

MORGAN HILL TIMES

Harmer wins 11th congressional primary

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By Michael Moore (mmoore@morganhilltimes.com)

San Ramon businessman David Harmer secured the Republican nomination for the 11th U.S. Congressional district by winning 36 percent of the votes cast in Tuesday's primary election.

With all the results counted, Harmer tallied about 18,500 votes in the district that includes all or parts of four counties.

Brad Goehring, a Clements grapegrower and businessman, came in second place with about 14,120 votes or 28 percent.

Tony Amador, of Lodi, and Elizabeth Emken, of Danville, claimed about 19 percent and 16 percent of votes cast, respectively.



Photo by: Staff

The winner of the primary will go up against incumbent Democrat Jerry McNerney of Pleasanton in the Nov. 2 general election. McNerney faced no opposition in the Democratic primary.

Harmer did not immediately return calls for comment Wednesday morning.

The sprawling 11th District stretches from the San Ramon Valley south to Morgan Hill, over the Altamont Pass into the western portion of San Joaquin County and far eastern Contra Costa County. The district's total population is about 639,000, and includes parts of four counties, including Alameda County.

The Republicans sounded similar on the stump leading up to today's vote, especially on the key conservative stances of reduced government, fewer regulations, lower taxes and tighter illegal immigration enforcement.

Harmer's campaign supporters include the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, former state assemblyman Dean Andal, and former congressman Norm Shumway. He has also been endorsed by former U.S. presidential candidate and Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

Harmer has touted his policy work with conservative think tanks such as the Pacific Legal and Heritage foundations and the Cato Institute.

Goehring is a fourth-generation San Joaquin Valley farmer and businessman. He is known in the agricultural industry as a national spokesman on behalf of agricultural interests.

Goehring pointed out at a recent candidate forum that he has received the highest percentage of campaign contributions from people who live in the 11th District. The other three candidates have ties to other states and Washington, D.C.

Goehring collected endorsements from the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation, two San Joaquin County supervisors, and Contra Costa County Sheriff Warren Rupf.

Amador, one of 14 children born to Mexican immigrant farm workers, has a long background in law enforcement.

He served as a patrol officer for the Los Angeles Police Department for 13 years, after which he was appointed to various state boards by a series of governors.

In 2002, Amador was appointed as the U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of California. He served in that position in 2009.

Emken, a disabled children's advocate, said recently that her autistic son spurred her decision to leave her job at IBM as an efficiency expert and lobby Congress for improvements in research and treatment of serious childhood diseases.

As such, in 2007 she became vice president for government relations at Autism Speaks, the nation's largest advocacy organization devoted to autism research. More recently, she lobbied successfully for an amendment in the national health care bill that bans insurance discrimination against autism treatment coverage.

The total number of votes cast for all four Republicans in the race exceeded 50,000. McNerney, the sole 11th congressional candidate on the ballot for the Democratic party, tallied more than 37,000 votes.

David Christensen, American Independent Party candidate for the seat, won 978 votes.



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