

Former Gov. Gary Johnson visits Gallup

Written by By Rick Abasta Sun Correspondent
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The U.S. Senate candidate covers marijuana and other campaign topics

Former governor Gary Johnson is running for the U.S. Senate as a Libertarian.

But jumping into the race wasn't necessarily a planned political move.

"This came as a complete surprise to me, running for the U.S. Senate," he said to a crowd of about 25 people at Sammy C's restaurant in Gallup Sept. 10.

The crowd ate appetizers and listened to reasons why they should join the campaign effort.

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Johnson said he stepped in to help the Libertarian Party after former candidate Aubrey Dunn, the current state land commissioner, dropped out of the Senate race.

Previously, Johnson said he didn't want to be in the Senate because, "it was about bellying up to the trough and adding to the deficit."

What's at stake, Johnson said, is "potentially being the swing vote in the U.S. Senate and that would have huge implications for New Mexico, I believe, in a positive way."

With a \$21 trillion deficit looming over the federal government, Johnson said he would love to be on the Senate budget committee to balance the budget.

"You cannot balance the federal budget if you're not going to cut military spending," he said. "You cannot balance the budget if you're not going to reform social security. You can't balance the budget if you're not going to reform Medicaid and Medicare."

Johnson spoke of his work with the Base Realignment and Closure of military installations as a means of cutting defense spending.

"I was governor and I headed up the BRAC Commission, which was about reducing military bases in New Mexico and what came out of that process was the recognition that dollars are really effectively spent here," he said.

He added that New Mexico has the ground for army maneuvers and the most restricted airspace and the only supersonic corridor for the Lower 48.

Alamogordo is currently trying to expand the military base there to accommodate 115 F-16s.

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“It would mean thousands of jobs and we’re not talking call center jobs. But to do that, they need to expand the airspace east and west of Alamogordo,” he said, adding that his opponent, Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M, doesn’t support the expansion.

“The last I’ll say about Heinrich is that he supports Medicare for all. That’s slated to be \$32 trillion? That’s the last thing we need to do,” he said.

Gesticulating for effect and speaking quickly to cover numerous areas of his platform, Johnson said he is going to tackle the big issues for coming generations. He said he supports term limits.

“I think that legalizing recreational marijuana in New Mexico would lead to 30,000 jobs. I believe in uber-everything. I think there are a lot of federal issues that could uber-ize electricians, plumbers, doctors, lawyers, accountants,” he said.

Such an effort would provide regular people with affordability in the jobs that they hold. They could move from one job to another, depending on the pay, he said, adding that it could be more affordable for the employee to be an entrepreneur.

“I am firmly opposed to our military interventions — 9/11 is tomorrow. I completely supported us going into Afghanistan to get Osama bin Laden. We got him. It’s 16 years now that we’ve been in Afghanistan,” he said.

Johnson said if he is elected to the U.S. Senate, he is never going to get re-elected.

“I ran for president twice, in 2012 and 2016. I learned a lot. What works is low tax, low regulatory environment. I didn’t create one single job in New Mexico. The private sector creates jobs,” he said. “I do believe that I created an environment where businesses did thrive and hire.”

Visit: www.garyjohnsonsenate.com

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