

CANDIDATE GETS PARTY SUPPORT ALBO, OTHERS RECEIVE GENEROUS HELP FROM THEIR LEGISLATIVE KIN

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Byline: Pamela Stallsmith Times-Dispatch Staff Writer Contact Pamela St

Body

Del. David B. Albo's campaign song could be The Beatles' classic, "With a Little Help From My Friends."

Albo is battling for the House seat he has held since 1994 against Democrat Gregory Werkheiser, who narrowly trails the Fairfax County Republican in fundraising. But Albo's Capitol colleagues have come to his aid, providing almost one-fifth of the nearly \$376,000 he reported raising as of Sept. 30. The lawmakers have pumped about \$75,000 into his campaign, a sum that's sure to swell in the upcoming days until the Nov. 8 election.

"The first thing I'd have to say is I'm really humbled that my colleagues want me back that much," Albo said. "It's been very, very nice to have that kind of support."

Delegates face a continual cycle of collecting money to build their campaign coffers and stay prepared for their every-other-year elections. But many - especially those who aren't facing rivals this year - are sharing the wealth with their legislative kin.

House candidates gave other delegate contenders almost \$520,000 last year and this year through Sept. 30, according to the Virginia Public Access Project, which tracks money in state politics. Senate contenders donated nearly \$68,000, and leadership committees - such as the House speaker's political-action committee, gave another \$715,132.

Although Republicans control the 100-member House, Democrats have made some modest gains in recent years. Both parties hope to pick up seats next month - the GOP now holds 60, plus two independents who usually vote with them. Democrats occupy 38.

"I spend just as much time working on campaigns as if I had an opponent, except I'm not worried about me," said House Majority Leader H. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem.

Between his candidate and leadership committee, Griffith said he has given House candidates more than \$113,000 as of Friday, with \$79,000 of that disbursed since Oct. 1.

Members of the House leadership said they encouraged delegates to give to incumbents or challengers to help maintain and expand their majority.

Similarly, the House Democratic Caucus is marshaling support for its candidates.

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During last year's tax fight, "we recognized how important every single vote is. So it's natural for members to assist candidates who have similar priorities," said the caucus chairman, Del. Brian J. Moran of Alexandria. "We are doing everything we can to have the necessary resources for our hardworking candidates."

House candidates have raised more than \$19 million since January 2004 and spent about \$14.7 million through the end of last month, according to VPAP. Political leaders in both parties have said only nine seats are competitive, which means both sides are pouring tens of thousands of dollars into those races.

The Albo-Werkheiser race illustrates that.

The Dominion Leadership Trust, the political-action committee of House Speaker William J. Howell, R-Stafford, had put nearly \$146,000 into House races this year through Sept. 30, with \$25,000 of that benefiting Albo. OneVirginia, the political-action committee of Democratic Gov. Mark R. Warner, has pumped \$367,000 into the contests, including \$25,000 to Werkheiser.

Albo's drawing more than money. Last weekend, three Republican delegates from Southside - Robert Hurt of Pittsylvania County, Clarke N. Hogan of Halifax County and Daniel W. Marshall III of Danville - went to Fairfax to stump for him, going door to door and bringing him a check for \$500 from their political-action committee.

"We don't have opponents, and Dave has always been such a good friend to us," said Hurt, who's also donated \$1,000 to Albo.

Del. S. Chris Jones, R-Suffolk, who boasts one of the biggest treasuries in the House, gave Albo \$15,000 in the spring.

"Certain members have tougher races than others," said Jones, who's facing token opposition next month. "Getting the message out to their constituents is important, and I try to help out where I can."

Werkheiser, in his first bid for office, has received \$54,250 from Democratic candidates or committees, including \$23,000 from the House Democratic Caucus. He expects Democratic attorney general hopeful R. Creigh Deeds to join him soon on the campaign trail.

"I'm certainly honored to have the support of the governor and other leading elected officials," Werkheiser said. "Certainly I understand that they want more like-minded company in Richmond. These races are not inexpensive."

Campaign coffers

Money raised through Sept. 30 for selected House races:

District 6

Anne Crockett-Stark, Republican \$99,080

*Benny Keister, Democrat \$108,648

District 9

*Allen W. Dudley, Republican \$93,760

Eric Ferguson, Democrat \$144,758

District 26**

Lowell Fulk, Democrat \$159,082

Matt Lohr, Republican \$162,774

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District 37**

David Bulova, Democrat \$279,678

John Mason, Republican \$259,386

District 41**

Michael J. Golden, Republican \$247,971

David Marsden, Democrat \$256,081

District 42

* David B. Albo, Republican \$375,850

Gregory Werkheiser, Democrat \$358,795

District 52

Hilda Marie Barg, Democrat \$336,593

*Jeff Frederick, Republican \$458,832

District 56

Peter L. DeFur, Democrat \$79,244

*William R. Janis, Republican \$169,744

District 67**

Chuck Caputo, Democrat \$230,637

Chris Craddock, Republican \$251,651

District 68

* Bradley P. Marrs, Republican \$193,856

Katherine Waddell, independent \$192,274

* denotes incumbent, ** denotes open seat

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Contact Pamela Stallsmith at (804) 649-6746 or pstallsmith@timesdispatch.com

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