

Mobility of American democracy relies on education, says candidate

By Karen Creighton
Of the Emerald

Part of the mobility of American democracy is based on access to education, and that access should be maintained, said Democratic candidate to State House District 43 Karsten Rasmussen.

Rasmussen, a University graduate, supports higher education but is concerned about overspending, he said.

"I'm supportive of higher education in general, but of course we need to keep in mind that our revenues are not such that we're talking about enhancement programs so much as doing our very best to hold the line and enhance where we can," he said.

Rasmussen will support a tuition freeze if it's economically feasible, he said.

"If financially feasible, I think that a tuition freeze is an awfully good way to encourage people to go to college after high school," he said.

Rasmussen will vote in favor of divestment of state funds from South Africa, he said.

"I don't think the South African government is going to sit up and pay attention until the United States and the citizens of the United States begin to take action to divest," he said.

Constructive engagement and the idea that whites have to take care of blacks is racist, Rasmussen said.

He opposes Ballot Measure 5, which would legalize the cultivation of marijuana for personal use.

"One of the common arguments in voting for Ballot Measure 5 is that marijuana is no greater a problem than alcohol, but that strikes me as being an odd argument, he said.

"Since we have so many problems with alcohol I don't know why we need to add to them,"



Karsten Rasmussen

he said.

The current war against drugs merely treats the symptoms and not the disease, Rasmussen said. Drug abuse is a sign of larger social problems, such as society's anger and feelings of powerlessness towards the government, he said.

Rasmussen would deal with these problems by working to increase the integrity and responsiveness of government so that people would feel more a part of society, he said.

He opposes nuclear power because it is neither safe nor economically viable, Rasmussen said. He is leaning against Ballot Measure 14, which would close the Trojan nuclear power plant until it could deposit its wastes in a federally licensed repository, he said.

Closing Trojan will cause more problems in terms of expense and ecological damage if other power sources, such as hydroelectric, are substituted, Rasmussen said. Stopping the construction of nuclear plants and phasing out the old ones is a better strategy than closing down existing plants, he said.

Rasmussen also opposes Ballot Measure 9, which would limit property taxes to 1.5 percent of assessed valuation, he said.

"I think it will be a tragedy in this state if it passes. I think we will have cuts in budgets that will be unprecedented in our history — we will be putting

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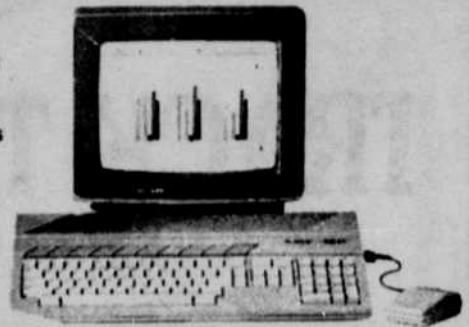
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