

EDITORIAL: The Bee Recommends Renteria, Costa, Nunes, and Moore for Congress

By The Fresno Bee Editorial Board

The Fresno Bee Editorial Board recommendations for Congress

AP FILE

It is rare that a congressional race in the San Joaquin Valley attracts national attention, but this is exactly the case in the 21st District battle between one-term incumbent David Valadao of Hanford and challenger Amanda Renteria of Sanger.

There are several reasons why the race is in the spotlight: Democrats hope to pick up a seat in a district where they hold a 17-point registration edge, Renteria's inspiring life story illustrates how far hard work and seized opportunities can take a daughter of migrant farmworkers and Valadao is one of the rare Republicans seriously reaching out to Hispanic constituents.

While we acknowledge Valadao's efforts to push immigration reform through the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, voters should be most concerned about the effectiveness of their representative.

Valadao has fallen short in meeting the needs of his constituents. He sought to repeal Obamacare, voted to shut down the federal government last year (a decision that cost the San Joaquin Valley's tourism industry many millions of dollars) and failed to persuade his GOP colleagues to support immigration reform.

Given the lack of access to medical care by many people in his impoverished district before the implementation of Obamacare, his repeated — and unfruitful — attempts to repeal the law indicate that he is more in step with the whims of GOP leadership than with the concerns of residents.

Renteria's track record, knowledge of agricultural issues and compassion for people who are often ignored by politicians make her a better choice for District 21 voters. A star athlete at Woodlake High School, she played basketball and softball at Stanford while earning bachelor's degrees in economics and politics before getting a master's from Harvard Business School.

She was an aide to Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California and chief of staff for Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan. While on Stabenow's team, she was highly involved in successful efforts to save the Detroit automotive industry and to pass the 2012 Senate Farm Bill. Both of these efforts required her to reach across the political aisle, identify common interests and forge ahead. Her willingness to keep an open mind and the ability to bring people together elevate her above the incumbent.

Incumbents Jim Costa, D-Fresno, and Devin Nunes, R-Tulare, are the clear choices in the 16th and 22nd districts, respectively, over underfinanced opponents Johnny Tacherra of Burrell and Suzanna "Sam" Aguilera-Marrero of



Tulare.

Costa, a conservative Democrat, has worked tirelessly and effectively on behalf of Valley residents to bring more water for agriculture, cleanse some of the nation's most unhealthy air, fix our broken immigration system and provide access to medical care.

Nunes has climbed the ranks of the House hierarchy and is influential within the Republican Party. Though we often disagree with his votes, he reflects the values of his district. In addition, his alliance with President Barack Obama on trade issues has helped the Valley economy. Nunes also is among the top candidates seeking chairmanship of the House intelligence committee.

In the sprawling 4th District, which includes parts of the Sierra and the Valley foothills, Art Moore, a West Point graduate, 14-year Army and National Guard veteran, is far and away a better choice than career politician Tom McClintock, one of the most ineffective members of the House. If Moore wins, he would be one of fewer than 20 Middle East war veterans in Congress.

Both candidates are Republicans, but Moore, unlike McClintock, says that he is a moderate on social issues and willing to work with Democrats. The Valley needs the strongest possible delegation representing it in Congress. Let's send Amanda Renteria, Jim Costa, Devin Nunes and Art Moore to the House of Representatives in the Nov. 4 election.

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