

Lake Placid resident to run for Congress: Treadwell eyes

Written by KIM SMITH DEDAM, Staff Writer
Saturday, April 21, 2007

LAKE PLACID — Alexander "Sandy" Treadwell, a resident of Lake Placid and former New York secretary of state, is organizing a run for the U.S. Congress seat held by freshman Democrat Kirsten Gillibrand. Gillibrand nabbed John Sweeney's Republican seat last November. Treadwell previously served as chairman of the Republican State Committee for four years under Gov. George Pataki.

In a phone interview Friday, Treadwell said he started actively meeting with state GOP leaders in December.

In four months covering more than 10,000 miles, Treadwell said he met with people throughout the district about his possible candidacy.

"And I was extremely encouraged by the response."

The decision was final, he said, "when I filed the statement of candidacy on Monday."

Dutchess County Republican Richard Wager also recently filed for candidacy.

Having played a supporting role in Republican Party politics for many years, Treadwell said a run for Congress was the next chapter.

"I have spent my life working for my community, working with leaders in the community. As secretary of state, I worked with leaders all over the state. This is a chance to continue to do that work in Washington. I have the experience and judgment to be an effective leader in Congress."

Treadwell said the 2007 election year was "difficult across the country" for Republicans, but he pointed to the four North Country GOP lawmakers, Rep. John McHugh, State Sen. Betty Little and Assemblywomen Teresa Sayward and Janet Duprey, who won with strong numbers.

"I was pleased with our area," Treadwell said. "Our local representatives were appreciated by the voters for the good work they do."

According to Treadwell's spokeswoman, Melissa C. Schwarz, the first campaign headquarters opened in Saratoga Springs this week.

"We just had the phones turned on," she said.

Two county Republican chairmen have already offered endorsements, William Thomas of Johnsburg and Town of Thurman Supervisor John Haskell.

Ron Jackson, chairman of the Essex County Republican Committee, said he supports Treadwell's congressional aspirations and foresees a fair campaign and a tough challenge for Gillibrand.

"Everybody knows Sandy, loves Sandy, he's so polite and always very kind. You don't have to worry about mud coming out of Sandy, he's not capable of it."

Jackson said he thinks Treadwell has a solid chance to unseat the popular, bright freshman Democrat.

"She's doing all the right things, I know all her people, but she's a clone of Nancy Pelosi. In 44 votes out of 44, they voted the same. Gillibrand was elected to represent the people of New York, not San Francisco."

The next step, Schwarz said, is to assemble a campaign team to begin fundraising ahead of nominations next spring.

Gillibrand has already raised about three-quarters of a million dollars to put toward the 2008 campaign, Schwarz said.

Treadwell, who is a wealthy philanthropist and has a farm in Westport, is expected to fill the war chest.

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When asked if he will self-fund the campaign, Schwarz said, "He will have the resources to run an excellent campaign."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, the average House of Representatives seat cost was \$966,000 in 2006.

Gillibrand raised about \$1.9 million to Sweeney's \$2.9 million.

Treadwell storefront headquarters are planned for each county in the district.

"We have very good core people and a lot of volunteers," Treadwell said. "This is going to be a great campaign."