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# **Democratic Party of Washington County**

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## **Guide to Partisan Elected Offices**

***2017-2018 Edition***

*“If I can hold on to my sense of humor, and a modicum of dignity, I shall have a wonderful time running for office whether I get there or not.”*

**– United States Senator Hattie Caraway (D-AR)**

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## How do I use this guide?

This publication is intended to help potential candidates narrow their focus to a specific office. As you review these offices, consider what your skill set is, how it might relate to the duties of the office, and how your professional and personal constraints might fit the requirements of the position.

Unless otherwise noted, each position listed is up for election in 2018. Several districts which are not up for election in 2018 are omitted here. If the office is open due to incumbency or a declared future vacancy at the time of publication or revision, that is noted in bold. This guide covers only partisan offices and omits school boards, city councils, and judicial offices. It is organized from the most local positions to the highest level offices.

The maps of various district-level boundaries are linked for each office where available.

Please excuse any errors of fact, grammar, or spelling. Corrections may be printed. This edition is current as of May 11, 2017.

## District-Level County Offices

*“All politics is local.” – Speaker of the House Tip O’Neill, maybe*

There are 18 positions in Washington County elected by local districts to serve at the county level. These positions include **constables** and **justices of the peace (JP)**. Constables have a law enforcement role and are outdated but constitutionally required elected positions, while JPs serve vital roles as the legislative branch of county government.

### Constable

In Arkansas, constable is a relatively archaic elected position that predates the ability of law enforcement to effectively cover the entirety of large counties. Constables may take training for law enforcement duties, such as ticket-writing in their district and licensure to carry firearms. All training, equipment, and uniforms are paid for by the constable.

In Washington County, there are three constable districts, comprising the north, central, and southern portions of Washington County. Currently, the central constabulary (Fayetteville) is represented by Clint Thomas, a Democrat. The other two districts are held by Republicans. It is vital that the people who hold these positions leave law enforcement to trained professionals, and the Washington County Democrats seek candidates who will pledge to do so. Constables receive an annual salary of \$1 from the county.

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For further information on the duties of constables, [see this 2010 story](#) from the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.

- **Constable District 1** – Incumbent **Republican John Duggar Constable**
- **District 2** – Incumbent **Democrat Clint Edward Thomas**
- **Constable District 3** – Incumbent **Republican Kyle Woodruff**

### **Justice of the Peace**

Justices of the Peace (JPs) are the most directly representative partisan officials in Washington County. They serve two-year terms on the legislative body of county government (the quorum court), and are responsible for passing county ordinances, levying taxes, and maintaining county services like the jails, roads, and other infrastructure. In Washington County, there are 15 JP districts, each represented by a different JP. They are elected every two years and are compensated \$200 for each meeting they attend (an average of 2-3 meetings per month).

Washington County currently has five Democratic JPs and ten Republican JPs. A simple majority on the quorum court is eight members, so Democrats would need to hold all five seats and pick up three more to reclaim a majority in 2018. A map of the fifteen quorum court districts [can be found by visiting this site](#).

- **JP District 1** – Northwestern Washington County, including Elm Springs, Tontitown, and Johnson. The incumbent is **Republican Tom Lundstrom**.
- **JP District 2** – West Springdale, centered along Highway 412. This district was represented by **Republican Roddy Loyd**, who resigned in April 2017. Whoever the governor appoints will be ineligible for reelection to this position. **This office will be open in 2018.**
- **JP District 3** – North Springdale, including portions of HarBer, to the Benton County line. The incumbent is **Republican Harvey Bowman**.
- **JP District 4** – East Springdale, east of Highway 71, south of Emma and north of Highway 412, to the city limit. The incumbent is **Republican Bill Ussery**.
- **JP District 5** – Rural northeast Washington County, east of Springdale and north of Goshen. The incumbent is **Republican Joe Patterson**.
- **JP District 6** – Extreme northeast Fayetteville around Zion Road and southeast Springdale, east of Highway 71 and south of Highway 412. The incumbent is **Republican Lisa Ecke**.
- **JP District 7** – Rural district west of Fayetteville, including Litteral, Wedington Woods, and areas west of Farmington and north of Prairie Grove. The incumbent is **Republican Alicia Deavans**, who is ineligible for reelection to this position due to appointment by the governor. **This office will be open in 2018.**
- **JP District 8** – Northwest Fayetteville. The incumbent is **Democrat Daniel Balls**.
- **JP District 9** – Northeast Fayetteville. The incumbent is **Democrat Eva Madison**.

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- **JP District 10** – West Fayetteville and Farmington. The incumbent is **Republican Robert Dennis**.
  - **JP District 11** – Downtown Fayetteville. The incumbent is **Democrat Joe Kieklak**.
  - **JP District 12** – Southeast Fayetteville. The incumbent is **Democrat Sue Madison**.
  - **JP District 13** – All of Western Washington County, including Prairie Grove, Lincoln, Canehill, Evansville, Cincinnati, and Summers. The incumbent is **Republican Joe Maxwell**.
  - **JP District 14** – Most of south-central Washington County, including West Fork, Winslow, and Greenland. The incumbent is **Democrat Ann Harbison**.
  - **JP District 15** – Most of east Washington County, including Goshen, Elkins, and Durham. The incumbent is **Republican Butch Pond**.

## Countywide Offices

Washington County has eight elected officials who fulfill duties for the entire county. These positions are full-time and the compensation is commensurate to these professional, administrative responsibilities. These duties range from overseeing the entire county government executive departments (county judge) to law enforcement and investigation (sheriff and coroner). Countywide elected officials are also responsible for the administrative functions of the county-level judicial courts; assessment, collection, and administration of public taxes; and the management of county business and election registration.

The duties<sup>1</sup> and annual compensation of the various countywide elected positions are:

**County Judge** – The county judge is the chief executive officer of county government. They are responsible for authorizing and approving the disbursement of all appropriated county funds, operating the system of county roads, administering ordinances enacted by the quorum court, maintaining custody of county property, managing grants from federal, state, public, and private sources; hiring county employees except those employed by other elected officials of the county; and presiding over the quorum court without a vote, but with the power of veto. The incumbent county judge is **Republican Joseph Wood** and annual compensation is \$97,825.

**County Sheriff** – The official duties of the office of county sheriff in Arkansas are divided into three major areas: The sheriff is the chief enforcement officer of the courts, conservator of the peace in the county, and has custody of the county jail.

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<sup>1</sup> Descriptions of county offices adapted from Washington County website.  
<https://www.co.washington.ar.us/government/elected-officials>

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- o As chief enforcement officer of the circuit and chancery courts, the sheriff is charged by the constitution and by statute with the execution of summonses, enforcement of judgments, orders, injunctions, garnishments, attachments, and the making of arrest on warrants issued by the courts. The sheriff also opens and attends each term of circuit and chancery court, notifies residents selected to jury duty, and assists in handling witnesses and prisoners during a given court term.
  - o A second major area of duties surrounds the responsibility of the sheriff in law enforcement: the preservation of the public peace; the protection of life and property; the prevention, detection, and investigation of criminal activity; the apprehension and confinement of offenders and the recovery of property; the control of crowds at public events; the control of vehicular traffic and the investigation of traffic accidents; and the rendering of services and the protection of property during civil emergencies or natural disasters.
  - o The responsibility for the custody of the county jail in each county is given to the county sheriff. The sheriff has custody of accused felons and some misdemeanors apprehended in the county and is charged with feeding and keeping these accused persons. A log of all prisoners kept in the county jail and those transferred is maintained by the sheriff, as well as a bail bond book. –
  - o The incumbent is **Democrat Tim Helder** and the annual compensation is \$96,825.

**County Clerk** – The county clerk is the official bookkeeper of the county government. Some responsibilities of the office include: maintaining the county’s voter registration, as well as conducting absentee and early voting at the courthouse and issuing marriage licenses, DBA certificates, and ministers' certificates of record. The county clerk also files and maintain nurses' and physicians' credentials and licenses and keeps a record of all fictitious business names in the county. The clerk serves as the clerk for the county court and Circuit Court Probate Division and as secretary to the Equalization Board. The incumbent is **Republican Becky Lewallen** and annual compensation is \$92,146

**County Circuit Clerk** - The primary duties of the circuit clerk revolve around filing, docketing, attending court, issuing of notices, records management, and reporting to the Administrative Office of the Courts. The circuit clerk files and processes all the court documents for civil, domestic relations, criminal, and juvenile cases. The office maintains those records and all appeals. It is the clerk’s responsibility to prepare a list of prospective jurors, docket cases of the respective courts, issue summonses, subpoenas, writs and warrants related to each case, attend court and swear witnesses. The clerk is also responsible for:

- Recording all deeds, mortgages, and conveyances of lands and buildings lying within the county, as well as maps and plats of newly laid out subdivisions and all records from other counties concerning land sales or conveyance which affect title in the county.
- Recording of powers of attorney, liens on real property, soldiers' discharges, leases, real estate fixture filing statements, performance bonds and public

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- official bonds.
- The incumbent is **Republican Kyle Sylvester** and annual compensation is \$92,146.

**County Assessor** – The assessor is responsible for valuing all the property in Washington County. These values are part of the funding formula that generates revenue to support our public schools, roads, emergency services and other government departments. The assessor assesses property values, including real property and personal property; maintains property records for the county; creates and maintains parcel maps; provides a free property search program for the public; and performs various administrative duties related to property valuation. The incumbent is **Republican Russell Hill** and annual compensation is \$92,146.

**County Collector** – The collector's office collects property taxes to help support schools, cities, roads, jails, and county expenses based on millage rates set by local governments and voters. The incumbent is **Republican Angela Wood** and annual compensation is \$92,146.

**County Treasurer** – The county treasurer is the disbursement officer of the county. Duties include: receiving revenue from local, state, and federal agencies; distributing money to Washington County taxing entities; accurately accounting for all receipts and disbursements; securing county funds that are above FDIC limits; investing county funds; preparing and signing checks for employees and creditors of the county; reconciling bank statements monthly to ensure balance accuracy; projecting revenue for upcoming year during annual budget process; and presenting monthly financial reports to the quorum court on the county's fiscal condition. The incumbent is **Republican Bobby Hill** and annual compensation is \$92,146.

**County Coroner** – The coroner's office determines the cause and manner of deaths in Washington and Madison counties. This process includes: identifying the circumstances surrounding the death; obtaining medical records and toxicology; communicating with the Arkansas Crime Lab; and gathering information from families and friends of the deceased to assist in the investigation. The incumbent is **Democrat Roger Morris** and annual compensation is \$92,146.

**Note:** The county also has a non-partisan county prosecuting attorney, who serves as the chief prosecutor for Washington County criminal cases.

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## **State Legislative Offices**

*“What I hear when I’m being yelled at is people caring loudly at me.” – **fictional character Leslie Knope**, Parks & Recreation*

The state of Arkansas has a bicameral legislature consisting of a lower house, the State House of Representatives, and an upper house, the State Senate. State legislative terms are two years in the House and four years in the Senate. Elections for the Arkansas State House are held every two years, while only half of the State Senate is chosen each election. For example, all House districts in Washington County are up for election in 2018, while only two of our Senate Districts (4 and 5) are on the 2018 ballot.

### **State House of Representatives**

The Arkansas State House of Representatives is composed of 100 members representing districts across the state. Members of the lower chamber serve on committees, write and sponsor legislation, and serve as the most direct and localized form of state government to the voters. Base compensation for State House members is \$39,400 and they are elected to two-year terms in each biennial election. There are nine State House districts (HDs) that are contained in or include parts of Washington County.

- **House District 80** – One of the larger districts in NWA, HD80 runs along the Oklahoma border and comprises most of Western Washington and Crawford Counties. The district runs from Tontitown and Wheeler down to Prairie Grove, Lincoln, and Summers, and down into Crawford County to the outskirts of Van Buren. The incumbent is three-term **Republican Charlene Fite**.
- **House District 81** – HD81 mirrors HD80 on the east side of south Washington County beginning at Lake Sequoyah and including Elkins, West Fork, Brentwood, Durham, and Winslow. The district also captures a large part of Crawford County, including Chester, Rudy, and Alma. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Bruce Coleman**.
- **House District 84** – This large district encompasses most of east Fayetteville, including the northeast portion by the Mission/Crossover intersection, north to Zion Road, as well as large rural portions south to Greenland and west to the edge of Prairie Grove and southwest of Lake Sequoyah. The incumbent is four-term **Republican Charlie Collins**.
- **House District 85** – HD85 is composed of west and southeast Fayetteville, including University Heights, Walker Park, and much of Mount Sequoyah as well as Farmington and rural portions of east Prairie Grove. The incumbent is three-term **Democrat David Whitaker**.
- **House District 86** – HD86 is central and northwest Fayetteville, including most of the University of Arkansas campus. The incumbent is four-term **Democrat Greg Leding**.
- **House District 87** – HD87 runs along Highway 412 west from extreme northwest Springdale, to capture Elm Springs and most of Tontitown, as well as Siloam Springs in Benton County. The incumbent is two-term **Republican Robin Lundstrum**.

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- **House District 88** – HD88 is comprised of Johnson and most of west Springdale, including HarBer Meadows. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Clint Penzo**.
  - **House District 89** – HD89 district is most of downtown and east Springdale. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Jeff Williams**. Democrat Irvin Camacho received 44% of the vote in this district in 2016.
  - **House District 97** – This large, multi-county district is comprised of northeastern Washington County, including Brush Creek, Sonora, and Goshen, as well as the northwestern corner of Madison County (including Hindsville), and most of Carroll County (including Berryville, Eureka Springs, and Holiday Island). The incumbent is three-term **Republican Bob Ballinger**, who is likely running for the State Senate. **This office is likely open in 2018.**

## State Senate

The Arkansas State Senate is composed of 35 members representing large districts across the state. Members of the upper chamber serve on committees, write and sponsor legislation, and serve as more tenured members of the state legislature. They are elected to four-year terms and are staggered into two classes so that only half of the body is up in each biennial election. Base compensation for State Senate is \$39,400 per year. There are five State Senate districts that are contained in or include parts of Washington County, two of which are up for election in 2018.

- **Senate District 4** is comprised of most of the city of Fayetteville (the northeastern corner excluded), as well as Farmington and Greenland and rural areas west of Elkins. The incumbent is **Democrat Uvalde Lindsey**.
- **Senate District 5<sup>2</sup>** is a very large district that contains rural portions of south Washington County, including Winslow. Its largest centers of population are Berryville, Eureka Springs, Huntsville, Alma, Mulberry, and Lavaca. The district includes portions of Carroll, Madison, Washington, Franklin, Crawford, and Sebastian Counties. The incumbent is **Republican Bryan King**.

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<sup>2</sup> This is a very large district. For specific county-level boundaries, see the US Census page: [https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/SLD\\_RefMap/upper/st05\\_ar/sldu05005/](https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/SLD_RefMap/upper/st05_ar/sldu05005/)

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## Statewide Elected Officials

Arkansas has seven statewide executive branch officers described in the state constitution. With the exception of Lieutenant Governor, all statewide positions in Arkansas are full-time, executive branch administrative positions that oversee significant portions of state government. Like the countywide offices, these public officials are responsible for collecting taxes, maintaining the business and license registries of the state, adjudicating legal cases on behalf of Arkansans, and maintaining the functioning of state government all the way down to the local level.

These positions serve four-year terms and are elected in the off-years of Presidential elections. (2014, 2018, 2022, etc.). Officials are limited to two terms (eight years) in each position. Historically, constitutional officers serve one or two terms and attempt to run for higher constitutional office. The duties and annual compensation of the various constitutional officer positions are:

- **Governor**<sup>3</sup> – The governor is the chief executive officer of the state of Arkansas and the commander-in-chief of all the state's military and naval forces except when either force is already under federal command. The governor delivers periodic (traditionally annual) addresses to the legislature. He is required to deliver one such address at the end of his official term. The governor has many administrative duties that interact with executive agencies, the judiciary, and the legislature:
  - The governor has veto power over all legislative actions, including appropriation bills, concurrent orders and resolutions. In the case of orders and resolutions, the gubernatorial veto does not extend to an order to adjourn the legislature. Lawmakers may override a gubernatorial veto by a simple majority vote of both houses.
  - Judicially, the governor has the "power to grant reprieves, commutations of sentence, and pardons, after conviction; and to remit fines and forfeitures, under such rules and regulations as shall be prescribed by law." The governor must inform the legislature each time he grants a pardon, along with his reason for doing so.
  - Other duties and privileges of the office include:
    - issuing and authorizing all commissions and grants made by the state
    - calling extraordinary sessions of the legislature
    - adjourning either regular or extraordinary sessions of the legislature when the two houses are unable to pass a concurrent resolution to adjourn
    - filling vacancies in the offices of treasurer of state, secretary of state, auditor of state, and attorney general, as well as other offices without specific vacancy procedure
  - Annual compensation for governor is \$141,000 and the incumbent is first-term **Republican Asa Hutchinson**.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ballotpedia.org/Governor\\_of\\_Arkansas](https://ballotpedia.org/Governor_of_Arkansas)

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- **Lieutenant Governor**<sup>4</sup> – The official duties of the lieutenant governor, as described in the state Constitution are to preside over the Senate with a tie-breaking vote, to serve as governor when the governor is out of the state (this duty was removed in 2016), and to serve as governor if the governor is impeached, removed from office, dies, or is otherwise unable to discharge the office's duties. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Tim Griffin** and the annual salary is \$42,315.
  
  - **Attorney General**<sup>5</sup> – The attorney general (AG) is the chief attorney for the state of Arkansas and is the attorney for all state officials, departments, institutions. The AG also has the authority to initiate civil lawsuits under all environmental protection statutes, maintain and defend the interest of the state in the federal courts and be the legal representative of all state parties in litigation where the interests of the state are involved. The AG also attends and defends the state before the Supreme Court. The AG also has several duties that interface with other branches/levels of government:
    - The AG will, upon request, give her opinion to the governor and heads of executive departments on any constitutional or legal questions concerning the official actions of such officers.
    - The AG is also authorized to give her opinion on certain legal matters to prosecuting attorneys, members of the general assembly, county commissions and all state boards and commissions.
    - The AG is also empowered to bring suit against state officials who have collected or received state monies and not accounted for them according to the law.
    - The AG also has broad responsibilities that have been assigned by statute:
      - *Consumer Protection* - the AG is charged with enforcing the “Deceptive Trade Practices Act, which created the Consumer Protection Division, and authorizes that division to conduct investigations, promote consumer education, and bring lawsuits to enforce the provisions of the law. The division is also charged with registration of charities and professional fundraisers.
      - *Medicaid Fraud* – the AG will investigate and bring cases regarding abuse, exploitation or neglect of nursing home residents and fraud against the Medicaid program. The office is also empowered under federal and state law to conduct criminal investigations and refer cases for prosecution. The AG’s staff may also be deputized by a prosecuting attorney and conduct prosecutions.
      - *Crime Victims Reparations* – the Crime Victims Reparations Board requires that the AG provide necessary office space, support staff and secretarial services to the Board for the administration of their statutory responsibilities.
      - *Public Utilities* – maintain a division within the office called the Consumer Utilities Rate Advocacy Division. This division is charged with representing the state, its subdivisions and ratepayers in state and federal

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<sup>4</sup> <http://ltgovernor.arkansas.gov/about-the-office/office-history/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/offices/budget/budgetRequests/0053\\_attorney\\_general.pdf](http://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/offices/budget/budgetRequests/0053_attorney_general.pdf)

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proceedings related to utility matters.

- o The annual salary is \$130,000 and the incumbent is first-term **Republican Leslie Rutledge**.
- **Secretary of State**<sup>6</sup> – The secretary of state has a very large portfolio of responsibilities and official duties. The main areas of responsibility are:
  - o *Business and Commercial Services Division (BCS)* – BCS is Arkansas's starting point for people wishing to transact business in the state. BCS also records trademarks, files notary public certifications, issues authentication of documents and apostilles, and records Uniform Commercial Code filings.
  - o *Business Office* – The business office includes purchasing, supply, and mail sections for the state Capitol. The business office is also responsible for arranging insurance coverage for the Capitol and other buildings along with their contents that fall under the secretary of state's jurisdiction, and for purchase, inventory, and disbursement of Arkansas and United States flags as authorized by law.
  - o *Capitol Facilities Division* – The Capitol Facilities Division cares for the almost century-old State Capitol and its surrounding landscape.
  - o *Communications and Education Division* – The Communications and Education Division familiarizes citizens about elections, the state Capitol, Arkansas history and citizenship. Major programs of the department include voter outreach campaigns, civics education materials and the Capitol lighting ceremony held each December. The office also archives the architectural drawings of the Capitol and other historical documents.
  - o *Elections Division* – In addition to maintaining the state's election records, the department assists county officials with conducting federal, state and district elections. Helping to ensure compliance with federal election laws such as the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act, the division plays a central role in establishing and maintaining Arkansas's uniform statewide voter registration system and continues to help oversee training on the state's electronic voting systems.
    - The Elections Division also serves as a clearinghouse for campaign finance reports that are filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission. The library of the Elections Division maintains the journals and acts of the legislature along with all incorporations and annexations of cities and towns.
  - o The annual salary of the secretary of state is \$90,000 and the incumbent is term-limited **Republican Mark Martin**. **This office will be open in 2018.**
- **Treasurer of State**<sup>7</sup> – The treasurer of state serves as the state's banker and is responsible for an investment portfolio of approximately \$3 billion. The treasurer's office accepts deposits (more than \$70 million per day on average) and credits them to the proper accounts, reconciles accounts, prepare statements and answers

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/aboutOffice/Pages/dutiesDivisions.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.artreasury.gov/office.html>

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customers' questions. As the bank for the State, the office provides the same services as private banks. Approximately 5,000 checks are processed through the receiving department and the treasurer reconciles more than 8,700 accounts daily, representing the funds of nearly 200 state agencies, boards and commissions. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Dennis Milligan** and the annual salary is \$85,000.

- **Auditor of State**<sup>8</sup> – The auditor of state is the general accountant for the state and serves as the payroll officer for the executive, legislative and judicial branches. In addition to these duties, the auditor administers Arkansas's unclaimed property program (UCP), which connects state residents with their unclaimed property and allows current and past residents to collect their property at any time. The incumbent is first-term **Republican Andrea Lea** and the annual salary is \$85,000.
- **Commissioner of State Lands**<sup>9</sup> – The primary responsibility of the land commissioner is the collection of delinquent taxes on real estate. If not collected at the county level, the parcels are certified to the and commissioner for public auction. The land commissioner's office also has jurisdiction of mineral leasing on state-owned property, including the state's navigable streams and riverbeds for the extraction of sand and gravel. The office also houses the state's original land records. The incumbent is term-limited **Republican John Thurston** and the annual salary is \$85,000. **This office will be open in 2018.**

## **Federal Offices**

In 2018, Arkansas will elect four members of the United States House of Representatives. Washington County is entirely in the Third Congressional District (AR3 or CD3). There is no election for the U.S. Senate in Arkansas in 2018 and the next presidential election is in 2020.

### **United States House of Representatives**

Washington County is part of AR3, a district that is reshaped every ten years following the United States Census. AR3 is a large district, with urban areas and large rural swaths, with a north/south I-49 corridor that runs from Fort Smith and Van Buren up to Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville. It also runs east along US-412 to Harrison and down Highway 7 to Russellville.

For a complete map of AR3, please [visit this site](#).

U.S. representatives serve in the lower chamber of the federal legislature and are elected every two years. They serve on committees and write, sponsor, and co-sponsor federal legislation. The base compensation for serving in the United

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<sup>8</sup> <http://auditor.ar.gov/about-our-office>

<sup>9</sup> <http://history.cosl.org>

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States House of Representatives is \$174,000 per year. The incumbent is four-term **Republican Steve Womack** of Rogers.

### **United States Senate**

The upper chamber of the federal legislature, the U.S. Senate is comprised of 100 members, two from each state. Its members are divided into three classes that are elected to six-year terms every two years. Arkansas **Republican Senators Tom Cotton and John Boozman** serve in Class 2 and Class 3, respectively, and the 2018 election is for Class 1 Senators. This means **Arkansas does not have a U.S. Senate election in 2018**. Tom Cotton is up for election in 2020 and John Boozman is up again in 2022.

### **President of the United States**

Republican **Donald Trump**, barring impeachment or removal from office, is president until January 20, 2021. The next presidential election is November 3, 2020.

### **What's next?**

Considering running for office is a lofty undertaking. You have to weigh the responsibilities not only of campaigning, but actually serving if you are elected. The facets of running a campaign will be discussed in a forthcoming **So You're Thinking About Running** guide to be published by the Democratic Party of Washington County. First, though, you must determine which, if any, political office is appropriate for you. Questions about running for office can be directed to the Vice-Chair for Candidate Recruitment, Will Watson, at [wdwatsonjr@gmail.com](mailto:wdwatsonjr@gmail.com).

Every decision about running for office is personal. A general timeline for making your decision could conform to the following:

- Spring 2017 – discussing a campaign with family, friends, and party officials
- Summer 2017 – planning your campaign, building your network and team, talking to potential funders
- Fall 2017 – announcing your campaign, raising money, building your team, and attending/hosting community events
- Winter 2017/2018 – raising money, building your team and meeting constituents
- Spring 2018 – raising money and identifying supporters
- Summer 2018 – raising and spending money and identifying supporters
- Fall 2018 – raising and spending money, identifying and mobilizing supporters, winning your election

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No two campaigns are the same. In this guide, more than 40 local and state offices are described. Each district has its own characteristics, historic patterns, and voter profiles. You can be assured is that the Democratic Party will offer training and support about how to set up your campaign, get started raising money, and use technology to reach voters. The ultimate success or failure of your campaign, though, lies in your ability to connect with a majority of voters in your district, county, or state – and build an organization and network that will enable you to do that over the course of this two-year cycle.

It would be disingenuous not to disclose that some districts are more competitive than others and will draw more support, donations, and momentum. Running in a district currently represented by a Democrat is innately less challenging than running for an open seat or one held by a Republican incumbent. As the election approaches, the Democratic Party (locally, statewide, and nationally) will allocate resources based on the competitiveness of each race. If you are running in a difficult, historically Republican district, expect to raise most of the funds to run your campaign yourself. You can make this easier by doing more preliminary work to get to know likely donors, build your support network, and grow your audience on digital platforms.

The simple fact is we will not win every election, but we will not win any elections in which we do not field a candidate to stand for office. **It is vital to the success of the Democratic ticket that every office be contested**, so that Democrats can pick up as many seats as possible in 2018. This means defending historically Democratic seats, challenging historically Republican seats, and picking up swing districts that will be heavily targeted by both parties. No matter which of these types of office you run for – likely Democratic, likely Republican, or swing – your candidacy will play a part in a larger strategy that will lead to success for Democrats.

So, what's next? **It's time to run for something.**