



Judge resigns; eyes Senate seat
By VICKY TAYLOR Staff writer

Richard Alloway II hasn't officially announced his candidacy for Pennsylvania's 33rd District senate seat yet, but anyone watching him make the rounds of county row offices and downtown businesses Friday afternoon might have been fooled into thinking he was already campaigning.

Just minutes after submitting his resignation as one of Franklin County's seven magisterial district judges, Alloway stopped in at row offices at the county courthouse in Chambersburg seeking support from local politicians -- should he make an official announcement next week.

After leaving the courthouse, he went up and down Main Street, introducing himself to local business owners and asking for their support should he decide to seek his old boss' seat in the state senate.

He said the response both at the courthouse and in the business community to the suggestion that he might run for retiring Sen. Terry Punt's seat was overwhelmingly positive.

He insists that he is still exploring his options, in spite of the fact that he turned in his resignation to Franklin County Court Administrator Neil Burkholder Friday, effective as of noon that day.

State ethics rules prohibited him from campaigning while serving on the bench.

He said he felt he could not seek any support for a potential candidacy until he resigned, so he discussed that possibility only with his family and Punt, his former boss, prior to noon on Friday.

"I have resigned to explore the possibility of running for the senate," Alloway told Public Opinion Friday afternoon.

He said he spent two hours Thursday night with Punt, reminiscing about the five years he spent as a Punt aide and talking about Punt's decision to retire at the end of this year and his own thoughts of running for the seat Punt will be vacating.

"Terry's been like a father to me, and I wanted his input," Alloway said. "I told him I was thinking about running and he said 'Rich, you know what this entails... think long and hard about it.'"

He called family members, including his father, Friday morning and told them he had decided to resign his judgeship and was thinking of running for the senate.

The family got together for dinner Friday night to talk about it.

Alloway said he will spend the weekend trying to put together a support base and expects to make a formal candidacy announcement early next week.

Alloway, a Hamilton Township native and 1986 graduate of Chambersburg Area Senior High School, took office as a magisterial district judge in January 2004 after defeating then 12-year incumbent Judge John Weyman on both the Democratic and Republican tickets in 2003.

He spent five years as a Punt aide following his graduation from Shippensburg University before quitting that job to go to law school. He ran for district judge the year after he graduated from Widener Law School. He passed the bar exam on his first try and has a law office in his home.

Alloway said that if he is elected, he will have several priorities when he gets to Harrisburg.

Property tax reform, health care and finding alternative energy sources are three big problems he sees state legislators facing in coming years, but he says the state legislature also faces "very real" ethical problems.

"We need to address these ethical problems and bring integrity back to political office," he said. "I firmly believe you can be a good senator and representative and still be morally upright and do your job ethically."

He acknowledges Punt both voted for the pay raise and took unvouchered expenses, but said it was one of the few mistakes his former boss made in the 30 years he spent as a state legislator.

"Terry has done a lot for this district, and believe me, my size 10s are not going to fill his size eight shoes," he said. "I won't even try... I will be my own person and do things my way."

He said he feels he can work with Franklin County's other junior legislators to "come up with new ideas" to benefit constituents.

"I will try to bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to the job," he said. "We need to think outside the box and I hope that together we can come up with new ideas to benefit the district."

Alloway said running for state office is something he has thought about for a long time, for years in fact.

"I've always wanted to follow in Terry's footsteps," he said.

Still, he said his candidacy is still in the exploratory stage.

"I resigned (as a magisterial district judge) so I could explore that possibility without violating the ethics rules, but there are other things I can do if I don't decide to run," he said.

Still, he said if he does run, he will run to win.

"If I run, I expect to be out every day (campaigning), working hard to win," he said.

"Ultimately, the voters will decide, and that's the way it should be."
