

Olsen eyes Frenzel's U.S. House seat

State Rep. Sally Olsen says she is responsive to her 30,000 or so constituents in the St. Louis Park area. So responsive, in fact, that she believes she can add about 520,000 names to the list.

That's why she says she's running for the Third U.S. Congressional District seat now held by Republican Bill Frenzel, who is retiring.

"I've never sought election until after people have come and asked me to consider running," says Olsen, an Independent-Republican from St. Louis Park.

She was the first to announce her candidacy for the congressional seat. But since then, many others, including state Sen. Jim Ramstad (IR-Minnetonka) have expressed an interest in the job.

Olsen says she was ready to jump in early because she had been thinking about it two years earlier when it was thought Frenzel would be given a new job in President George Bush's new administration.

Frenzel kept his seat at that time, but the seed to go to Washington, D.C., had been planted and nurtured by family and friends, Olsen says.

"I can make a significant contribution to the state and to the country," Olsen says, citing her 12 years of service in the state House, and her concern for education and financial issues.

If Olsen doesn't receive the IR



Rep. Sally Olsen

endorsement for the U.S. House seat, she says she will run again for the state House. Earlier, Olsen received the IR endorsement for her District 44A seat.

The endorsing convention for the Third U.S. Congressional District seat won't be until May 5.

Olsen, former chair of the Education Finance Division, is currently on the Financial Institutions and Housing, Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs, and Taxes committees.

She has traveled in the United States as well as in the Soviet Union, China, Israel, and Europe.

"My work and traveling have given me an appreciation for the diversity of the concerns of people out there," Olsen says.

She was instrumental in passing legislation that strengthened child abuse reporting laws, initiated art program funding for public schools, and reduced car insurance premiums for senior citizens who completed defensive driving courses, she says.

One of the pitfalls of her tenure at the House has been the amount of time it was spent being part of the minority party.

"As a minority member, you can't really sponsor any major legislation," Olsen says. "It becomes more of a game of inches; I work to get amendments passed that make the bills better."

If Olsen doesn't return to the House next session, she says she hopes people remember her as someone who worked hard for her constituents, and was conscientious and loyal.

"It's important to listen, to try to understand and be understanding," Olsen says. "I don't have to agree with people all the time, but I can listen to their concerns and ensure that our government is working in an honest, ethical, and fair way."

Revisor's bill cleans up "unnecessary locutions" . . .

Walt Whitman or Emily Dickinson wouldn't have written it, but the process of writing the *Minnesota Statutes* is a little the same.

"It's like a poem — you're never done with it," says Harry Walsh, an attorney in the Office of the Revisor of Statutes.

And just as Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* went through many revisions, so, too, does *Minnesota Statutes* — all 645 chapters.

This year there are three separate "revisor's bills" — two of which have been signed into law — that make

corrections and clean up the language in the Minnesota statute books.

Chapter 367.01 dealing with the resignation of town officers is no poetic work.

But take a closer look and you'll see that this year's version is written in a language that's easier to understand than the one many lawyers and bureaucrats speak.

"It shall be the duty of the town treasurer" has been changed to, "It is the duty of the town treasurer."

And the section that states "Any town

may provide for combining the offices of clerk and treasurer" has become "A town may *combine* the offices of clerk and treasurer."

"There's more conscious concern for language now than there used to be," says Walsh.

The office had time to clean up the language in two chapters of the law during the 1989 interim, bringing the total number of revised chapters to 25 since the project began about six years ago.

Walsh says his office is reluctant to