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The Times recommends — Legislative District 1, Position 1: Guinn and Stanford; Position 2: Munson

The Seattle Times editorial board recommends voters cast ballots for Sandy Guinn and Derek Stanford in the Legislative District 1, Position 1, primary election. For the district's Position 2 seat, Heidi Munson is the choice.

VOTERS in northeast King County and south Snohomish County have a rare political opportunity to elect two new faces to the Legislature. Befitting the unusual moment, two open seats in District 1 drew eight candidates.

The district, which includes portions of Bothell, Woodinville, Mountlake Terrace and Brier, is losing state Rep. Al O'Brien, a Democrat in Position 1, to retirement. The former Seattle police sergeant was first elected in 1996.

The race for Position 2 is to replace state Rep. Mark Ericks, a Democrat, who is not seeking re-election. Ericks, elected in 2005, has been nominated to lead the U.S. Marshals Service in Western Washington.

In the state's extraordinary financial circumstance, their replacements will be learning the job under trying and at times chaotic circumstances. Past experience and thinking outside partisan boxes are key.

For Position 1, voters would be best served by a strong race between Republican Sandy Guinn and Democrat Derek Stanford. This dual endorsement for the primary aims at knowing the candidates better, especially on where to tighten state spending and how to prioritize brutal budget cuts that await lawmakers in Olympia.

Guinn served on the Bothell City Council until 2009, and was picked by her peers to serve as deputy mayor. She was part of a local government that held down taxes, as the city nurtured and delivered on redevelopment plans for the future. Bothell worked to create jobs.

Stanford is a statistician who believes Olympia can do better with more data-driven information. He has worked behind the scenes in local Democratic politics and he knows the district. He is a jobs-oriented candidate, who is sensitive to the impact of state revenue and budget decisions on small business.

The race also includes Democrat Vince DeMiero, a Mountlake Terrace High School teacher, and two more Republicans, Dennis Richter and Dick Lapinski.

Of the three candidates for Position 2, we are drawn to the fiscal restraint championed by Republican Heidi Munson. She is endorsed over Democrats Luis Moscoso and Dave Griffin.

Munson is essentially running on pledges of leaner government, tighter spending and an open mind about new ways to doing government business, including working toward a greener environment. Her earnest rhetoric fits the times.

Moscoso knows the inner workings of Olympia, but the challenge for him is to broaden a perspective shaped by representing the Washington Public Employees Association/UFCW 365 and union issues for Community Transit workers and drivers. He knows the territory, the question is how tough he can be in the interest of all taxpayers.

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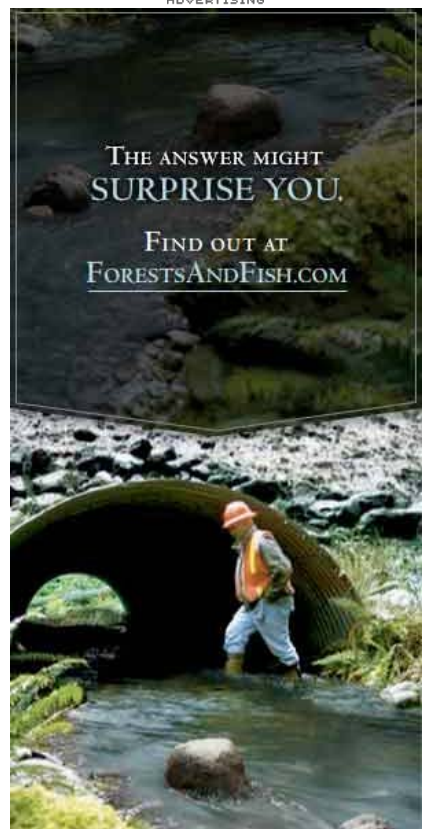
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