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Kokomo attorney Mark Hurt announces bid for Indiana's 5th US Congressional District

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Kokomo attorney Mark Hurt is running for Indiana's 5th U.S. Congressional District.

Hurt, a Republican, announced Tuesday he has filed with the FEC his candidacy for the Republican Party nomination. Indiana's 5th Congressional District encompasses Hamilton, Grant, Madison, Delaware and Tipton counties and almost all of Howard County.

"I hope to move the needle," Hurt said. "I want God to use me to be a light in that public policy arena. I feel like we have a lot of issues that require leadership. ... I want to protect the Constitution, make improvements in everyone's life. I feel I'm the working man Republican, sensitive to the silent majority who pay their taxes, work hard, raise their children and try to play by the rules but it's tough sometimes."

The district's current representative, Republican Victoria Spartz, announced earlier this year that she will not seek a third term. That decision has opened the candidacy floodgates, at least on the Republican side. The district, after last year's redistricting that stripped out parts of Marion County, now leans more comfortably Republican.

Hurt is joining four other Republicans running in next May's primary. Those four others are:

- Chuck Goodrich, a member of the Indiana House of Representatives.
- Raju Chinthala, the founder and president of the Indiana India Business Council and the treasurer for the Howard County Republican Party.
- Siddharth Mahant, co-owner and founder of the Avon-based trucking company Mahant Transportation.
- Matthew Peiffer, president of Muncie-based child welfare advocacy nonprofit "A Voice for Kids."

No Democrats have filed to run for the seat yet, according to the FEC.

If elected, Hurt said he would focus on decreasing the federal debt; strengthening the U.S.'s southern border through investment of new technology and the hiring of more U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents; support the PROTECT Kids Act, which would restrict federal funding for any elementary or middle school that allows students to change their pronouns or gender markers without the consent of their parents; and promote U.S. energy independence.

Hurt, a Grant County native, moved to Kokomo in the late '90s after graduating with a law degree from Michigan State University. He also has degrees from Taylor University in (education) and from Baylor University (international relations and political science).

He spent 25 years as a part-time deputy prosecuting attorney and currently runs his private law practice in both Kokomo and Noblesville.

Notably, Hurt has political experience serving as an aide to former Sen. Dan. Coats, President Trump's director of national intelligence; Michigan Gov. John Engler; and former Iowa Congressman Fred Gandy.

He said that experience in how D.C. works sets him apart from the other candidates.

"I feel like I can hit the ground running," Hurt said.

The primary for Indiana's 5th Congressional District is May 7, 2024.

Hurt is not a stranger to running for political office. In 2017, he launched a campaign for the U.S. Senate. After more than a year campaigning, he fell short of the verified signatures required for his name to be placed on the primary.

State law requires U.S. Senate candidates to submit signatures of at least 500 registered voters from each of Indiana's nine congressional districts and Hurt fell short of the required 500 signatures in at least two districts.

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