

Tacherra considers third straight Costa challenge; Madera supervisor Rogers may also run

By John
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Johnny Tacherra

In 2012, Republican Johnny Tacherra didn't make it past the primary election in his quest to oust Fresno Democrat Jim Costa from the 16th Congressional District seat.

Last year, Tacherra came within 1,334 votes — just 1.4 percentage points — of ousting Costa in one of the closest congressional elections in California.

Will the third time be the charm?

It looks like Tacherra intends to find out.

He didn't return a phone call seeking comment, but he's acting like a candidate when he's out in public, several local Republicans said, and his campaign page on Facebook and campaign Twitter account have continued to offer up statements and criticism of both Costa and President Barack Obama.

Even more, those who've talked with Tacherra say he's telling everybody he's running again next year.

If he does, he may have to face not only Costa in the state's top-two primary, but also Madera County Supervisor David Rogers, a Chowchilla Republican. Like Tacherra, Rogers didn't return a phone call, but also like Tacherra, Rogers has been telling people he's running, Republicans said — including at the Central Valley Tea Party's Christmas dinner, where Rogers was reportedly "working the room."

If Rogers and Tacherra both take on Costa, they'd likely split the Republican vote in the primary election, and one of them would be out.

Already, some Republicans who like Tacherra are urging caution for 2016. It will be a presidential election year, and Costa has proven much harder to challenge in those years, when voter turnout is much higher.

A better strategy, they say, would be for Tacherra to move into the district — his home in the unincorporated Fresno County hamlet of Burrel is in David Valadao's 21st Congressional District — and then run for the seat in 2018. Republicans run stronger in gubernatorial election years. Costa's two recent congressional close calls were in 2010 and 2014, both gubernatorial election years.

If Tacherra becomes a three-time loser to Costa, some who like him as a candidate say it could cause irreparable damage to his effort to ever win the 16th Congressional District seat.

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