

= Don Marostica =

Don Marostica (born March 7 , 1948) is a real estate developer and former legislator in the U.S. state of Colorado , currently serving as director of the state 's Office of Economic Development and International Trade .

Raised in Colorado , Marostica is an Army veteran , former high school teacher , and most recently a prominent real estate developer in northern Colorado . After several years serving on the Loveland , Colorado city council , Marostica was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 2006 , represented House District 51 , which encompasses the city of Loveland .

Marostica , regarded as a moderate Republican , focused heavily on fiscal issues as a legislator , including transparency and loosening budgetary restrictions , and sat on the legislature 's Joint Budget Committee during the 2009 session . In July 2009 , Marostica resigned from the legislature to accept the post of economic development director in the cabinet of Democratic Gov. Bill Ritter , where he has focused on attracting and growing business in the state of Colorado during the ongoing recession .

= = Early career = =

Marostica was born in Sterling , Colorado and graduated from Roosevelt High School in Johnstown . He attended Colorado State University on football and wrestling scholarships , graduating in 1970 with a degree in physical science and geology . In 1975 , he earned a master 's degree in secondary school administration from the University of Northern Colorado

Have been commissioned through the ROTC program at Colorado State , Marostica served in the United States Army and the Colorado Army National Guard , leaving the service at the rank of captain in 1979 . After leaving the Army , Marostica taught and coached wrestling at Rocky Mountain High School in Fort Collins . Marostica currently resides in Loveland , Colorado with his wife , Carol .

Marostica entered the real estate industry in 1977 and is currently a partner in Loveland Commercial , LLC . In 1982 , during a downturn in the real estate market , Marostica declared bankruptcy and had judgements from creditors filed against him . He also had tax liens filed against him both in the early 1980s and in the mid @-@ 1990s , and has since paid all back taxes . Marostica became financially successful in real estate , and , together with other partners in Loveland Commercial , has donated extensively to local causes , including endowing a chair in the business department of Colorado State University . As a developer , Marostica specialized in commercial real estate , spearheading five Planned Unit Developments in Loveland and Milliken , Colorado .

Marostica was elected to the Loveland City Council in 2001 , serving for three years , including a span as mayor pro tem , before resigning in 2004 because of professional conflicts of interest . During his 2006 legislative campaign , he was criticized for , as a city council member , voting to award city money to his company for a development contract ; the city council had to authorize a special exception to its conflict of interest rules to approve the contract .

Marostica has served on over 60 boards and commissions in the Loveland area , with an emphasis on transportation @-@ related issues (Loveland Transportation Finance Committee , Loveland East @-@ West Mobility Study Committee , Loveland Eisenhower Boulevard Alignment Analysis Committee , Fort Collins @-@ Loveland Airport Master Plan Update Committee) . He has also served as the chair of the Board of Directors of the Poudre Valley Health System Foundation and the Medical Center of the Rockies Foundation , and on the bond oversight committee for the Thompson School District . He is also an avid motorcyclist and regularly participates in the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and Ride to the Wall , a cross @-@ county ride ending at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial .

= = Legislative career = =

== 2006 election ==

In seeking the 51st House district state house seat , representing Loveland , Marostica first faced a challenge from Kevan McNaught in the Republican primary . McNaught was endorsed by the Colorado Club for Growth , who criticized Marostica for his support of higher taxes and his use of eminent domain when he was a member the Loveland city council . Marostica edged out McNaught in the Republican primary by about 250 votes , or 5 % of voters . In contrast with McNaught 's conservative credentials , Marostica was considered by observers on both the left and the right to be a moderate Republican ; he supported Colorado 's 2005 Referendum C , a loosening of state spending restrictions under the state 's Taxpayer Bill of Rights .

In the general election , Marostica defeated Democrat Jodi Radke in the general election with 56 % of the vote . Marostica raised and spent roughly \$ 350 @, @ 000 , of which \$ 220 @, @ 000 ? almost least two @-@ thirds of the money his campaign spent ? was donated by Marostica himself , to win the contested primary and general elections .

== 2007 legislative session ==

For the 2007 session of the Colorado General Assembly , Marostica was assigned to seats on the House Finance Committee and the House Transportation and Energy Committee , while expressing an interest in eventually serving on the powerful Joint Budget Committee . Following the legislative session , Marostica sat on the interim Transportation Legislation Review Committee .

Although a Republican serving in a legislature controlled by Democrats , Marostica was relatively successful at passing legislation . During his first session , Marostica sponsored bills to streamline the issuance of search warrants , to give volunteer reserve peace officers the same status as regular peace officers , and to require that powersports vehicles be sold only by licensed motor vehicle dealers . Marostica , an avid motorcyclist , was among the prominent opponents of a bill that would have required minors to wear motorcycle helmets while riding , even wearing his own motorcycle helmet to a committee hearing at which the bill was debated .

Marostica failed to win legislative approval what he described as his " most important " proposal ? the " Taxpayer Transparency Act , " which would have required that government expenditures larger than \$ 300 be reported on a searchable government website . Although supported by Republican House leadership , the bill died in committee ; however , Marostica saw his transparency proposal implemented in 2009 by an executive order of Gov. Bill Ritter .

== 2008 legislative session ==

In the 2008 session of the Colorado General Assembly , Marostica sat on the House Health and Human Services Committee , the House Transportation and Energy Committee , and the Joint Capital Development Committee .

Marostica declared his " favorite bill " among those he sponsored during the session to be a measure to exempt owners from property tax on buildings leased to public universities , an idea Marostica attributed to a local developer . Marostica also sponsored legislation signed into law to allow statutory counties , cities , and towns to spend money on marketing in addition to advertising , in response to a lawsuit challenging the town of Estes Park 's ability to engage in marketing .

== 2008 election ==

Marostica announced his bid for re @-@ election to the legislature in January 2008 ; Marostica 's campaign raised about five times as much money as that of Democratic opponent Kenneth Bennett , bringing in over \$ 80 @, @ 000 by mid @-@ October , of which \$ 10 @, @ 000 was contributed by Marostica personally ; His re @-@ election bid was endorsed by the Denver Post , Marostica ultimately won with 58 percent of the vote .

In the contested 2008 Republican presidential primaries , Marostica supported former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani , helping to organize a November 2007 fundraiser for Giuliani 's campaign that was reported to net over \$ 60 @,@ 000 . After John McCain secured the Republican nomination , Marostica supported the McCain @-@ Palin ticket , including kicking off a Sarah Palin rally in Loveland in October .

= = = 2009 legislative session = = =

For the 2009 legislative session , Marostica was named to a seat on the legislature 's Joint Budget Committee , and a seat on the House Appropriations Committee as the ranking Republican member . During hearings before the beginning of the legislative session , Marostica supported withdrawing all state funding from public research universities , a move opposed by university leaders , but which was discussed more seriously after poor economic forecasts . Marostica also helped to lead an effort to allow the state to tap the financial reserves of Pinnacol Assurance , a quasi @-@ governmental worker 's compensation insurer , in order to balance the state budget . Following the legislative session , Marostica served on Colorado 's Long @-@ Term Fiscal Stability Commission , a panel created by legislation during the 2009 General Assembly to consider changes to constitutional constraints on the state budget .

In February , Marostica was the only Republican who announced plans to support legislation to repeal Colorado 's Arveschoug @-@ Bird limit , which capped the growth of general fund expenditures at 6 percent per year . Marostica faced pressure from prominent Republicans , including Independence Institute President Jon Caldera and former state treasurer Mark Hillman , to drop his support ; in response , he referred to Hillman and Caldera as " has @-@ beens " and " losers , " earning him additional criticism from House Republicans ; Marostica later promised to apologize to Hillman and Caldera . Marostica was the prime sponsor of the bill in the House , where , after surviving an attempted Republican filibuster in the Senate , it was ratified , and later signed into law . Marostica also broke with other Republicans as the only member of his party to vote in support of a failed effort to repeal Colorado 's death penalty ; the proposal passed the Colorado House by one vote , but was defeated in the Senate .

Marostica also sponsored bills to allow golf carts , scooters , and small electric vehicles to travel on some public roads , to allow state veterans organizations to provide burial for unclaimed remains of Colorado military personnel , and to allow building inspectors from other municipalities to assess structural damage to properties , a proposal stemming from a May 2008 tornado in Windsor , Colorado. to enable increased state funding for online education , and to keep Colorado 's tobacco litigation settlement cash fund open for one additional year . Marostica announced plans to introduce legislation to expand the definition of cigar bars to increase the number of establishments exempt from Colorado 's indoor smoking ban , but withdrew the legislation after facing opposition from Democrats ; that same week , he denounced as " inappropriate and offensive " a British National Health Service flyer distributed by a lobbyist linking smoking to erectile dysfunction , calling for an ethics investigation into the flyer .

= = Director of Economic Development = =

In July 2009 , Democratic governor Bill Ritter named Marostica , a Republican , to the post of executive director of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade , replacing Don Elliman , who Ritter had tapped as Colorado 's chief operating officer . Marostica resigned his House seat to take the position , and handed control of his development company to his partner and son in order to avoid conflicts of interest , Marostica named opening Asian markets to Colorado exports as a priority for his time in the new position , in addition to encouraging new venture capital investment and retaining existing major employers despite the late @-@ 2000s recession . Marostica was replaced in the House by small business owner Brian DelGrosso , and on the legislature 's Joint Budget Committee by the more conservative Rep. Kent Lambert .

During Marostica 's first months in the position , he helped lead Colorado 's effort to keep Frontier

Airlines jobs in Denver following its merger with Republic Airways ; ultimately , Frontier moved several hundred jobs , and Frontier 's headquarters , to Wisconsin and Indiana , which offered greater tax and economic incentives . When legislators proposed eliminating business tax credits in late 2009 to help balance the states budget , Marostica publicly defended many of those credits , but he did support limited cuts to tax credits in Governor Ritter 's proposed 2010 ? 2011 budget .

In late 2009 , Marostica was also involved in attracting a wind turbine parts supplier to Colorado , announcing a renewed emphasis on natural gas development on Colorado 's Western Slope , and pushing to speed the permitting process for oil and gas operations . In 2010 , Marostica pushed for additional incentives for the " creative industry , " including arts , media , and film , in Colorado .