

Skeele's Republican Petitions Questioned

Pictured is Shawn Skeele of DeRuyter.

There won't be a Republican primary for the 111th Assembly district race if Board of Elections upholds Bargabos challenge

By Aaron Gifford

The state Board of Elections will decide whether Assembly candidate Shawn Skeele's Republican petitions are invalid because he failed to note the specific public office on his documents.



According to the challenge submitted by Republican candidate Richard Bargabos, of Smithfield, Skeele noted the 111th District on his petitions but did not include the title "Member of Assembly." There are also delegate and political party committee positions in the district, so voters who signed the petitions did not necessarily support Skeele's bid for the assemblyman position, Bargabos says.

"There is case law to back this up," Bargabos said. "You have to put Member of Assembly on the petitions. Otherwise, the voters wouldn't know which office the candidate is seeking."

The state Board of Elections is scheduled to conduct a hearing on the challenge Aug. 5 and must certify a decision by Aug. 9.

Skeele plans to be at the Aug. 5 hearing to argue his case. He said the 111th delegate and committee member positions are not up for election this year, and he told everyone who signed the petition that he was running for the assemblyman seat.

"It's some obscure legal precedent. It's clear that I got the majority of signatures myself, and every door I went to I told them what office I was running for and I handed out pamphlets," he said. "We'll see what happens (at the hearing). If not, we'll file a lawsuit that same day to let the judge decide it."

Bargabos said he previously filed a lawsuit in Albany County Supreme Court that asks for "judicial intervention" on his claim if the Board of Elections doesn't rule in his favor. If Skeele's Republican petitions are thrown out, Bargabos said he would withdraw the lawsuit.

Meanwhile, a challenge to Bargabos' Independence party petitions by two members of Assemblyman Bill Magee's camp was unsuccessful. That challenge claimed that Bargabos did not have at least 208 valid signatures from Independence party members. But the Board of Elections later determined that all 240 signatures submitted were valid.

Magee, the Democratic incumbent, said a Supreme Court lawsuit was previously filed to overturn the Board of Elections' decision on that matter. The suit was withdrawn on Thursday, so Bargabos' line on the Independence ballot will stand.

"I guess there was some question as to whether it (challenge) would stand in court," Magee said Friday.

Skeele petitioned for a Republican primary and also received the Conservative party endorsement. Bargabos plans to run a write-in campaign for the Sept. 14 Conservative primary.

Magee will be on the Democratic ticket in the November election. He's seeking his 11th consecutive term.

One Comment on "Skeele's Republican Petitions Questioned"

1. Shawn Skeele on Wed, 4th Aug 2010 4:56 pm

I knew that running for the, "Member of the" NYS 111th Assembly District seat was going to be challenging and difficult against an establishment that favors the incumbent or career politician just climbing the party ladder.

My opponent's position with the lawsuit filed is that people who signed my petition didn't necessarily support or understand my bid for the NYS 111th Assemblyman position by leaving out the phrase, "Member of the". Between the Republican and Conservative signatures, I obtained over 800. If I had time to get affidavits from all of them stating they understood what office I was running for, I have no doubt I could. Everyone understands what office I am running for except my opponent apparently.

This is just another example of a desperate attempt to keep a common ordinary individual, beholden to no one except the people of this district, from being on the ballot. Instead of you, the people, choosing who should be on the ballot, a select few want to try and dictate who you, the people, can choose to begin with. Based on the lawsuit filed that I received, the NYS Board of Elections and I are listed together. Being so and that I have not received any correspondence stating my petitions are invalid from the NYS Board of Election, the NYS Board of Election still considers them to be valid and thus the lawsuit pending. My day in court will be this Friday, 8/6, 9am at the Albany County Court House, 16 Eagle Street, Albany, NY for you GPS users if anyone cares to join me. 😊

On the literature I handed out to all my petition signers who understand what office I am running for, I have a sub heading stating the need to till up some weeds in Albany that are choking our economy and families with the need for a new crop to be planted. At court, we will see if there are any seeds of common sense on Friday.

Shawn Skeele

"Member of the" NYS 111th Assembly District Candidate

P.S. – Would the Madison County Courier care to explain why my opponent receives positive headlines when getting an endorsement from a party but I do not? On the 4/27/10 & 7/17/10 editions, my opponent received large positive headlines about party endorsements. I received the Conservative Party endorsement on 7/16/10 and it gets mentioned over a week later not as a headline like my opponent receives but buried at the end of an article on page 6 today and last week online buried half way into the article. I talked with Aaron Gifford on 7/30 who is covering the race about this specifically and the management of the paper regarding this huge discrepancy only to get a questionable negative headline with my name in this week's edition. I guess I should be happy with just getting the headline if I can't shame you into giving fair coverage.

Sincerely,

Shawn Skeele

"Member of the" NYS 111th Assembly District Candidate