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Candidates in the Big First Discuss the Issues at Forum

Seven candidates vying for a spot in the U.S. Congress in the Big 1st District in Kansas gave their views on a variety of topics to over 100 people in attendance at a candidates forum Tuesday night at the SCCC/ATS Showcase Theater.

The topics discussed were illegal immigration, health care reform, abortion, info-structure, and energy.

During the topic of abortion, it was surprisingly Republican Marck Cobb of Galva who said despite personally being pro life that he is pro choice when it comes to legislation. Democrat Alan Jilka of Salina said he is pro life along with the other five Republicans in the race. Rob Wasinger of Cottonwood Falls and Tim Huelskamp of Fowler each used personal examples as to why they are pro life. Wasinger has ten children, while Huelskamp has adopted several children into his family.

Jilka and Cobb are the only two candidates in favor of amnesty when it comes to illegal immigration. All seven did agree that the borders need to be secured with Sue Boldra of Hays insistent that a wall must go up. Boldra also stressed how she is the only citizen candidate in the race as she has been a school teacher for over 20 years.

When it came to health care, Jilka said he felt like everyone needed to give the new law a chance to work. Tracey Mann of Salina quickly responded by saying he strongly disagrees and that giving it a chance to work will destroy health care for years to come in America. The other five Republicans also echoed what Mann said and are all in favor of repealing the law.

Jim Barnett of Emporia and Huelskamp both stressed that their records in the state senate show fiscal responsibility and that they have already proven that they'll do what they say. Barnett also said his experience as a medical doctor will help him when it comes to health care.

All of the candidates have had some sort of farming experience and claim agriculture is very important to them along with continuing Congressman Jerry Moran's work to improve Highway 54. They also all agreed, including Jilka the Democrat that the United States should be attempting to get energy anyway possible right now, including continuing offshore drilling.

The forum aired on B107.5 and was sponsored by the Liberal Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Chambers of Commerce, Seward County Community College/Area Technical School, B107.5 KSCB Radio, High Plains Daily Leader, and the Southwest Times Newspaper. The forum was also taped by Smokey Hills Public Television and will air on July 8.

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