

For immediate release:

CHESTER FIRST SELECTMAN ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE FOR STATEWIDE OFFICE

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Chester First Selectman Tom Marsh announced today that he is filing to establish an exploratory committee for statewide office including governor. Marsh is the first Republican municipal leader to form such a committee. As the only candidate with both business and municipal leadership experience he brings a new dimension to the contest.

“Connecticut State government is broken because of shortsighted solutions and an unwillingness to make tough decisions. The fiscal crisis in the early 90’s brought us the income tax. The last budget crisis in 2002 saw slashes in state staffing” Marsh said. “We are standing today with a heavy tax burden, our state credit card maxed out, and still our leaders cannot decide what’s strategically important in state government and how to balance revenues and expenses.”

While things may look bleak, Marsh believes that our current economic situation is a great opportunity. “Connecticut has key elements in place to return to prosperity. We have always been blessed with a great geographic location. We need to promote that through better transportation connections, which will retain and attract businesses. We have a diversified tax structure, we need to fine tune it and make it more productive. We also need to share more revenue with municipal governments to take advantage of their prudent budgeting practices, and help relieve the dependence on property tax. State government needs to improve the services only they can provide, while listening to local leaders and allowing them to do more locally or through voluntary regional efforts.”

“Our approach will be basic: identify the cost of government, prioritize needs, identify the departments and organizations that can deliver the greatest value, and follow through to insure the objectives are being met. “

Marsh has a strong track record of fiscal control. The first municipal budget prepared under his leadership lead the state in performance with an overall **decrease of -2.94%**. That performance has carried forward. The current municipal operations budget for Chester is still **less** than the budget he inherited in 2005. During this period services have increased while spending has decreased. Marsh attributes this to prudent fiscal practices, a bi-partisan team effort among the town boards and commissions, and strong leadership.

Leadership will ultimately be the key to success. The challenge lies in keeping the legislative and executive branches focused. This can only be accomplished through bi-partisan leadership, a strong trait for Marsh. “There are very few purely republican or democratic issues. No political party ever made a campaign promise to have Connecticut lead the nation in debt burden. No campaign advocated that Connecticut rank near the bottom nationally in state spending on natural resource management. Yet here we are, the unfortunate owner of both distinctions; the result of distracted legislation and budgeting.”

When it comes to campaign financing Marsh is emphatic stating “I will not be participating in Connecticut’s public campaign financing program. Putting the philosophical aspects of the issue aside, the program has an estimated cost of \$60 million, and Connecticut is broke. With all the priorities for state spending I don’t think if you asked most Connecticut residents how the state should spend its last \$60 million the answer would be to spend it on political campaigns. I don’t have the personal wealth to self finance, so our campaign will be an old- fashioned grass roots, hand shaking, meet the people campaign, raising funds dollar by dollar.

In addition to serving as Chester’s First Selectman Tom was appointed to the Governor’s Early Childhood Education Council, and currently serves as chair to the 17 town organization, Connecticut River Valley Chief Elected Officials. Tom holds an MBA in marketing and a BSBA in management. The Marshes own a family business with Kathy, his wife of 27 years taking an active role.

Family is very important to Tom and Kathy. In addition to raising three children, Ashley, James and Christine, the Marshes are proud to have provided in home care to both of Tom’s parents and to Kathy’s mom during their later stages of life.