

Democrat announces 2020 run in House District 54

By **Alex Ross** - March 28, 2019



A Democrat from Cludcroft has declared that she plans to run in 2020 for the seat now held by the top Republican in New Mexico’s House of Representatives.

Jennifer Gose, in a press release, announced her candidacy earlier this week for the House District 54 seat currently held by House Minority Leader Jim Townsend, R-Artesia. The district encompasses parts of Eddy, Otero and southern Chaves counties.

“Southeastern New Mexico is a land full of opportunity — it deserves a representative who sees this and will fight for community economic investment, industrial diversification, training and educational opportunity, and good jobs,” Gose said.

She said she decided to make a bid for the seat in January because she feels the communities within the district do not get the attention they need and deserve, even though the oil and gas production in that part of the state is the chief source of state revenue.

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Conditions of U.S. 285 from Artesia south to Carlsbad and other roads are just some of the evidence of “the economic decline” Gose added.

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Infrastructure, housing, education and diversifying the economy within the district will all be top priorities, she said, as well as health care.

"I want to protect and expand quality health care for everyone, everyone," she said.

Gose, a native of Lubbock, Texas, is the owner of Valkyrie Holdings Co., a small real-estate company. She has worked in Texas in a variety of positions ranging from accounting, events management, sales, marketing and property management.

Two years ago, Gose moved to New Mexico with her husband Brian Wojcik.

A Democrat has not been elected to House District 54 since 2006, and the party has not put up a candidate for the seat since 2008, according to archived election results from the New Mexico Secretary of State's office.

Gose acknowledges it is very likely she will not win, but she will be working throughout the campaign with people in the district to compile a list of what needs to be done to better those communities.

She added that if someone other than her wins the seat in 2020, she plans to turn that list over to them so they can work on addressing those issues.

Although a registered Democrat, Gose said she does not feel beholden to the party.

"I don't carry water for anyone except the people who have hired me to represent them," she said.

One area Gose breaks with her party on is attitudes toward the oil and gas industry.

"I will put it this way — you can't just turn off the oil and gas industry because you would leave 90 percent of the district without jobs," she said.

The Energy Transition Act — Senate Bill 489 (SB 489) — passed the Legislature and was signed into law by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

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Gose said the goals set out by the bill are aimed at making sure that what comes next will provide good high-paying jobs, be a reliable source of state revenue and can preferably avoid the boom and bust cycles of the oil and gas industry.

Since launching her campaign in January, Gose said she has been meeting with officials, educators and economic developers in Carlsbad and throughout the district, attending every public meeting she can to learn all she can about the challenges the district faces.

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