



Red Meat for a Blue State  
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## Down in the Desert: Jerry Lewis in Trouble and Hopes for Dems

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Democrats never had much of a shot in the San Bernadino desert, but hope springs eternal. Previous CMR posts ([11/14](#)) and today ([12/8](#)) have noted that Republicans are blaming GOP Congressman Jerry Lewis for election losses. Even Club for Growth frontman Shawn Steel called for Lewis' head. Ever since Rolling Stone Magazine listed Lewis as #5 in their list of the "[Top 10 Worst Congressmen](#)," we wanted to take another look at this seat. (Richard Pombo was previously slated at #7 so the list is already dwindling in length.)

Lewis represents California's 41st District, which covers eastern San Bernardino County, including cities of Highland, Redlands, Hesperia, Apple Valley, and just about everything South of the I-15 for those LA drivers going to Vegas all the way to the state border. The district covers a little of Riverside County, including Calimesa, Banning, and Beaumont. All are all growing communities -- and most are red cities.

If the Club for Growth gets what they want, and Lewis decides to step down midterm or does not seek

another term as is widely assumed, it will touch off a feeding frenzy of Republicans jockeying for position for this seat.

Here's a look at the perspective GOp'er's and a few Democrats that could play spoiler, especially if the replacement is chosen by special election if Lewis resigns. (The GOP has a 47-33 GOP advantage in registration).

### DEMS

San Bernardino Mayor **Pat Morris**. Morris would be the best hope for Dems to make inroads in this seat. He is a former 30 year Superior Court Judge and was just elected in a runoff in February 2005 to be Mayor, but is receiving glowing reviews for his work. Despite a crowded ballot of measures this November, Morris pushed a quarter cent sales tax increase for the city to fund additional police officers. The measure passed with more than 2-1 support. Coincidentally, Morris ran last year with Lewis's support and endorsement.

**James Ramos**, Community College District Trustee. Ramos made a splash two years ago by raising more money than anyone previously running for Trustee. He is a tribal member of San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and a local businessowner and is seen by some as a future officeholder for Democrats in the area.

**Mark Westwood, Rita Ramirez Dean, and Louie Contreras** have all run within this region in the past year for various offices. Unfortunately none has shown a prowess for raising support beyond a traditional base of support.

### GOP

**Mike Ramos**, Current San Bernardino County District Attorney who was Schwarzenegger's Chair in the County. He was a school board member previously in Lewis' hometown of Redlands but has never tested his Republican credentials.

**Bill Postmus**, County Assessor-elect who was formerly Chair of the County Board of Supervisors (and also Chair of the GOP party). Postmus is always rumored to be looking to climb up the ladder. Unfortunately he may suffer from a lackluster showing where he outspent his opponent 10-to-1 and only won 54%-46% this past month.

Assemblyman-elect **Paul Cook**. He took his oath only days ago. But he is a former Mayor of Yucca Valley and is a retired Marine Colonel in a potential district with lots of current and former military.

State Senator **Bob Dutton**. Dutton has openly talked about the possibility of moving up to Congress. But he only represents a small portion of this district and would have to move residences to make it happen.

Assemblyman **Bill Emerson**. In his second term, he is a former orthodontist from Lewis' hometown of Redlands. He has never been seen as harboring future congressional ambitions.

Former Assemblyman **Russ Bogh**. Bogh, whom Cook replaced, may harbor more ambitious plans since retiring from the legislature. He is also looking at Jim Battin's Senate seat as his next move in two years.

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