposed balanced budget amendment.

• **National health insurance:** "My concern," Meyer said, "is the 35 million people who don't have health care." Meyer supports the pay or play requirement that

businesses provide insurance or pay into a government fund.

"We need a national insurance plan. There should be health insurance for everyone," Briggs said. He said the government should act as an intermediary between the clients and private insurers to get the best insurance.

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