

Nevada Appeal

Appeal endorses Heller, Titus and Krolicki

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2nd Congressional district

Dean Heller is our choice, but it should be known that the vote was not unanimous. Here's why: There is a concern that he will be status quo in Washington and fall short of representing the independent thought Nevadans are known for. Was it really an accomplishment that George Bush came to Nevada to campaign for Heller, or was it a sign that Heller's campaign is not doing as well as expected, and that he will be beholden to the Bush agenda if he's elected? There's a reason Republicans are having a tough go of it in this election - because many conservatives are questioning the Bush administration's policies on Iraq and other issues.

Despite those concerns, Heller does have accomplishments to stand on, including steering the Secretary of State's Office through a period of rapid transition to a new voting system. He made mistakes, but in the end, the job got done. He is also credited with making the state more business- friendly by simplifying the process they use to incorporate in Nevada.

His proposals include making recent tax cuts permanent on the assumption they will boost the economy. Jill Derby does not support that. They also differ on Social Security, with Heller supporting optional privatization and Derby favoring a lock box approach.

Derby is a formidable opponent with lots of energy and a stated goal of working across party lines. Her homespun "right off the ranch" campaign is misleading. She's polished and sharp. She is critical of Bush administration policies on the war, which she said has isolated the United States.

She lists several accomplishments from her time on the Board of Regents, but in the end, Heller's accomplishments as secretary of state are hard to ignore. And having a congressman from Carson City would have its advantages, giving residents a direct conduit to Washington.

We say choose Heller, but hold him accountable for his votes and make sure he's independent in the true spirit of Nevada.

Governor

When you analyze the candidates on the issues, there is surprisingly little difference between their proposals, including the need for better funding of education and their opposition to Yucca Mountain.

Thus it becomes a matter of style and leadership ability.

A clear picture emerges from those who have worked with both candidates:

Dina Titus is a hard-working, hands-on legislator who sweats the details. She listens to people, and knows the state budget process inside and out.

Jim Gibbons is a generalist who lets others take care of the details. He's a polished politician, but flounders when questions take him far off message.

Gibbons takes no accountability for a campaign featuring negative campaign ads. Rather, he said, he's disappointed in the negativity, which can partly be interpreted as a reflection on his own integrity.

Titus is not innocent of negativity in her campaign. She explains her negative ads as having to fight back.

It will be important for the state's new governor to have the ability to build consensus and work across party lines. There's little evidence Gibbons has those traits, and his accomplishments in Washington haven't been a major part of his campaign.

Thus, the best vote for Nevada's future is Dina Titus.

Lieutenant

governor

Brian Krolicki is the choice, based on his accomplishments as state treasurer. He's universally respected for his work developing the Millennium Scholarship (in fact, had all his recommendations been followed, there may not be concerns today about the solvency of the scholarship fund) and the College Tuition Plan.

Those accomplishments will doubtlessly serve him well as lieutenant governor, with its responsibilities of promoting economic development and tourism. He's laid out several ideas to accomplish that.

His opponent, Bob Unger, a Las Vegas developer, is also well-qualified to fill the economic development role. He's a proven planner and deal maker, but his unfamiliarity with Northern Nevada makes him a poor choice for voters in this region.

## Secretary of state

These candidates are probably best known for their famous fathers.

We have concerns about both.

With Ross Miller, it's inexperience - he's only 30 and has no experience managing such an office - and with Danny Tarkanian, it's a past that includes a sanction for practicing law without a license.

Both have brought out solid proposals. For example, Tarkanian wants to toughen the campaign finance disclosure laws; Miller talks about toughening the ballot initiative process so groups cannot get misleading questions in front of voters.

It comes down to an ability to make solid, ethical decisions. In that respect, Miller gets the nod.

## State treasurer

Mark DeStefano questions Kate Marshall's lack of hands-on money management skills in private enterprise. She raises questions about his past business practices, which includes a bankruptcy filing.

But Marshall does have plenty of experience in business and in fighting fraud. Her campaign isn't flashy, and her proposals bring no promises of significant increases in the return on state dollars.

DeStefano proposes programs he says will bring greater return on the state's money through investment vehicles he claims carry no risk.

The bottom line is the person in charge of the state's coffers needs to have an unblemished financial record. Marshall qualifies. DeStefano does not.