

STATE STREET

Congressional Hopeful Is Dogged by Past as a Breakaway Democrat

State Sen. David Carlucci considers a run for U.S. House seat that Rep. Nita Lowey is vacating



David Carlucci was elected to the New York State Senate in 2010 and immediately joined the breakaway Independent Democratic Conference. PHOTO: MIKE GROLL/ASSOCIATED PRESS



By
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As State Sen. David Carlucci prepares a campaign for Congress, some activists in his Hudson Valley district say his previous membership in a faction of breakaway Democrats will dog him in a primary.

Mr. Carlucci, 38 years old, has been talking to supporters about a campaign and is expected to make a formal announcement on Monday. He would seek the Democratic nomination in the 17th District; incumbent Rep. Nita Lowey announced Oct. 10 that she wouldn't run for re-election.

Mr. Carlucci was elected to the state Senate in 2010 and immediately joined the Independent Democratic Conference, which allied with Republicans who held the chamber majority until this year. Progressive activists had long criticized the IDC for empowering the GOP and organized

Democratic primary challengers that ousted six of the eight former IDC senators in the 2018 election.

“It’s a long road back,” said Paul Diamond, an organizer with Rockland United, a progressive group that backed Julie Goldberg’s unsuccessful primary challenge to Mr. Carlucci.

Mr. Diamond said he was backing Mondaire Jones, a former attorney for Westchester County, in the congressional race. Mr. Jones said he was also upset by Mr. Carlucci’s affiliation with the IDC and that it showed the senator couldn’t be trusted.

In an interview, Mr. Carlucci said he was focused on achieving results and worked across the aisle to do so. After Democrats won the majority this year, he became an active supporter of Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, a Democrat from Yonkers, saying he was proud to have sponsored more bills that passed both houses of the state Legislature than any other senator.

“I’m aware there will be people attacking all day long about the past. I’ll be talking about the present and the future,” Mr. Carlucci said. “We can attack each other all day long, and it’s not going to do one thing to lower property taxes or get our kids a better education.”

Last week, Chelsea Clinton said on ABC’s “The View” that she wouldn’t seek Mrs. Lowey’s seat and Assemblyman David Buchwald, a Democrat from Westchester County, announced his bid in a video.

Rockland County Democratic Chairwoman Kristen Zebrowski Stavisky said she expected Mr. Carlucci and others would join the fray. Mrs. Lowey didn’t have a Republican opponent in 2018, and there are twice as many Democrats as Republicans in the district, which covers Rockland County and northern Westchester County.

“I’m sure there will be more [candidates] coming out of the woodwork,” Ms. Zebrowski Stavisky said. “A congressional seat doesn’t come up very often.”

WALKING THE LINE: Some leaders of the United Auto Workers are upset that Gov. Andrew Cuomo hasn’t shown more support for their strike against General Motors Co.

Union members are picketing outside GM facilities near Buffalo and Rochester. Many Democratic politicians, including U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, have stopped by while in the area.

But Mr. Cuomo, a Democrat, hasn’t done so.

The UAW backed Mr. Cuomo's re-election bid last year, and leaders spoke on his behalf while he was competing against actress Cynthia Nixon for the Working Families Party nomination. (Ms. Nixon won at the convention, but lost to Mr. Cuomo in a Democratic primary.)

"He had his opportunity to stand with us or not, and he chose not to," said Chris Brancato, recording secretary for UAW Local 1097 in Rochester. "There's no way you can sugarcoat it or change it to something else."

Mr. Cuomo did tell the Buffalo News editorial board on the second day of the strike, which began Sept. 16, that he supported the workers. Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat from Buffalo, has visited the UAW picket lines.

GM and the UAW announced a tentative agreement last week to end the strike, but picketing will continue at least until Friday while union members vote on the deal.

Mr. Brancato said he was also upset that Mr. Cuomo hasn't acted on a union-backed bill that would let workers file for state unemployment benefits after a week of striking. Mr. Cuomo said last week during a radio interview that the bill was "complicated because it's in the middle of that GM strike, and how would that bill impact the strike currently going on, if at all."

THE QUESTION: Who did Mr. Poloncarz oust when he was first elected county executive in 2011? Hint: His former Republican opponent was also in the news last week.

—Know the answer? Leave a comment!

THE LAST ANSWER: Andrew Cuomo is now New York's first bachelor governor since Hugh Carey. Mr. Carey, a Democrat who was in office from 1975 to 1983, became a widower in 1974 and married Evangeline Gouletas in 1981. They later divorced.

THE QUESTION: Mrs. Lowey was first elected to Congress in 1988. Which incumbent Republican did she beat, and what office did he run for within the last decade?

— Know the answer? Leave a comment!

THE LAST ANSWER: Prior to Donald Trump, the last sitting U.S. president to visit Utica, N.Y., was Harry Truman in 1948. In 2014, Barack Obama landed at Griffiss International Airport in nearby Rome, but didn't stop in Utica.

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Corrections & Amplifications

State Sen. David Carlucci sponsored the most bills that passed both houses of the Legislature this year. An earlier version of this article incorrectly stated he sponsored the most bills that passed

the state Senate. In addition, Rep. Nita Lowey's first name was misspelled as Nina in the headline in an earlier version.

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