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## Local

Janice Hahn, Craig Huey appear headed for Congress seat runoff

By Jean Merl, Los Angeles Times

Story posted 2011.05.18 at 12:21 AM PDT



In a seemingly major upset in the race to replace former Rep. Jane Harman (D-Venice), Republican Craig Huey appears to have captured one of the spots in a July 12 runoff.

With all of the election night ballots counted late Tuesday, Huey squeaked past California Secretary of State Debra Bowen, a Democrat, by 206 votes.

If the outcome stands after outstanding ballots are counted, Huey will face Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, a Democrat.

Antiwar activist and teacher Marcy Winograd, who challenged Harman twice in Democratic primaries, finished fourth.

Huey, a conservative businessman who pumped \$500,000 of his own money into the race, faces long odds in the runoff, given the district's strong Democratic tilt. Hahn and Bowen were viewed from the start as the probable front-runners for the South Bay-based congressional seat. They led the pack in campaign contributions and were better known to voters than many of the others.

Hahn entered the race first and quickly sewed up endorsements from most of the area's elected officials, raising \$424,000 by April 27, the end of the latest reporting period. She also benefited from independent campaigns waged by unions, including the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. In addition, an insurance group independently spent more than \$100,000 to support her.

Bowen, backed by several national groups, the California Nurses Assn. and California's major environmental organizations, had raised about \$338,000. A pro-Democratic group known as the Lantern Project spent about \$11,000 on calls to voters to support her, according to Federal Election Commission records.

Democrats (45%) hold an edge over Republicans (28%) in the 36th Congressional District, which runs mostly along the coast, from Venice

to San Pedro. More than 22% of voters are unaffiliated with any state-recognized political party.

But the gerrymandered district, like others for Congress and for the state Legislature, are being redrawn this summer by a citizens commission, and most politics watchers expect it to be at least somewhat less Democratic than it is now. Whoever runs for the seat next year will probably do so in a changed district.

Tuesday's election was widely watched for the possibility it held of pitting two members of the same party against each other in a runoff. Under the state's new voter-approved elections system, the top two primary finishers, regardless of party affiliation, compete for the seat. Runoffs are not required in special elections if one candidate wins a majority in the first round.

Six Republicans, five Democrats and five third-party or independent candidates qualified for the ballot after Harman resigned in February to lead a Washington think tank.

At least four candidates, including Huey and Winograd, live outside the district. Congressional candidates are not required to live in the districts they seek to represent.

As the early results came in, Hahn and Bowen led the 16-candidate field. But Huey, never far back, continued to gain on Bowen as the counting progressed..

Another Republican, Redondo Beach Mayor Mike Gin, finished fifth.

Los Angeles County elections officials estimated the cost of Tuesday's election at \$1.7 million. Part of that will be borne by the Los Angeles Community College District, which consolidated parts of its own election Tuesday with the county's.

The election results may be found on the [county's elections website](#).

[jean.merl@latimes.com](mailto:jean.merl@latimes.com)

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