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## Three Running in Redrawn 7th

U.S. Senate, 3rd District House Seat Also Being Contested

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Redrawn boundaries have changed the makeup, and potentially the political dynamic, in Maryland's 7th Congressional District.

Represented for eight years by Elijah E. Cummings (D), the district was redrawn for the 2002 election and now incorporates almost all of Howard County, a small chunk of Baltimore County around Catonsville and a large part of Baltimore. Although the district is made up mostly of registered Democrats, Cummings won the Howard portion in 2002 by only about 800 votes.

Howard voters will also go to the polls Tuesday to elect a U.S. senator. And Howard residents living in the 3rd Congressional District will select a representative.

Three candidates are running in the 7th District: Cummings, of Baltimore, a former delegate to the *General Assembly* and now chairman of the *Congressional Black Caucus*; Virginia T. Rodino of Baltimore, an assistant professor of communications at Bowie State University running for the Green Party; and Tony Salazar of Ellicott City, a Republican, who is senior vice president and general counsel for Provident Bank.

The two challengers are making their first run for elected office.

Cummings has raised more than \$700,000; Salazar more than \$90,000, with at least \$10,000 of his own. Rodino hasn't filed a campaign finance report because she says she has raised less than \$5,000, the threshold amount for filing.

Some critics say Cummings's work for the Black Caucus has come at the expense of the district. His supporters, however, say they are proud of his national profile.

Rodino says Cummings, who joined about a third of his House colleagues in voting against a resolution authorizing use of U.S. forces in Iraq, was not outspoken in his opposition to the war. Salazar, who says he would have backed President Bush, accuses Cummings of partisan politics.

Cummings and Salazar also have sharply defined their differences on fiscal issues. Cummings backs a proposal by Sen. John F. Kerry, the Democratic presidential candidate, to roll back tax cuts for those making more than \$200,000. Salazar says he wouldn't raise taxes on high earners but would revise the tax code to make it "fairer" to all income levels.

Rodino, who is working on Ralph Nader's presidential campaign, backs his plan for scuttling income taxes on people making less than \$50,000 and says she would plug corporate tax loopholes. (Cummings backed Howard Dean in the Democratic primary.)

Cummings has held the seat since winning a special election in April 1996 to replace Kweisi Mfume, who became head of the NAACP. In four subsequent elections, he has won with at least 73 percent of the vote.

A member of the House Government Reform Committee, Cummings votes a traditional liberal Democrat line, getting high marks from organized labor and environmental and civil right groups. He receives lower ratings from business organizations.

Salazar won the endorsement of the Howard County Times, which said he had a better grasp of county issues, including transportation. He opposes the high-speed magnetic levitation train, or maglev, which Cummings has supported. Salazar has also received support from the business community.

Salazar describes himself as a moderate, saying he opposes a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage; he also is against abortion.

In Maryland's 3rd Congressional District, nine-term Rep. Benjamin L. Cardin (D), the former Maryland House of Delegates speaker, is facing challengers Robert P. Duckworth (R), clerk of Anne Arundel County Circuit Court, and Patsy Allen of the Green Party.

Cardin, who has been easily reelected in all his campaigns, is known as an expert on social security and is a member of the Ways and Means Committee. He has said he would work to shrink the national deficit if reelected.

Like Kerry, he wants U.S. allies to assume more of the costs of the war in Iraq. He also supports Kerry's plan to roll back Bush's tax cuts for the country's wealthiest residents.

Taxes have also played a key role in Duckworth's campaign. One of his main themes is, "If you vote for me, you'll have more money in your pocket." A proponent of limited government, Duckworth, who has been elected to the court position three times, has promised to limit tax burdens.

As for experience, he points to his record as court clerk, where he has managed a department with a \$5 million annual budget and processed more than 3,000 adoptions.

Allen said she is running to promote the Green Party ideals of social justice and "environmental wisdom."

The district covers much of the Washington-Baltimore suburbs, stretching from Towson and Reisterstown north of Baltimore, down through Elkridge and Columbia in Howard, swinging east into the Anne Arundel communities of Glen Burnie and Annapolis.

In the Senate race, three-term Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (D) is facing state Sen. E.J. Pipkin (R-Queen Anne's), a former Wall Street junk bond dealer who has used more than \$1 million of his money to finance his race. Also running for the seat are Green Party candidate Maria Allwine, a Baltimore legal secretary, and Thomas Trump of the Constitution Party, president of Trump Investment Counsel Inc. of White Marsh.

Pipkin, who grew up in Dundalk, moved back to Maryland in the late 1990s and became involved in a successful effort to stop plans to dredge Baltimore harbor and dump the spoils near his 18-acre home on Kent Island, near the Bay Bridge. Mikulski, he said, did nothing to help his efforts, a claim she disputes. He was elected to the Maryland Senate in 2002.

Pipkin's campaign has focused on what he says is Mikulski's pattern of supporting higher taxes, opposing defense spending and sending soldiers to war without proper equipment or pay. Mikulski says he is distorting her voting record.

Mikulski, who grew up in East Baltimore, is a former social worker who served on the Baltimore City Council and spent 10 years in the U.S. House of Representatives before winning a Senate seat in 1986. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee and has pursued legislation that she says is aimed at helping the elderly, middle-class families and college students trying to pay rising tuition costs.

Her campaign has raised more than \$5 million. Overall, the race has become one of the most expensive in Maryland history.

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