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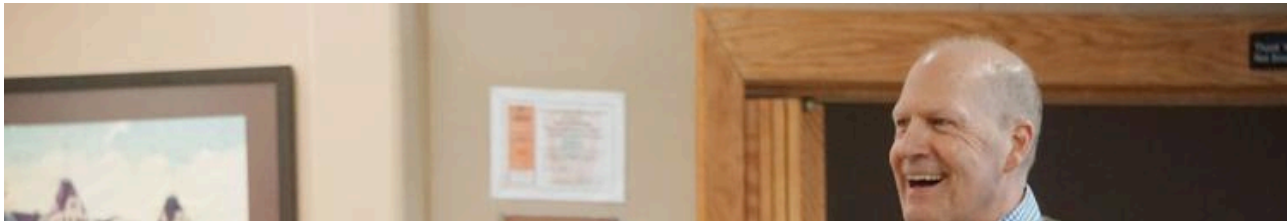
Sununu thinks it's time for NH to send a Republican to Washington

3-term US rep, 1-term senator touts experience in politics, business

By GABRIEL PERRY, The Laconia Daily Sun
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WEIRS BEACH — U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen's announcement in March 2025 that she would not seek reelection left a vacuum in New Hampshire politics. Voters could now be ready to swap one political dynasty for another in 2026.

Serving in the seat since 2009, and as New Hampshire's governor for six years before that, the impending vacancy resulted in what is shaping up to be a competitive race to select Shaheen's successor.

There are no Republicans represented in New Hampshire's federal delegation, and former Sen. John E. Sununu says he's the one who can change that.

In the Democratic primary, four-term Rep. Chris Pappas (D-NH) is seeking election to Senate. If selected, he'll serve alongside Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH), who also previously served the Granite State as governor, from 2013 to 2017.

The state Primary Election is Tuesday, Sept. 8.

At the Weirs Community Center on April 8, Sununu, speaking before a crowd of Belknap County Republicans, was laser-focused on beating Pappas. His case: Pappas hasn't done much at all with his time in the U.S. House.

"Such an important part of this job is serving your constituents: veterans, retirees, people who are trying to deal with regulations in the federal government. You need someone who can be a tough, strong, effective voice. And I have a track record of actually doing that," Sununu said. "Chris Pappas, what has he done? Nothing. It's hard to overstate how little he's accomplished."

Sununu was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1996, and reelected in 1998, and again in 2000. In 2002, Sununu defeated Shaheen in the General Election, earning a seat in the U.S. Senate. In 2008, he lost a reelection bid to Shaheen. His father, John H. Sununu, was New

Hampshire's governor for most of the '80s, then chief of staff for George H.W. Bush. His brother, Chris Sununu, was the 82nd Granite State governor, serving until Gov. Kelly Ayotte was elected in 2024.

“This is an important election, because Republicans haven’t had a representative in Washington in a decade, and there’s no reason for that. New Hampshire’s a Republican state: we have a Republican governor, Republican state Senate, Republican House,” he said. “We have a delegation in Washington that doesn’t just vote out-of-step with New Hampshire, they vote the liberal party line every time, and the worst of them is Chris Pappas.”

Sununu told the 60-odd Republicans in the room that when Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) served as Speaker of the House, Pappas tended to vote along with her, and avoiding Democratic Party representation for New Hampshire in the Senate influenced his decision to run.

“Chris Pappas voted with her 222 out of a possible 223 times — how is that even possible?” Sununu said. “That’s certainly not New Hampshire. That might be California, but that’s not New Hampshire.”

Sununu, during his tenure in the Senate, tended to vote with the party majority — 84% of the time, according to a Washington Post congressional voting database published in 2007, though it's worth noting Sununu broke with the party on significant legislation: he joined Democrats in filibusters of the Patriot Act, and was one of the Republicans who voted in opposition to the original bill.

Opining the country has progressed positively in the years following President Joe Biden’s administration, which he characterized as defined by bad fiscal and immigration policy, Sununu told the crowd the only way to prevent a return to that paradigm is by keeping a Republican majority in the Senate.

“This seat in New Hampshire is the best chance Republicans will have to pick up a seat in the Senate this year,” Sununu said. “Protecting those gates, not going back to the inflation, the overspending, to the open borders.”

Sununu said his experience in government, and in business, have prepared him to do the job.

“We in New Hampshire benefit when we’re being represented by people that have actually worked in small business, worked in manufacturing, hired employees, trained employees, dealt with regulations,” Sununu said. “That perspective is so valuable in solving problems and making the right decisions, whether it’s in Concord, or in Washington, or anywhere else. That’s the perspective I’ve always brought to my work and, as senator, that’s the perspective I’ll bring representing New Hampshire.”

If elected, Sununu said he’ll be charged with tackling “huge challenges in this country” — paramount among them, balancing the federal budget. He said the budget can be balanced, not by raising taxes, but by controlling spending. Sununu also pointed to health care, and said the system would benefit from pricing transparency and increased competition by allowing insurance companies to sell policies across state lines.

Sununu also told the audience the use of the military should always be focused on specific national security goals and objectives, and those laid out in the ongoing war in Iran include the destruction of their nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities, and of a network used by the Iranian regime to support terrorist organizations abroad.

“Iran has been killing Americans for 47 years,” he said. “Those three objectives, I think, are consistent with our national security goals and needs. I think they have been largely achieved, at this point — the nuclear program truly is decimated.”

“With your help, I will be the next senator of the State of New Hampshire — a Republican senator from the State of New Hampshire — and a senator that will make you all very proud,” he said.

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