

his style is aggressively independent
But within context of trustee-oriented
homogeneous - Rep -
career - human made
district.

Charles Wiggins

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This interview took place when I went to ask him if I could travel with him in the fall, and when I told him that I was trying to look over the Congressman's shoulder to see how and what his perception of the district was that triggered off the following comment.

"I've given the subject some thought. Maybe I shouldn't be too quick with my thoughts. But a district is a funny animal. You can pat it. But inevitably you tend to spend most of your time with the people you are most compatible with, the people you identify with. And that colors your perception of your district. These people though are only a part of the district. So it's a very imperfect mechanism. The great mass of the people you can't reach. They are not organized, they don't have institutions you can plug into. The leadership, the elite runs along the top of all the institutions and you can reach them, but not the people generally."

Is your district heterogeneous? "No, it's homogeneous. By almost any standard, it's homogeneous. It's geographically compact. It's all suburban--no big city, in the accepted sense of the word, and no rural area. It's all white. There are very few blacks, maybe two per cent. Spanish surnamed make up about 10 per cent. Traditionally, it's been a district with a high percentage home ownership. It still does, but the apartment house syndrome is taking over and hundreds of

apartments are being built. Economically, it's above the national average in employment--though the national average is skewed by pockets of very high unemployment. But the people of the district are employed. It's not that it's very high income. Oh, I suppose there are a few places of some wealth, but nothing very wealthy. And no pockets of great poverty either. And it's not dominated by any one industry. The Orange County segment has a lot of small, clean, technical industries. So I consider it very homogeneous."

Politically, it's had a history of being a safe Republican district. The new district will be safer than anything I've ever had. Before, I had a competitive district; although once I became the incumbent it was safe for me. I defeated a Democratic incumbent, not particularly because of anything I did but because of a lot of factors. The new district will begin to change and is already. It will become increasingly more Democratic. For now, I don't anticipate any trouble unless there's a national disaster for the Republicans. But in 7 or 8 years it could change, probably not at the Congressional level but first for the Assembly." He and I agreed there was always somebody running for the Assembly.

He said he had one serious primary opponent this year who "is a man of some substance" who "has raised more money than I" but hasn't spent it yet. "I'm waiting for the other shoe to drop." He wonders what the guy is going to do with his money--run a media campaign, run a direct mail campaign, or "go South with the money". Wiggins is not working hard

in the district. "I suppose if I felt I was hanging on by my finger nails, I would go out and do and work the district, but I have this Judiciary thing and, unless I'm misreading the situation very badly, my work is higher on the priority list than going back to the district." He said the man running against him is a builder who is organizing everyone connected with the building industry and saying that "we need our interests represented in Washington." "It's a very narrow view." "He says his opponent plus one other insignificant opponent should get one-third of the vote.

He said that on a typical trip home to the district he would visit one school, one group of "institutional administrators" by which he meant city officials, Chamber of Commerce, something like that. He said that he cannot hit the service clubs too much because they meet during the week. He said he would go to one or two political things and that as the campaign heated up, the political would take a higher percentage of his time.

He says September is fine and to check with Pat Rowland.