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Underdog congressional candidates make their pitch

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The Dems who run in the 5th, 7th and 8th CDs will likely face uphill battles in their races against GOP incumbents this fall.

And Tom Palzewicz, a Navy vet and small business owner, didn't shy away from it.

He joked with Dem delegates about how tough the sledding is in the 5th CD, where he's challenging GOP Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, who first won the seat in 1979. He said some clients he's told he's running respond by closing the door, leaning over and whispering, "I'm a Democrat, too."

When he told some in the business community he was going to challenge Sensenbrenner, some said they were happy he planned to primary the Republican lawmaker. He then corrected them that he's a Dem and was asked why.

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"I'm a Democrat for two simple reasons," he said. "I believe in fairness and justice in wages, and I believe in equality."

In the 7th CD, Margret Engebretson and Brian Ewart are squaring off for the Dem nomination to challenge U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy, R-Weston. Both talked about health care.

Engebretson knocked Duffy, saying he voted to eliminate the Affordable Care Act without a backup to continue providing coverage for the people of his northern Wisconsin district.

"My whole life I've stood up for people. I'm hardwired that way. It's who I am," she said.

Ewert said Dems have a history of creating and supporting health care, from covering veterans to Native Americans.

“But our work is not done,” he said, saying the Medicaid option should be opened up to all in the country.

Brown County Assistant DA Beau Liegeois urged Dems to carry the momentum and energy in the convention hall into the rest of the state this fall, saying they have the opportunity to change the future.

“We can change the hands of time,” he said. “We can move our country forward to end the divisiveness, to sow the seeds of compassion and to regain our place in the world as the greatest country in this world.”