

ELECTION GUIDE

2026 PRIMARY



HUBBARD COUNTY CANDIDATES

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HUBBARD COUNTY VOTING INFORMATION

How primary elections work



In partisan races or those with political parties, only one candidate in each party moves on. For example, the winner of the Republican primary for governor will be on the ballot in the November general election. The rest of the candidates are out of the running.

You can only vote for one party, but you choose which one, as Minnesota doesn't have party registration.

In nonpartisan races, the primary narrows the pool of candidates down to twice the number of available seats. So if five candidates are running for county sheriff, the top two in the primary will be on the ballot in November. If 14 people are running for four seats on the school board, the top eight will advance.

Where and when do I vote?

There are three ways to vote in Minnesota: by mail, early in-person and in-person on Election Day.



Voting by mail began June 26. Some precincts in rural areas are mail ballot precincts, and ballots are automatically mailed to registered voters there. If you don't live in a mail ballot precinct, you can still request a ballot at mnvotes.gov/absentee. You can return your ballot by mail, and those ballots must be received by no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day. Or, you can drop it off yourself at your county elections office no later than 5 p.m. on Election Day.



Early in-person voting also began June 26. You can go to your county's early voting location(s), usually the courthouse or government center, and fill out an absentee ballot. You will need to know your MN ID or Social Security number to fill out the application.

Starting July 24, voters can cast ballots as part of the "early voting process," which is more similar to voting on Election Day. You'll fill out a short certificate, fill out a ballot and then put it into the ballot counter.

Hubbard County's early voting location is the Hubbard County Courthouse in Park Rapids (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)



On **Primary Election Day**, Tuesday, Aug. 11, you can go to your local polling place to vote until 8 p.m. You can find your polling place at mnvotes.gov/pollfinder.

Local election officials also send teams of election judges to nursing homes and hospitals during the 35 days before the election and provide ballots to voters who live in the city or town where the facility is located. You can contact facility management or your local election office to find out when that will happen.

HUBBARD COUNTY VOTING INFORMATION

How do I register to vote?



You can register to vote or update your registration online at mnvotes.gov or by returning a paper form to your local elections office until July 21. You'll need an email address and your driver's license or the last four digits of your Social Security number.

You can also register when you vote, either early in-person or on Election Day. You'll need to bring one proof of residence, like your driver's license or a photo ID paired with a bill or lease.

Where can I find more information?

For more details on voting, you can visit mnvotes.gov, call 1-877-600-VOTE (8683), text 651-217-3862 or contact your county election office.

For more on the 2026 election, including candidates, maps and more, visit kaxe.org/election2026.

What is KAXE?



KAXE is a Northern Minnesota public radio station, founded in 1976. We have signals in Grand Rapids (91.7), Bemidji (90.5) and Brainerd (89.9), and our broadcast can always be streamed at kaxe.org.

KAXE News began in 2023, and our team of Northern Minnesota-born-and-raised journalists puts together this Primary Election Guide.

KAXE's Election Guide methodology



KAXE contacted every candidate three times using contact information submitted to the Secretary of State's Office when they filed for office. Candidate responses have not been edited and are published as submitted.

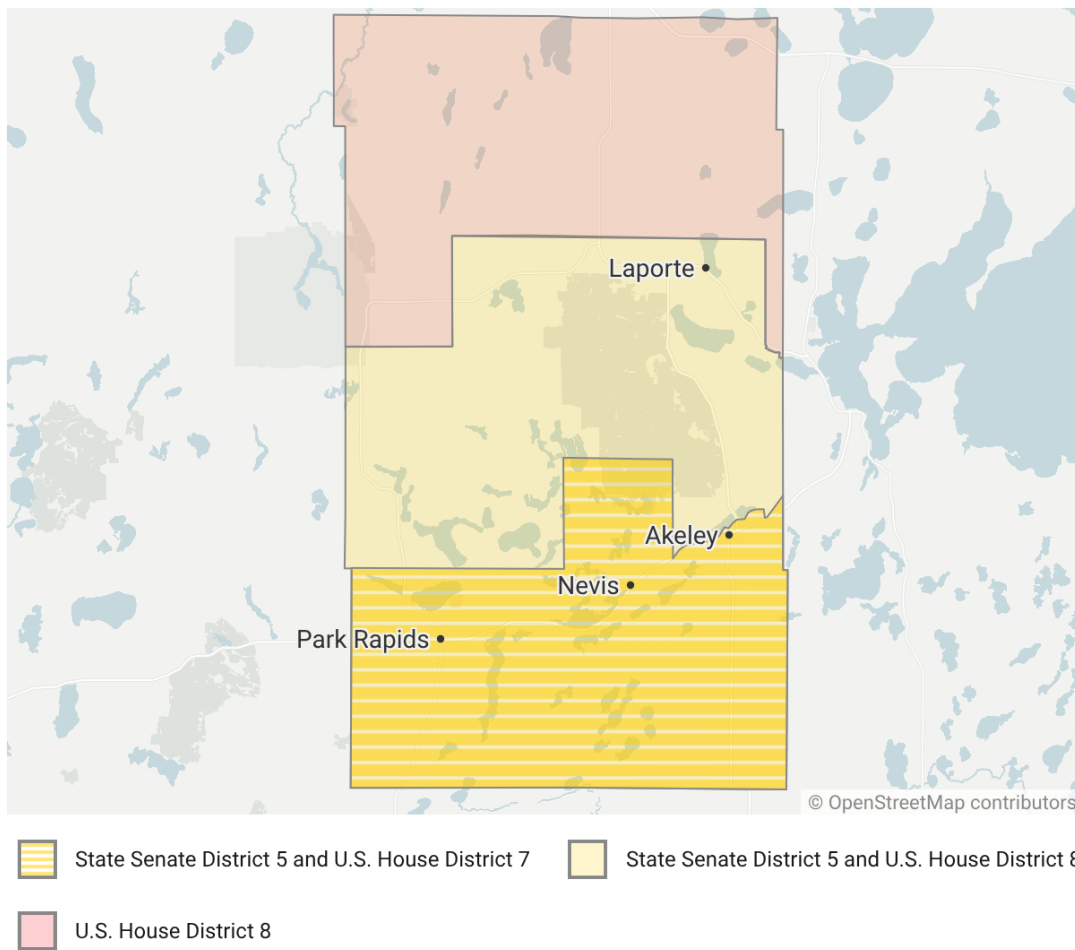
As necessary, our news team added contextual information and corrected inaccuracies, marked with editor's notes in italics.

Please contact us at news@kaxe.org with questions or comments or to report any errors.

HUBBARD COUNTY VOTING INFORMATION

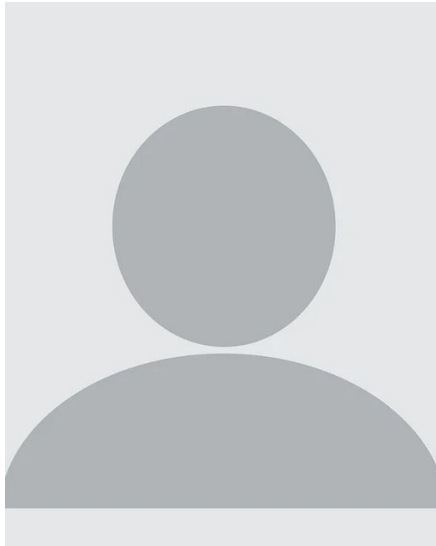
About Hubbard County districts

Three of the races in this guide will only be on some Hubbard County voters' ballots: the races for U.S. House District 7, U.S. House District 8 and Minnesota State Senate District 5. Check the map below to see which districts you live in.



Created with Datawrapper

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 7: DEMOCRATS



Steve Carlson

stevecarlsonforussenate2018.com



Erik Osberg

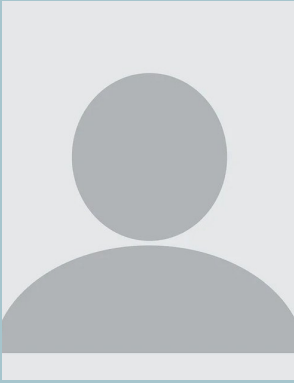
erikosberg.com

Party endorsed

Candidate campaign website as reported to the Minnesota Secretary of State.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 7: DEMOCRATS

Steve Carlson



Age on Election Day: 75
Community: Capitol Heights in St. Paul, Capitol

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? I am retired but hope to sell my books. Writer

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. Professional journalist, 10 years in state government at U of Minnesota. Won several statewide elections and other Congressional primaries. Novelist writing about Minnesota. Write and perform important political music to reflect my values and lead this state and country. Polyglot and use a number of languages to help others.

Why are you running? I began in politics after returning from Vietnam conflict with a determination and mission to not allow any more Vietnams, which I have written about extensively in my memoir. America's in trouble and we need a new Congress to save the day as my rap Vote for Change explains.

As a business consultant in the Vietnamese refugee community on my return I gained knowledge and experience to transform a community. CD7 is not rebounded, it is not revived, serious people are trying to secede to the Dakotas! It is neglected and both my Swedish and Norwegian grandmothers came from Clay County. I intend to turn it around by my work in Congress and leadership and network with both parties. This can be a golden age for CD7.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? DFL needs to be drastically changed. Indy Party U.S. Nominee in 2014. We need a new party arrangement. Clearly the old DFL is dead, propped by corruption. Few leaders outside the legislature are even from Minnesota. Taken over by haters who've unlawfully taken down our flag to show their disdain. One says Minnesotans are not intellectual enough. I'm a professional linguist fluent in many languages including Swedish and Norwegian, Spanish and Asian languages. Can communicate and lead. Independent voters in CD-7 have voted for me in statewide elections giving me counties in my primary against Steve Simon. I will not follow the party I will lead it. I will challenge Michelle Fischbach to lead the district better, and vote for the SAVE Act. Save CD7 and keep it in Minnesota. My ancestors didn't come to CD7 to see it neglected and undeveloped.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. Jobs and economic development; Health care;

government Integrity. Leading Rural Restoration of CD7 by creating Jobs and economic development; Health care; government Integrity. Leading Rural Restoration of CD7 by creating special Restoration Hub Zones using tax and finance measures (local and state) focusing on areas where housing is inadequate for jobs created. Expanding health facilities and social services in these areas. Using AI to provide educational quality and equity to students using broadband internet including Starlink. Work with state and federal government to stop fraudulent practices. Pass SAVE Act. Citizenship is key to advance Minnesota Restoration. Use food processing to create more local food. for foreign markets creating over-supply. Promote educational tourism and educational programs about natural resources. .

What are your natural resources policy positions? Work with federal government to prevent forest fires. Keep the ground water unpolluted. Farming is good, will seek Ag Committee seat if elected. By promoting farm land and food processing to create jobs in CD7 we will produce and sell more food locally, instate, rather than seek to compete with Brazil

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U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 7: DEMOCRATS

Steve Carlson (continued)

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented?

This is not a game, it is Minnesota, the free state who create a government of members. Each of us is a member and cannot be deprived of rights and privileges without the law of the land or due process of law. I will represent the unborn, our little members who can't vote but are still going to be respected and represented and protected as a class in future Minnesota law. A woman, beyond health and safety, incest or rape, does not have the choice to "represent" her unborn by reckless abortion. I am a hyperpolyglot, speaking many languages including Swedish, Norwegian, Spanish, Asian languages so I promote real outreach not the strangulation of CRT.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

I previously ran with the Independence Party. So my goal is to be independent and to be a leader. I will not vote straight party line, but for Minnesota CD7. Our interests do vary from DFL. CD7 Rep is not a piece of a battering ram for Chuck Schumer, Amy Klobuchar or John Thune. I support Donald Trump because he can lead. There were election irregularities in 2020 and we must heal this state's electorate. We did it in passing the contentious 1857 MN Constitution and we must revisit the promises of that contest and restore it. We need to restore the original dream of the farmers and foresters who first realized the American Dream and fought for freedom.

Editor's note: There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 7: DEMOCRATS



Age on Election Day: 54
Community: Wadena, MN

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? I currently work for Otter Tail County as the Rural Rebound Initiative Coordinator.

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. My experience comes from real life. I grew up in rural Minnesota, graduated from Upsala Area Schools, and worked my way through college while playing football at Hamline University. I've worked in finance, owned a small business, worked in the trades, worked alongside farmers, and now serve as the Rural Rebound Initiative Coordinator for Otter Tail County. My work is focused on helping rural communities grow — partnering with employers, schools, nonprofits, and local leaders to support businesses, attract families, and create opportunity. I'm not a career politician, and I don't pretend to be. I'm someone who knows the

Erik Osberg

value of hard work because I've lived it, just like my neighbors across Western Minnesota.

This campaign is about people, place, and making sure rural communities have a stronger voice. We can do better.

Why are you running? I'm running for Congress because I believe we can do better.

I've lived in rural Minnesota most of my life, and I know what it feels like when people in Washington talk about places like ours but don't really listen.

Working families are stretched thin. Farmers and small businesses are being squeezed. People are driving too far for healthcare, worrying about bills, and wondering if their voices matter. That's not right.

I'm a working-class Minnesotan, a husband, a dad, a small business owner, and someone who believes leadership starts with showing up. This campaign is about people, not politics. It's about honesty, accountability, restoring checks and balances, and bringing some decency and empathy back to public service. Western Minnesota needs someone who listens, tells the truth, and fights for working families, family farms, strong schools, healthcare access, and rural communities.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? I believe trust is earned by showing up. Since we launched this campaign, I've put over 31,000 miles on the road, visited communities in all 38 counties in Western Minnesota, and had thousands of face-to-face conversations. As of mid-June we've made over 200 campaign stops, and

we're not slowing down.

That matters because you can't represent people you don't take the time to listen to. You can't understand what families, farmers, small businesses, teachers, healthcare workers, and rural communities are facing if you're only talking at them from a distance.

This campaign is built around what I hear every day: strengthening rural communities, supporting family farms, improving schools, expanding healthcare access, and helping working families.

People here don't need more political theater. They need someone who will show up, listen, be honest, and get to work. That's why I'm running.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. My priorities come from the conversations I've had with people across Western Minnesota. Government should work for people, and right now too many feel like it doesn't.

1. Defend the Constitution and restore accountability. The Constitution is the foundation of our democracy. I'll protect our freedoms, defend fair elections, respect the rule of law, and make sure elected officials answer to the people — not special interests.

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U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 7: DEMOCRATS

Erik Osberg (continued)

2. Get big money out of politics.

Your voice should matter more than any corporation's. I support ending the influence of Citizens United, increasing transparency, and reducing the role of corporate money in our elections. My campaign doesn't accept corporate PAC money because trust starts with accountability.

3. Make healthcare more affordable and accessible.

I'll fight to protect rural hospitals and clinics, lower prescription costs, and make sure families can get care closer to home.

We can do better.

What are your natural resources policy positions?

I know our natural resources aren't just something we talk about, they're part of our way of life.

Our lakes, rivers, farmland, forests, and outdoor traditions are worth protecting. Whether you farm, hunt, fish, or just enjoy being outside, we all have a responsibility to be good stewards of the land and water we depend on.

I believe we can protect our environment while also supporting the farmers, workers, and communities who rely on these resources. That means protecting clean water, supporting conservation efforts, investing in sustainable agriculture, and making sure decisions include the people who actually live and work on the land.

Too often, these issues get turned into political fights. They shouldn't be.

Taking care of the land isn't a partisan issue — it's about respecting what we've been given and making sure future generations can enjoy the same Minnesota we do.

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented? I believe representation doesn't only belong to the people who voted for you.

If I'm elected, my job will be to represent everyone in Western Minnesota — Democrats, Republicans, independents, and people who don't think much about politics at all.

That starts with showing up. Throughout this campaign, I've traveled across the district, listened to people from all backgrounds, and had conversations with folks who don't always agree with me. I think that's how leadership should work.

We may not see every issue the same way, but everyone should be treated with honesty and respect, and everyone should have a representative who listens.

I'll keep holding conversations across the district, with farmers, small business owners, workers, parents, seniors, and communities that feel forgotten.

At the end of the day, this seat doesn't belong to a political party. It belongs to the people of Western Minnesota. My responsibility is to them.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

My job is to represent the people of Western Minnesota. That responsibility comes before anything else.

Political parties matter because they bring people together around shared ideas and goals, but no party gets every issue right every time. If something isn't right for the people I represent, I have a responsibility to speak up. I'll listen to people in this district, look at the facts, and make decisions based on what will actually help our communities, not what's easiest politically. That's how leadership should work.

I'm running because we need more honesty and accountability in Washington — people willing to work together, ask hard questions, and solve problems instead of just winning political fights

I won't agree with my party on every issue, and not everyone will agree with me every time. But I'll be honest, explain my decisions, and put Western Minnesota first.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS



Luke Gulbranson
lukegulbranson.com



John Munter
munterforcongress.substack.com



Trina Swanson
trinaforcongress.com
Party endorsed

Candidate campaign website as reported to the Minnesota Secretary of State.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS



Age on Election Day: 42

Community: I live in Eveleth, where I was born and raised.

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? I am a small businessman and hockey coach. My main small business is a maple syrup company.

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. My lived experience has prepared and motivated me to run for office. I am a fourth generation Iron Ranger, and my family really struggled growing up. We got by with the help of government programs like food assistance, free school lunches, and energy assistance. When my dad was able to get a union job with the 49ers, life got more stable. From these experiences, I understand the people of the district and the struggles they face, the importance of good union jobs and the stability they provide, and the importance of protecting programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid that are currently under threat.

Luke Gulbranson

Why are you running? I am running because for too long, working people and the middle class have been getting the short end of the stick. Pete Stauber, and far too many members of Congress, are looking out for themselves and the wealthy. We need a representative who will fight selflessly, not selfishly, every day so that working families can live and thrive in Minnesota.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? I will fight everyday for the people of the North and Central Minnesota in Congress. First, we have to win, and as an Iron Ranger, union member, and small business owner - I am the best candidate to take on Pete Stauber. I'm running because families across the 8th district are struggling. Their costs are going up and their wages are nowhere near keeping up. And who is Pete Stauber looking out for? The big money and special interests calling the shots. I'm not a politician and I'm not running to serve the rich and the powerful. I'm running to serve my friends and neighbors in Minnesota so they get a fair shot and a voice in their future.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. My top three priorities are to lower the cost of essential goods and services, protect Social Security and Medicare, and stand up for unions and workers. First, to lower the cost of essentials, I will tackle the rising cost of healthcare head-on. On protecting Social Security and Medicare, I will support and vote for a bill that reverses

the barbaric cuts made to these programs in the One Big Ugly Bill. Finally, as someone who understands the power of a union job, I will stand up for unions and working people. I will advocate for fair working conditions at all places of work and accountability for corporations that treat their employees unfairly.

What are your natural resources policy positions? My grandfather was a foreman at the Oliver mine. My uncles and dad were heavy equipment operators and Local 49 union members. I know that mining is not only a path to the middle class for thousands of people but the backbone of towns across the district. I also have always had a deep love of the outdoors, like so many people across this district. I don't support mining in the area near the Boundary Waters and would have voted no on Pete Stauber's bill that ends protection for that piece of federal land. The Boundary Waters are too important to us, to our water, to our way of life here. However, I support mining, including copper-nickel mining, at currently operating mines and at proposed sites under development if companies meet all rules and regulations necessary to do so.

(continued on page 12)

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS

Luke Gulbranson (continued)

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented?

We send one person to Washington DC to be accountable and responsive to each and every person across our district, and I would always work hard to do that if elected. It would be a priority to hire excellent staff representative of the district, to return home and be present in the district outside of session, and to hold regular town hall meetings across the district.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

I'm running for Congress to represent this district. Not a party. Not a president. And certainly not corporations and the wealthy - which is why I will not accept a dime of Corporate PAC money. Every decision I make will be based on conversations with constituents right here at home.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS



Age on Election Day: 77
Community: Warba, MN

John Munter

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? I have had published in the Duluth News Tribune countless opinion pieces on the issues of the day for the past six years. I feel, also, that I have the best appreciation of many conservative viewpoints betrayed by the current Administration and MN 8 Congress Member as well as liberal viewpoints. See MunterforCongress.substack.com

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented? We all want the same things-- jobs, housing, and health care and I look forward to debating the fine points of issues with everyone. I think we all have the common sense that we can no longer afford this extended American empire and need to focus on economies at home.

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? I am retired on my hobby farm and work as an author.

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. I look for solutions. During the Line 3 pipeline hearings I was solely responsible for pushing the State to remove defunct pipelines from private properties with my study showing the pipes were not too close together to be removed safely.

Why are you running? I may be old but I can do my age in push-ups and am mentally agile. For example, 21 corporations in Duluth own 10 or more single family homes which should be reserved for young people building equity-- addressed perhaps by taxation, 300 foot separations, or national private equity bans.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. Jobs, housing, and health care--1) rejecting the data center and copper nickel mining because they threaten more jobs than they create. I support taxes on AI chips and tokens to pay for the white collar job apocalypse retraining 2) I support Ro Khanna's plan to create 3 million more homes paid for with windfall profits tax on oil companies as well as a nation-wide ban on private equity buying up single family homes. I support single payer health care which cuts the cost by half and group buying by the US of pharmaceuticals.

What are your natural resources policy positions? Copper nickel mining in Northern Minnesota is stupid in creating toxic waste piles threatening our hospitality. fishing, and tourism industries. The iron ore industry should do better in mercury reduction. Pulsar Helium is non-polluting and promising hundreds of jobs in years to come with great drilling results.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

They can go jump in Lake Superior. I have always thought the Ukraine War was stupid in pushing NATO nukes 6 minutes fly time to Moscow-- and aid to Israel in the Gaza genocide was evil. The current US Military-Israel fusion (Section 224 of the NDAA) is treasonous but 94% of Congress takes money from the Israeli lobby. Ro Khanna and Thomas Massie are my heroes for getting some Epstein files released working across the aisle.

Editor's note: Roughly 94% of current members of Congress have accepted campaign funds from pro-Israel lobbyists, according to [Track AIPAC](#).

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS



Trina Swanson

will use my experience in foreign policy, national security, immigration, and public service to hit the ground running on day one.

Why are you running? I grew up in a working-class home in Hermantown. My Mom was a nurse, and my Dad was a carpenter, later working at the paper mill. Our kitchen conversations weren't about politics. They were about making ends meet, looking out for neighbors, and believing that if you worked hard enough, you could build a comfortable life. I learned that unions strengthen the middle class, that communities thrive when people show up for each other, and that honest work should buy you a life with dignity, not constant insecurity. That's not happening in northern and central Minnesota. The current Representative is putting corporate interests and profits before the working people trying to raise families and retire with dignity. I want to continue my service to this country as an elected official, drawing upon the experience and leadership skills I gained as a 25-year public servant.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? Competence, experience, leadership, integrity, grit. These are the traits I will bring to the job on day one. This election is far too important to put forward a candidate without the experience to do the job. I understand the issues. I worked in Washington, D.C. I know why Washington works, but more importantly, why it doesn't work. I spent my career serving under both parties, bringing people with diverse backgrounds and opinions to

the table, identifying solutions, and building coalitions to implement those solutions. Congress needs to get back to this approach, crossing the aisle to solve problems. Furthermore, I am the Candidate that can win in November. I have already shown up for public forums in all 21 counties, answered unscripted questions, and engaged on complicated issues. I earned the DFL endorsement in May on the very first ballot with over 70% of delegates voting for me.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. Universal healthcare, proper federal funding for childcare, schools, hospitals, and programs the working class relies upon, and attracting new industries with good-paying jobs to the district. I will fight from day one for universal healthcare. We get to decide what our values are and how we spend our money. We currently have a representative who supports cuts to programs that the middle class relies upon, so the 1% can receive greater tax breaks. Minnesota pays more in federal taxes than it receives back in federal funding. I will fight for Minnesota to receive proper federal funding, rather

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Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? JET Global Solutions, LLP, Founding Partner and Attorney

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. I began my career as a public servant at just 18 years old at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. This was my job throughout college and law school. I then joined U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, where I served for almost 20 years. I represented our country in Minnesota, Washington, D.C., Germany, and Kenya. I led international operations and national emergency responses, combated national security and criminal threats, and ensured immigration benefits were granted lawfully, all while working for administrations of both parties, to keep Americans safe. I left a career I loved when I was asked to do things I believed were unethical. I

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: DEMOCRATS

Trina Swanson (continued)

than placing the responsibility on the state, resulting in property tax increases. I will advocate for new industry investment like clean energy and green steel production, with good-paying union jobs. People should be able to stay in the communities they love, raise families, and retire with dignity.

What are your natural resources policy positions?

Generations to come must be able to enjoy this amazing land we call home. We must ensure we have clean water. That means we use science, the experts, and regulatory processes to ensure corporations use the most advanced technological means in their industries to minimize the impact on the environment and manage natural resources sustainably. I will ensure proper funding for federal agencies with oversight of our natural resources, to include returning to proper staffing levels after DOGE cuts, and reopening offices that closed, like the U.S. Forest Service research facility in Grand Rapids. Mining cannot be allowed in the BWCA watershed. However, we can continue to advance technologies for mining in the Iron Range, and hold corporations accountable, so mining is done in a responsible manner, minimizing the impact on the environment and water.

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented?

I will show up. A Representative is just that, a representative of all people in their district. I will continue to show up in all 21 counties. This district is so vast and varied that what's most important to one area may not be the most important issue in another. I will make decisions based on what I think is best for the greatest number of people in the district. In order to do this, I will engage. I will have offices staffed around the district, so constituents feel heard. I will hold town halls in person, without requiring prescreened questions. I will explain why I voted for or against a bill, take feedback, and learn and grow. But, this all starts by electing people with integrity, who understand the issues and the implications for the district. I am that person for CD-8.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

I will fight for what's best for the district. I am not running for office for power or to spend decades in the position. It is time to break out of voting party lines and instead come together in Congress to solve problems. For too long now, each side tries to score political points and win elections by politicizing serious issues like immigration, the future of Social Security, taxes, and health care. Rather than worrying about the next election cycle, Representatives need to govern, represent the people, and get things done. We have seen a Congress unwilling to stand up to this Administration and the dangerous implications of their unwillingness. I will take my oath seriously, an oath to defend the Constitution, rather than a party or administration. That's what I did in my 25-year career as a public servant.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: REPUBLICANS



Anthony Hamilton

anthonyhamiltonforcongress.com



Pete Stauber*

petestauberforcongress.com

*Incumbent
Party endorsed*

*Candidate did not respond to KAXE's survey.

Candidate campaign website as reported to the Minnesota Secretary of State.

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: REPUBLICANS



Age on Election Day: 43
Community: Mora

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? I am a farmer. I farm my own land.

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. Our founders never intended for Congress to create career politicians. They envisioned citizen legislators to temporarily occupy these seats. Farmers, veterans, tradesmen, working class people who would step away from their lives to serve and return home. That is the tradition I intend to keep. I am a farmer, my qualification isn't a resume built inside Washington rubbing elbows with lobbyists. It's a lifetime of solving real problems with limited resources. I know what the cost of gas, doctor bills, grocery costs, vet bills, and when the harvest doesn't go as planned, do to a monthly budget. The 8th district is full of people who work with their hands, manage their own finances, and deal with the

Anthony Hamilton

consequences of decisions made by people who have never lived anything close to their lives. I am one of those people. That is my qualification.

Why are you running? I'm running because I'm no longer willing to sit and watch our government act this corrupt. I spent years doing what most people do, calling and emailing my representative, hoping someone would listen. Nobody did. Our government isn't broken, it's corrupt and there is a difference between those two words. Broken things can be fixed by accident. Corrupt things are working exactly as designed, just not for you and me. Lobbyists write our laws. Members of Congress trade stocks on information you and I will never have. The government shuts down and the people who caused it still get paid. I got tired of waiting for someone else to fix it. So I wrote the CAPT Act. A five-part reform bill covering stock trading bans, lobbying restrictions, salary accountability, attendance requirements, and term limits. I'm serious about this, I am willing to go do it myself. That's why I'm running.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? I am not a performance. I don't have a consultant telling me what to say to a donor expecting something in return. I've taken zero PAC money. I don't owe anyone anything except the people in this district. Pete has been in Washington since 2019. Our debt has climbed toward \$40 trillion, our grocery bills have gone up, healthcare costs have gone up, and the lobby

money flowing into his campaign has gone up. That is not a record to run on. That is a record to run from. I'm running because I want my children to grow up knowing their government won't cheat them. That it belongs to them. Right now it doesn't, and Pete is part of the reason why. Voters should choose me because I'm the only candidate in this race who can't be bought. That is not a talking point, it's just the math.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals. My top priority is congressional reform and real accountability. I authored the CAPT Act, a five part bill that addresses the core corruption that drives every other problem in Washington. One: Term limits. Three in the House and Two in the Senate, no more career politicians feeding at the troughs for decades. Two: End lobbying corruption and foreign money in our legislative process. Lobbyists write our laws, that has to stop. Three: Ban congressional stock trading for every member of Congress and staff. Four: Financial accountability for shutdowns and unbalanced budgets. Shut down the government, lose your salary for the full

(continued on page 18)

U.S. CONGRESS DISTRICT 8: REPUBLICANS

Anthony Hamilton (continued)

duration, no pay back. Every year without a balanced budget triggers a 10% pay cut. Five: Mandatory attendance. Show up and do the job you were elected to do or you don't get paid. Same as every other job in America. Fix Congress first, then fix everything else.

What are your natural resources policy positions?

Minnesota's natural resources belong to the people of this state, not to foreign corporations, not to Chilean mining companies shipping the output to China and then call it American energy independence. I support domestic mining and timber. CD8 was built on resource industries and I will not apologize for that. That doesn't mean we have to risk destroying the Boundary Waters to watch Chilean companies get rich while supplying Chinese domestic production. Pete sponsored opening the watershed to sulfide mining through H.J.140 knowing the outcome and who would benefit. I would not have let this happen.

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented?

Every constituent in this district deserves to be heard. That starts with showing up, something that Pete has failed to do. He has not held a single in-person town hall in over seven years in office. That is not representation, that is avoidance. I have been holding town halls before I am even elected. That is the standard I intend to keep. Beyond that, I am looking closely at congressional staffing allowances and how they can be deployed to actually serve constituents across this district, not donors, not lobbyists, not party leadership. People who call my office should reach someone whose job is to listen and help, not manage them. You don't have to agree with me on everything to deserve a representative who answers the phone. That is the baseline and I intend to meet it.

What would you do if what's best for your district differed from your party's position on an issue?

I would unapologetically side with my constituents. That is the job. I am not running to be a reliable party vote, I am running to represent the people of the 8th district. If those two things conflict, there is no conflict, my constituents win every time. This is why I wrote the CAPT Act. A member of Congress who is financially beholden to a party, donor, or PAC cannot make that choice freely. The money owns the vote before the vote is even cast. I don't have that problem. I don't owe anyone anything except the people in this district. The founders didn't design this system for party soldiers. They designed it for citizen legislators who would use their own judgement on behalf of the people they represent. That is the job I am applying for.

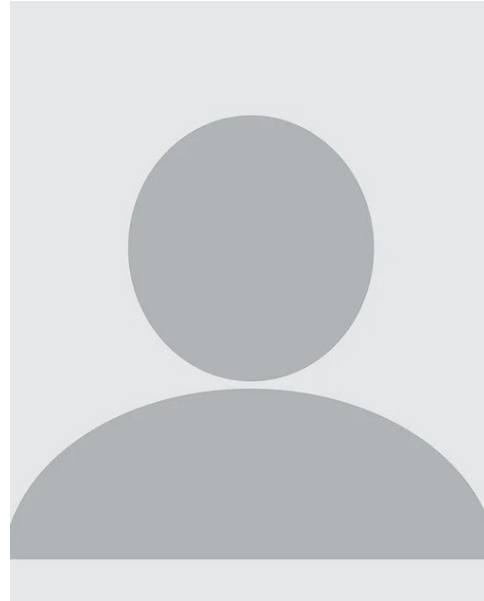
MN STATE SENATE DISTRICT 5: REPUBLICANS



Paul Utke*

paulutke.com

Incumbent



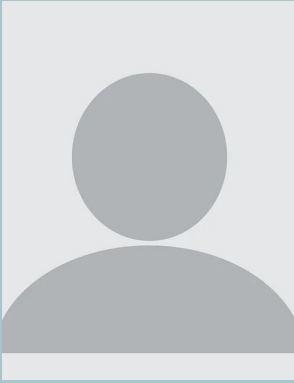
Mike Wiener

Party endorsed

*Candidate did not respond to KAXE's survey.

Candidate campaign website as reported to the Minnesota Secretary of State.

MN STATE SENATE DISTRICT 5: REPUBLICANS



Mike Wiener

Why are you running? As the endorsed candidate I'm running for change. The state budget has increased from \$35 billion to nearly 70 billion in 10 years. Has your income doubled in the last 10 years? NO. And yet career politicians keep voting for massive omnibus bills which only expand government spending. Massive amounts of fraud in the health and human services committee has continued because politicians work for big pharma and lobbyists not the people. I am the only candidate in this race who does not take money from lobbyists. I work for the people not special interests.

Editor's note: Minnesota's spending was \$62.4 million in fiscal year 2025, compared to \$35.9 billion in FY2015. That includes spending from special revenue funds, permanent trust funds, federal dollars and debt services. Spending from the General Fund, Minnesota's largest and most flexible fund, has grown to \$34 billion from \$20.3 billion.

Why should voters choose you to advance to the general election? As the Endorsed candidate receiving 80 percent of the votes at the Republican convention I'm truly honored. It has been a great experience serving in the house, now it's time to take that experience to make change in the Senate. As the author of The articles of impeachment I worked to hold Tim

Walz accountable for the fraud in our state. I was one leading the charge to keep our old Minnesota flag. At the same time warning that down shifts from the state would massively increase our property taxes which has happened. Leaders need to take charge, not wait for a gavel to make change. I will work for our future generations for my children your children our grandchildren for a better Minnesota.

What are your top three priorities, if elected? Please describe specific policy goals.

Cut Government spending which lowers taxes.
Fraud, hold corrupt politicians accountable.
Restore our old Minnesota flag

What environment and natural resources policies do you support? I hunt and fish and want to make sure my kids have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors as much as I do. When natural resources have become politicized it can have negative effects on our rural way of life. We have seen this with the wolf predation issues. I attended and spoke at many of those events.

Age on Election Day: 50
Community: Rural, south of Long Prairie

Where are you currently employed, and what is your role? Wiener Custom Craft. Owner.

Please share any prior experience and education that you believe qualifies you for office. I served the people of House District 5b as their Representative for the last four years. 20 years ago my wife and I started Wiener Custom Craft a wood processing company that produces animal bedding and Bio -mass. Our business gives me connections with two of the largest industries in our area agriculture and forestry. I also attended to Technical College for Business Management and Sales

(continued on page 21)

MN STATE SENATE DISTRICT 5: REPUBLICANS

Mike Wiener (continued)

What policies do you support to address concerns of widespread fraud in state-run programs?

Currently health and human services is where the bulk of the fraud is taking place. The departments gauge their success by number of people served but not results. For instance in the housing funding we have spent billions on homelessness and yet the number of homeless has not decreased. These departments needs to prioritize results and efficiency along with Zero Based budgeting in order to reign in the fraud. When fraudster are convicted of frauding government the the specific area where the fraud came from have to have their budget cut by that amount.

Editor's note: Federal prosecutors estimated fraud in state-run Medicaid programs, primarily funded by federal dollars, could exceed \$9 billion; Gov. Tim Walz and state officials said that was a sensationalized number. In December 2025, a Minnesota Star Tribune review of federal court cases showed the alleged fraud uncovered to date is closer to \$218 million, though that number was expected to grow as investigations continue.

What policies would you champion to help alleviate growing property tax burdens on residents at the local government level? What changes, if any, would you support to Local Government Aid?

Since before I was elected I proposed a cap on property taxes. Which would protect our homeowners especially in the rural areas. This has to be tied with no unfunded mandates from the state to be successful. Currently the state shifts tax burden down onto the counties and local entities without funding them. LGA and CPA only help alleviate some of the tax burden. As Ronald Reagan said we don't have a tax problem we have a spending problem. We need to cut spending and with an estimated 9 BILLION in fraud there is plenty of areas we can cut.

How would you ensure constituents who didn't vote for you still feel represented?

I work for all the people in my area. Good ideas aren't relegated to one party. But on core issues such as life and the second amendment to me there is no compromise.