

February primary ballots to be lengthy

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The question almost becomes, "Who's not running for governor or U.S. Senate?"

The close of the filing period for the Feb. 2 primary on Monday left seven Republicans, four Democrats and two Green Party candidates running for governor and eight Republicans, seven Democrats and one Green Party candidate for U.S. Senate.

Obviously, some candidates are better known and better funded than others. And objections could remove some candidates from the ballot for lack of enough valid petition signatures. Still, the field is large.

Kent Redfield, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Illinois Springfield, said Democrats have the problem of having inherited "an incredible mess" from ousted Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

Their top candidates for governor include the new incumbent, Gov. Pat Quinn, who served as lieutenant governor under Blagojevich for six years. While Quinn has a reputation as a reformer, "certainly we haven't made any kind of dramatic moves to ... turn the state around," Redfield said.

Quinn and Comptroller Dan Hynes, his main Democratic opponent, "are going to beat each other up" in the primary contest, Redfield said.

"The only thing that makes the Democratic side look less than totally bleak," Redfield said, is the lack of a clear frontrunner with momentum on the Republican side.

Just in the past week, the former state GOP chairman, Andy McKenna of Chicago, joined the race, as did former Attorney General Jim Ryan of Elmhurst, who lost to Blagojevich for governor in 2002. The other five GOP candidates have been running for months.

"The longer that race goes with nobody kind of clearing the field," Redfield says, the less likely it is candidates will drop out, because each can see the chance of "hitting the jackpot" by getting just enough to place first in the big field.

In the process, Redfield said, conflicts in the GOP -- such as who are "real Republicans" versus "moderate Republicans" -- will be highlighted, possibly eroding the general election chances for whoever wins the primary.

In the Senate race as well as that for governor, Redfield said, a primary candidate with clear frontrunner status can start positioning for the general election. He said GOP U.S. Senate candidate Mark Kirk, a member of the U.S. House from Highland Park, might be able to pull that off. But the other seven Republican candidates for that job are hoping that doesn't happen.

In all over the eight-day filing period, 859 candidates filed candidacy petitions at the State Board of Elections.

Bernard Schoenburg can be reached at 788-1540.

Major primary contests in central Illinois (no primaries are scheduled for Illinois secretary of state and attorney general):

Governor:

*Republicans: Adam Andrzejewski, Hinsdale; state Sen. Bill Brady, Bloomington; state Sen. Kirk Dillard, Hinsdale; DuPage County Board Chairman Bob Schillerstrom, Naperville; Dan Proft, Chicago; Jim Ryan, Elmhurst; Andy McKenna, Chicago.

*Democrats: Comptroller Dan Hynes, Chicago; Gov. Pat Quinn, Chicago; William "Dock" Walls, Chicago; Ed Scanlon, Oak Park.

*Green Party: Rich Whitney, Carbondale; Richard B. Mayers, Chicago. (State Green Party Chair Phil Huckelberry said Mayers is not part of the party organization and was removed from the ballot in 2007 after filing for the U.S. House in the Third Congressional District.)

U.S. Senate:

*Democrats: Alexi Giannoulis, Chicago; David Hoffman, Chicago; Robert Marshall, Burr Ridge; Jacob Meister, Chicago; Corey Dabney, Aurora; Cheryle Jackson, Chicago; Will Boyd, Greenville.

*Republicans: John Arrington, Harvey; U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, Highland Park; Don Lowery, Golconda; Andy Martin, Chicago; Kathleen Thomas, Springfield; Patrick Hughes, Hinsdale; Bob Zadek, Rockford; Tom Kuna, Jerseyville.

*Green Party: LeAlan M. Jones, Chicago.

Lieutenant governor:

*Republicans: Brad Cole, Carbondale mayor; Jason Plummer, Edwardsville; Don Tracy, Springfield; Randy White, Hamilton; state Sen. Matt Murphy, Palatine; Dennis Cook, Orland Park.

*Democrats: State Sen. Rickey Hendon, Chicago; state Sen. Terry Link, Waukegan; state Rep. Art Turner, Chicago; Scott Lee Cohen, Chicago; Thomas Castillo, Elmhurst; state Rep. Mike Boland, East Moline.

*Green Party: Don Crawford, St. Elmo

Comptroller:

*Democrats: Raja Krishnamoorthi, Hoffman Estates; state Rep. David Miller, Lynwood; Clint Krislov, Wilmette.

*Republicans: Jim Dodge, Orland Park; Judy Baar Topinka, Riverside; William J. Kelly, Chicago.

*Green Party: R. Erika Schafer, Chicago.

Treasurer:

*Democrats: Justin Oberman, Chicago; Robin Kelly, Matteson; Mark Doyle, Chicago.

*Republican: state Sen. Dan Rutherford, Chenoa.

*Green Party: Scott Summers, Harvard.

U.S. House from the 18th Congressional District:

*Democrats: Deirdre "DK" Hirner, Springfield; Carl Ray, Washington.

*Republican: Incumbent Rep. Aaron Schock of Peoria.

*Green Party: Sheldon Schafer, Peoria.

U.S. House from the 19th Congressional District:

*Republicans: U.S. Rep. John Shimkus of Collinsville; Michael Firsching of Moro. Firsching is a veterinarian who owns his own business in Edwardsville and says he is "pretty much of a constitutionalist."

*Democrat: Tim Bagwell, Olney.

94th Illinois House District:

Republicans: Rep. Rich Myers, Colchester; Victoria Mohr, Dallas City.

Democrat: Earl Godt II, Macomb

98th Illinois House District:

Democrats: Charles Landers, Bunker Hill; Chris Sherer, Hillsboro; Fred J. Snodgrass Jr., Virden.

Republican: Wayne Arthur Rosenthal

100th Illinois House District:

*Republicans: Rep. Rich Brauer, Petersburg; Bill Hinrichs, Rochester

Circuit Judge, Fourth Circuit, to fill vacancy of John Coady:

*Democrats: Stephen Friedel, Vandalia; Stewart Freeman, Breese; Michelle Coady, Taylorville

*Republican: Douglas Jarman, Hillsboro

Circuit Judge, Fourth Circuit, to fill vacancy of Kathleen Moran:

*Democrats: Mike McHaney, Salem; Tom Finks, Taylorville

Sangamon County

Only the Republican incumbents filed petitions to run for the four countywide seats up for election in 2010 in Sangamon County.

But that doesn't mean there won't be contests on the November ballot.

Democrats could run as write-in candidates in the Feb. 2 primary, or if no Democrat is nominated at the primary for an office, party officials have until April 5 to appoint a candidate for the general election, which is Nov. 2.

The GOP incumbents who did file were: County Clerk Joe Aiello, Sheriff Neil Williamson, Treasurer Tom Cavanagh, and Regional Superintendent of

Schools Helen Tolan.

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