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Local House, Senate candidates to discuss health care in public forum

By Sarah Coyne scoyne@joplinglobe.com Sep 15, 2018



Candidates in Southwest Missouri House districts 127, 159, 160, 161, 162 and 163 and Senate District 32 have been invited to participate in a public forum to share and discuss their views on health care issues.

KJ McDonald, Southwest Missouri organizer with Missouri Health Care for All, confirmed eight of the 16 candidates would be in attendance as of Friday afternoon, including the following contenders:

- Senate District 32: Republican Bill White, Democrat Carolyn McGowan and the Green Party's Conon Gillis.
- House District 127: Democrat Teri Hanna.

- House District 161: Republican Lane Roberts and Democrat Elizabeth Lundstrum.
- House District 162: Democrat Sarah Hinkle and the Green Party's Mollie Dyer.

The forum will start with an introduction by Chip Haley, the public policy director at the Independent Living Center. The candidates will then introduce themselves and discuss their top health care priorities, McDonald said.

A question-and-answer period will then be opened up to audience members, who are encouraged to prepare questions and topics for discussion ahead of the forum. Moderators will collect questions from attendees on provided index cards and give those questions to candidates.

"Think about how you feel about our health care system, and come prepared with questions about what needs to change or how to make the health care system better," McDonald said. "We hope to hear answers to every single question that attendees could possibly think of across the whole broad category of health care in Missouri."

Not all candidates are able to attend, but McDonald said she's proud of the fact that representatives from three parties on the ballot — Republican, Democrat and Green — will have a voice in the forum.

"We have some repeat candidates, some with experience and some who are fresh to the game," she said, "but everyone I've talked to is looking forward to the discussion."

There will be refreshments and a meet-and-greet following the forum, as well as a voter registration opportunity.

Missouri Health Care for All is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan, faith- and community-based, grass-roots movement advocating for health care for Missourians.

If you go

The forum, hosted by Missouri Health Care for All and the Independent Living Center, is set for 6:30 to 9 p.m. Tuesday at the Independent Living Center, 2639 E. 34th St. in Joplin.

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Sarah Coyne

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