

## Strack the best choice for 7th District

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Four Democratic candidates are contesting the 7th District U.S. House seat, to face in November the winner of the heated Republican primary race as Tim Walberg tries to defeat Rep. Joe Schwarz.

Two candidates in the Democratic primary - Chuck Ream and Sharon Renier - have strong name recognition in the district. Ream, a former kindergarten teacher who's been a Scio Township trustee since 1988, has been active in several grassroots efforts, most recently as a leader in the successful attempt to derail a Washtenaw County bond proposal for jail expansion. Renier, an organic farmer from Munith, challenged Schwarz in 2004 after beating two others in the Democratic primary that year. Ream is running for the first time for a federal office.

Daryl Campbell, a Realtor and Washtenaw County Sheriff's deputy from Scio Township, is also making his first congressional bid, as is Fred Strack, a Dexter resident and purchasing manager for Ford Motor Co.

The four candidates offer voters a wide range of choices, although there is agreement on many issues among the group. Of the four, Ream and Strack have the deepest knowledge of issues and best articulated plans for what they would like to accomplish in Congress.

When asked for his priorities, Ream produced a long list of concerns and goals, ranging from exiting the war in Iraq and providing universal health care to supporting funding for education and reforming the federal prison system. The range of topics, though ambitious, lacks the focus we'd like to see from someone who would be serving a first term in Congress.

In contrast, Strack's focus is sharply targeted on the economy and job creation, linking that to the need for pension and health care reform. Part of that approach includes investing in technology to develop alternative fuels, which is both an existing strength for this area and a strategy to decrease this county's dependence on foreign oil.

In our view, Strack is more realistic about what a freshman Congressman could accomplish, and plans to keep his focus on what we believe to be the most critical issue facing District 7: the economy. We're endorsing him in the Democratic primary race for the U.S. House of Representatives.

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