

Imes campaign: Elected official, environmental nonprofit leader and small business owner John Imes announces candidacy for the 26th State Senate District

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MADISON – In a letter to voters today in the 26th State Senate District, John Imes announced his plans to join the race with three other highly regarded candidates for the seat long held by Senator Fred Risser who is retiring as the longest-serving state legislator in the nation.

“During this difficult time when both the physical health and economic health of our community are at risk, we need leaders who can bring a uniquely diverse experience working with stakeholders, engage all points of view more effectively and build the coalitions we need to win back a Democratic majority,” said Imes. “I promise to work diligently to enact the high-road, progressive policies that will take better care of our local businesses, workers, families and communities and put people first!”

John Imes is Executive Director of Wisconsin Environmental Initiative, a nonprofit organization he co-founded in 1996. As an elected Board Trustee for the Village of Shorewood Hills since 2012, John also serves as Village President Pro Tem, Finance Committee Chair and is a member of the Plan Commission and Joint Campus Area Committee. John is also Chair of the Village planning process for the Garden Homes

Neighborhood and previously served as Chair of the Personnel Committee for 7 years.

John also serves on the Monroe Street Merchants Association Board and as an adviser to several initiatives including the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters Climate & Energy Leadership Network, the Edgewood College, Social Innovation and Sustainability Leadership Program and the American Sustainable Business Council Climate and Energy Working Group.

John and his wife Cathie also own the Arbor House, an award-winning model for sustainable tourism located on Monroe Street. The Imes have four children - Jack, Cora, Ben and Grace.

The 26th State Senate District includes the Assembly Districts 76, 77 and 78 that comprise the City of Madison and the Village of Shorewood Hills. The date for the primary election is Tuesday, Aug. 11th

Dear friends and neighbors,

During this difficult time when both the physical health and economic health of our community are at risk from COVID-19, we need leaders who move beyond business and politics as usual and put people first. That is why I am entering the race for the 26th State Senate District, the seat long held by Senator Fred Risser who is retiring as the longest-serving state legislator in the nation.

As an elected official, environmental nonprofit leader and responsible small business owner rooted in the district for over 25 years, I bring a uniquely diverse experience working with stakeholders on issues that allow me to engage all points of view more effectively and build the coalitions we need to win back a Democratic majority.

Protect Workers and Prioritize Public Health

As your State Senator, I will work to implement the bold, high-road, progressive policies we need and will stand up for local businesses and workers. I believe we can come out of this crisis healthier, stronger, and more resilient as a community, but only if we implement an economic recovery plan that works for all and prioritizes workers, public health and safety, and provides affordable health care, paid sick, family and medical leave, and direct economic relief.

Our goal should be to make the state a model for high-road practices and provide incentives to those that adopt them and enact legislation requiring them. Providing a livable fair wage, family-friendly benefits, work-life balance, education and technical training and a “just transition”, particularly for women, immigrants, and people of color, will help reduce social/economic disparities and make an economic recovery that works for all possible.

Revitalize Main Street and Defend the UW

While our next state budget will be severely impacted by COVID-19, I will apply my extensive management background and experience as a local official and work to dismantle the traditional economic development incentives that benefit large, non-local multinational corporations like Foxconn and redirect savings to Main Street local businesses. I will also make sure workers are compensated as valued partners and will defend the UW System from further cuts in the same way by building a stronger funding commitment to higher education by the state.

Wisconsin Green New Deal

In order to build a long-term, resilient recovery and help protect against future systematic threats, I'll work to implement a broad Wisconsin based Green New Deal that includes the innovative policies to be a leader in clean energy, climate action, sustainable communities, regional transit, smarter — more affordable housing, food security, flood resilience and entrepreneurship — a plan that attracts investment and provides well-paying, accessible jobs and helps restore Wisconsin's leadership tradition.

Protecting Women's Rights and Equal Rights for All of Our Citizens

I will stand for equal pay for women and a woman's right to choose and equal rights for all our LGBTQ+ community members. I will also stand against intolerance and hate and the rhetoric and policies that target immigrants, refugees, and people of all faiths in our community.

Supporting Teachers and Our Public Schools, Reducing Gun Violence

I support our wonderful teachers and public schools and will be dedicated to the education, well-being, and success of our children. We need more equitable school funding and common-sense reforms to end gun violence.

Protecting Our Seniors

Our seniors and citizens with disabilities deserve a decent, safe, and affordable quality of life. That includes affordable health care with a "public option" as well as prescription drug reform legislation that addresses skyrocketing costs, and improvements to nursing homes to limit the exposure and spread of infectious diseases.

I also understand the importance of listening to voters and will take a cooperative, practical, and effective approach to solving problems. Working with colleagues, I voted for resolutions in support of our public schools and reducing carbon emissions to mitigate climate change. I will also refuse special interest campaign contributions and will oppose efforts to restrict voting rights that dismantle Wisconsin's good government tradition.

Voters want dedicated, experienced and effective leadership to transcend the extreme divisiveness and inaction of today's state politics and I promise to work diligently to enact high-road, progressive policies to take better care of our local businesses, workers, families and communities and put people first!

I would appreciate your support and thank you very much for your contributions to the success of our community.

Sincerely yours,
John Imes