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Democratic state senate candidate to focus on creating jobs

Staff Report

LAWRENCEVILLE — Josh Weger, a regional manager for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, announced his candidacy for state senate Tuesday.

He is running for the 55th Senate District seat currently held by Sen. Dale Righter, R-Mattoon.

"Families across the state are struggling and we need to create jobs now," said Weger. "People are looking to their elected officials to rise above partisan rhetoric and come up with real solutions."

Weger, 31, a Democrat from Lawrenceville, is the Southeast Region manager for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. In addition, he serves as a board member of the Southeastern Illinois Economic Development Authority, which focuses on economic development.

"I am running for senate to bring my expertise in job creation to the state legislature," said Weger. "The legislature needs to do more to create jobs, and I have the skills to get the economy going again."

Weger is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Springfield, where he received a bachelor's in economics and a master's in political science. Weger was a legislative aide to former Illinois Agriculture Director and State Rep. Chuck Hartke of Effingham.

Weger stressed job creation but also cited other priorities such as increasing transparency in campaign contributions and streamlining state finances. He pointed to his tenure at the Illinois Auditor General's Office as making him well suited to bring reforms to Springfield.

Due to the absence of a Democratic candidate in the February primary, the Democratic county chairmen are able to select a candidate for the General Election. They convened Monday night and selected Weger.

Righter could not be reached for comment Tuesday afternoon.

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