

State senator the latest Republican to file for Wenstrup's open seat

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State Sen. Shane Wilkin worked his way up from county politics to the General Assembly. Now he wants a shot at Congress.

Wilkin, of Hillsboro, filed his statement of candidacy to run for the 2nd Congressional District just east of Cincinnati, currently represented by Republican U.S. Rep. Brad Wenstrup.

Wilkin is one of at least eight Republican candidates who have said they're running for Wenstrup's open seat. Wenstrup in November announced he would not seek reelection in 2024 so he could spend more time with family.

Wilkin didn't respond to messages left by The Enquirer on Monday.

Wilkin served as Highland County commissioner for three terms before going to the Ohio State House in 2018. He served as a representative for four years until winning the election in 2022 for Ohio Senate District 17, which represents 10 counties in southern Ohio.

Wilkin works as a licensed real estate agent and owns Larry's Party Shop, a carryout store in Hillsboro, according to his ethics disclosure forms filed in 2022 with the state.

Where is the district?

The sprawling district runs from Cincinnati's suburbs in the west to West Virginia in the east, covering most of southern Ohio. Almost all of the counties are considered part of Appalachia.

The district covers all of Clermont, Clinton, Pike, Adams, Brown, Highland, Ross, Scioto, Pickaway, Hocking, Vinton, Jackson, Lawrence, Gallia, and Meigs counties, as well as a portion of Fayette County.

What is the district like politically?

It is the most Republican district of Ohio's 15, based on the 2020 presidential race results. President Donald Trump beat Joe Biden by about a 3-to-1 margin.

Wenstrup himself beat his most recent Democratic challenger Samantha Meadows in 2022 by the same margin.