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Press Release: Prominent Democrats Ask Voters to Re-Elect Pam Roach

By Christopher Hurst, Yvonne Ward, and Karen Willard

Three prominent Democrats who have run for office in the 31st District, including Republican Senator Pam Roach's two-time opponent, feel compelled to support Roach for the district's Senate seat. This decision is both painful and necessary.

There were four people seeking the Senate seat this year, and now it is down to two Republicans: Senator Pam Roach or challenger Matt Richardson. Matt Richardson is an unacceptable risk to children and, in a highly ironic turn of events, we are asking voters to elect Senator Pam Roach.

After carefully reviewing the extensive documentation relating to the criminal behavior of Matt Richardson extending back many years, we conclude that if he were elected to the Washington State Senate, the safety of children would be at risk. Matt Richardson was charged with sexually assaulting two young girls over multiple years. He pled guilty to the charges. He then engaged in a pattern of seeking positions in schools with young children while hiding his history.

According to a criminal Affidavit of Probable Cause, Matt Richardson engaged in a persistent, ongoing sexual assault of two young girls. After this incident, he engaged in inappropriate behavior in public school classrooms. That pattern should stop at the steps of our Capitol.

Democratic State Representative Christopher Hurst, when faced with the prospect of a child molester in the State Capitol stated: "Spirited political debate is a healthy process in our system of self-government. However, there are times when a moral imperative becomes so great that it is necessary to set aside partisan differences in the interest of public safety. This is one of those times."

Democrat Yvonne Ward ran vigorous campaigns against Roach in 2002 and 2006; the campaigns between them exceeded \$700,000.00. "I and my supporters worked hard to unseat Roach," said Ward. "I disagree with her on so many policy issues. But given the choice between a conservative Republican, and a conservative Republican with a history of sexual assaults against children, Pam Roach gets my vote."

Democrat Karen Willard ran against Roach's son Dan for the House Position 1, and has worked hard since then in partisan Democratic politics for Pierce County and the 31st Legislative District. "Nevertheless", she says, "I'm going to ask the voters to vote against Matt Richardson as this isn't a partisan issue".

State Senators and Representatives enjoy the volunteer work of high school pages during session. Student groups of all ages make many visits to the state capitol every day. Senate and House pages, citizens and interest groups meet with legislative leaders behind closed doors as there is a high level of trust that we give to our elected representatives. We should not elect someone who is not worthy of that trust.