

Three join race for governor

The relative unknowns are challenging anti-tax crusader Bill Sizemore for the GOP nomination

By Jesse Sowa
Community Reporter

Jeffrey Brady, Walter Huss and Bill Spidal, all relative unknowns in the Oregon political scene, are attempting to challenge Bill Sizemore in the Republican primary for Oregon governor on May 19.

Sizemore, the executive director of Oregon Taxpayers United, is widely viewed as the most likely Republican candidate in the November election.

"I am a Republican because I believe in free enterprise, limited government and individual responsibility," Sizemore said in a recent letter. "I am not a Democrat because I do not believe in strict government regulation or control of the economy."

Sizemore also said flooding Oregon schools with money is not the only solution to the education problem.

"Throwing money at our public school system will not provide our kids with a better education," he said. "We have done that for two decades and seen little result."

Katherine Schiele, communication director for Sizemore's campaign, said the major issues for Sizemore are efficiency and government accountability. According to Sizemore, Oregon citizens are paying more than enough for the services they deserve, but that money is being spent in areas not useful to progress in the state.

Sizemore could not be reached for further comment.

Bill Spidal, the owner and manager of a Portland investment company, said freezing all tax rates and fees would be an important step for state officials in gaining the respect of Oregonians.

And, like Sizemore, Spidal disagrees with increased spending for the public school system. He said the budget for public schools has risen in recent years while average attendance has decreased.

Spidal said areas of excess state spending include unneeded government-built buildings, the West Side light-rail project in Portland and a \$125 million project implemented by the state Department of Motor Vehicles.

"Prevention [of excess spending] is the way to go," he said. "Unfortunately, we're not doing that."

Spidal said many criminals are repeat offenders who seem unfazed by jail time, and he believes mandatory jail times would cut the number of repeat offender crimes in half.

Another area where Spidal sees a lack of state accountability is the current status of Oregon's rivers and the inability to control growth.

"The Willamette is turning into a giant cesspool," he said. "The growth is out of control in Oregon."

Walter Huss, director of the Direct Legislative League and Oregon Tax Reform Coalition, has developed and presented a plan to state officials that would implement a single gross receipts tax of 2.5 percent and abolish the state's income and property taxes.

The plan would also prohibit a retail sales tax or any other single

tax. The plan would do away with filing taxes for 1.5 million citizens and 147,000 state businesses, Huss said.

"It's a very workable thing — fair and honest," he said.

Huss, a Portland native, added that the sales tax would allow more mothers to stay home with their children, which he believes would lessen the breakdown of families in the state.

Huss is in favor of additional spending for higher education in Oregon, which ranks poorly among states. He said businesses in the state are looking for three things: a competent and friendly tax system, leaders who take charge in the workplace and an educated work force.

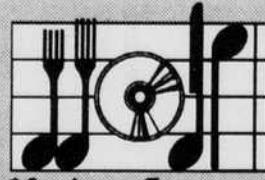
Additional higher-education funding will help increase those three things, Huss said.

Jeffrey Brady, a dentist from Portland, is in favor of additional government help in saving fish in local waters, as well as making dental care affordable to all children.

"I am running for governor because I do not think enough is being done to save the salmon, the steelhead and the fish in the ocean, rivers, streams and lakes in Oregon," Brady said in a letter submitted for the 1998 Oregon Voters' Pamphlet.

"The children in the state of Oregon need to have the best, most caring and affordable dental care that the government health plans and insurance companies can provide."

Brady has no previous government experience. He was unavailable for further comment.



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