

By [editorial board](#) • September 14, 2018 

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# Incumbents' edge not always well-deserved

All incumbents in the five contested legislative districts which overlap parts of Yamhill County — House 10, 23, 24 and 25, and Senate 13 — are heavily favored. But only three earn endorsement here — Ron Noble in House 24, David Gomberg in House 10 and, narrowly, Kim Thatcher in Senate 13.

We believe the House 23 race pitting Danny Jaffer against incumbent Mike Nearman deserves fuller treatment, so aren't addressing it now. Senate 16 also extends into Yamhill County, but incumbent Betsy Johnson lacks opposition. In House 25, we find incumbent Bill Post's views too extreme and stridently too disruptive.

Here's our take:

**House 24:** We strongly supported former McMinnville Police Chief Ron Noble over his Democratic foe, local handyman and talk show host Ken Moore, in 2016. The county's influence and stature ebbed under Donna

Nelson and Jim Weidner. Noble's first term has laid groundwork for consensus-building stewardship.

Moore returns to the ballot, having won the primary via write-in votes. What effort he plans to put into a campaign is unknown. Regardless, Noble deserves to win in a walk.

**House 10:** Democratic incumbent David Gomberg earned bachelor's and master's degrees at Oregon State University and served as the school's student body president. He went on to earn an MBA from Willamette University's Atkinson Graduate School of Management.

He worked for Congressman Les AuCoin and served as chief of staff for Barbara Roberts prior to her election to the governorship. Then he left government service to head the Lincoln City chamber and establish a successful coastal business. He won election in 2012 from District 10, which includes portions of Lincoln, Tillamook, Polk, and Yamhill counties.

Gomberg is once again facing ideologue Thomas Donohue of Pacific City, whose biggest claim to fame is a post equating Democrats with Nazis. In his subsequent apology, Donohue claimed he had no idea his two-time opponent was Jewish.

There's zero in the challenger's background to recommend him.

**Senate 13:** Keizer Republican Kim Thatcher served five terms in House 25 before moving to the Senate in 2014.

At the time, her district — covering portions of Marion, Clackamas, Washington and Yamhill counties — was reliably Republican. It is decidedly less so today, but Democratic hopes fell when Willamette University law professor Paul Diller dropped out.

Diller's replacement is U.S. Army veteran Sarah Grider of Newberg, a distant second in the primary. She faces tough going against Thatcher, who enjoys a substantial edge in resources and political savvy.

Thatcher's record is thin, but so is her challenger's background.

**House 25:** Keizer Republican Bill Post rivals colleague Mike Nearman for sheer obstinance and obstructionism. He makes no meaningful contribution in Salem. A conservative talk show host by trade, he's displayed the same brand of bombast in the Legislature, particularly counterproductive in a chamber dominated by opponents.

His challenger, Keizer's Dave McCall, is a pro-business Democrat with a degree in the administration of justice and 30 years of criminal justice experience. McCall's election, however unlikely, would represent a refreshing change.