

Tomlinson, Farry campaign confidently

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election 2010

The two Republican state legislators like their chances for re-election but stressed it will take a lot of hard work.

Sunday was Valentine's Day, and the love was flowing among the 175 who gathered at the Penndel Fire Co. to watch state Sen. Tommy Tomlinson, R-6, and state Rep. Frank Farry, R-142, announce they are running for re-election this year.

After enjoying roast beef sandwiches, pasta and potato salads, coffee, soda and other food and drink, the party faithful heard the two Republican incumbents say they were confident of winning another stint in Harrisburg. Tomlinson, 64, is running for a fifth four-year term and Farry, 37, a second two-year term.

"Two years ago, I was asked to run against a Democratic incumbent (Chris King)," said Farry, who is also an attorney and chief of the Langhorne-Middletown Fire Co. "More than 13,150 doors knocked on later, we were successful. Our volunteers hit the streets and stuck our message in thousands of front doors, and we're going to need that kind of effort again."

If elected, Farry said one of his main priorities would be continuing his effort to see more state tax dollars flow back to local school districts.

"We need to fix the skewed education funding formula," he said. "The state is not putting a fair share back into school districts like Neshaminy, and that is something we need to fix."

Tomlinson spoke proudly of his role in bringing slot machines and, most recently, table games to Pennsylvania.

"In three years, the slots have brought in about \$4 billion in tax revenue," he said. "It has also created about 8,000 construction jobs and 8,000 permanent jobs, and table games will create about another 9,000 permanent jobs. We've reduced the loss of money to other states and it's incredible the amount of money we've brought into this state."

Tomlinson and several others at Sunday's gathering said they believed the political pendulum has swung toward the Republican way of doing things.

"This campaign will be about creating jobs, which is what we've done, and about stopping the big government things that don't really get a lot accomplished," said Tomlinson.

Among the other speakers at Sunday's event were former Gov. Mark Schweiker, former Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick and Bucks County Commissioner Jim Cawley. All spoke confidently of Republican chances for election wins in 2010.

Fitzpatrick is running for Congress again this year in a bid to reclaim the seat now held by Patrick Murphy, D-8. Cawley has been endorsed by the state GOP to run for lieutenant governor. He will be running with state Attorney General Tom Corbett, the endorsed Republican candidate for governor.

"We've had a challenging week digging out from the snow," said Schweiker. "Now, we have to dig in from a political standpoint. It's going to take a lot of hard work and dedication to achieve our goals for 2010."

Tomlinson, a Bensalem resident, was a Bensalem school board member for 12 years and a state representative for four years before becoming a state senator. Farry, who lives in Langhorne, has been a volunteer firefighter for 20 years and Langhorne-Middletown chief the last 10. He's also the former assistant township manager in Middletown.

Among those vying for Farry's seat on the Democratic side is former Middletown Democratic Chairman John Toth.

Bucks County NAACP president John Jordan and former Bensalem Councilman Bryan Allen are among the Democrats taking a shot at Tomlinson's seat this year.

"It's a long time between now and November and a lot of issues to be raised, so we'll see what happens in November," said Toth of the Republican optimism.

Bucks County Democratic Chairman John Cordisco said Republicans have been long on criticism but short on solid, detailed proposals to address issues like the ailing economy.

"People are very concerned about the economy, but I've seen no Republican program or proposal put forth at either the state or national level that really addresses those kind of issues," he said. "It's really been nothing more than obstructionism. All they can do is say no, and I think the American people are looking for something much more substantial."

Tomlinson represents Bensalem, Bristol Township, Bristol, Middletown, Langhorne, Langhorne Manor, Lower Southampton, Pennel, Hulmeville, Northampton, Wrightstown, Ivyland and Warwick. Farry represents Langhorne, Langhorne Manor, Hulmeville, Pennel, most of Middletown and most of Lower Southampton. Chris English can be reached at 215-949-4193 or cenglish@phillyBurbs.com.

"Tomlinson, Farry campaign confidently" Bucks County Courier Times 15 Feb 2010: A1