

Opinion

# Important to have Woodward's experience in Senate

BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The decision to endorse Sen. Jim Woodward, R-Sagle, was not difficult. For the good of the state and his district, he should serve another term in office.

His opponent, Scott Herndon, did not respond to an invitation to interview with the editorial board. The Statesman does not endorse candidates who won't agree to an interview.

Woodward is a man who thinks and acts just like you would expect from a Navy engineer: practical, methodical and solution-oriented. He's not given to the wild, windmill-tilting tenden-

cies that have for years grown on the far right.

He easily recognizes which problems are real — rising residential property taxes, a society that does not sufficiently value teachers and an economy that may be entering challenging waters — from those that are imaginary — critical race theory in schools, porn in libraries and transgender athletes taking over sports.

Woodward has perhaps the keenest grasp on property tax issues of any of the senatorial candidates we have interviewed during this campaign cycle. When we asked most candidates whether they would support raising the homeowners exemption,

most responded that they wouldn't because it would shift the tax burden onto businesses.

Woodward correctly noted that since the homeowners exemption was frozen, the tax burden has steadily shifted off of business and onto homeowners. That's the problem that needs solving, and he expressed support for doing so.

In his interview, Woodward outlined practical solutions to problem after problem in the Gem State: education policy, balanced budgets, dealing with population growth, etc. In each case, he carefully weighed the interests of different parties and proposed solutions that are

broadly reasonable.

Contrast that approach with his opponent's.

Whether it's an invasion of transgender athletes or teachers indoctrinating students with critical race theory, Herndon has focused his campaign on "problems" that have two things in common: They are divisive, culture-war issues, and they aren't really problems in Idaho.

And the one major piece of policy he has outlined is about as extreme as it comes.

Herndon has crafted one draft bill he would propose that demonstrates the depths of his extremism. Not only would his proposed abortion law allow women who obtain

abortions to be prosecuted, it would allow the same for many women with IUDs, women who use Plan B and women using in-vitro fertilization.

They would be charged with murder.

In recent years, the Senate has helped to keep the excesses of the House in check. But that could change. Herndon would push it in the wrong direction.

Woodward's experience will also be an important asset. State government is an immense, complex organization. To craft policy to effectively guide it, a lawmaker needs not just principles but practical understanding. Woodward's four years working with state government help him understand how it can be effectively managed.

In short, he's someone who knows the difficult art of governing.

Too many of Herndon's political orientation have

taken the easier way out: Simply look up how the Idaho Freedom Foundation has scored a bill and vote accordingly. Elect someone who votes that way and you don't have a representative — you have a robot.

In a year where the Senate will see a huge number of new faces due to redistricting, retirements and other factors, it's particularly important to have an experienced, competent and clear-eyed person like Woodward in office.

*Statesman editorials are the unsigned opinion expressing the consensus of the Idaho Statesman's editorial board. Board members are opinion editor Scott McIntosh, opinion writer Bryan Clark, editor Chadd Cripe, newsroom editors Dana Oland and Jim Keyser and community members J.J. Saldaña and Christy Perry. Not all opinions are unanimous.*