

# The Patriot Ledger

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## DeCoste and Demong have different approaches to opioid crisis

By Katherine Isbell

The Patriot Ledger

Posted Oct 28, 2018 at 10:45 AM

NORWELL — The opioid crisis is high on the priority lists of the two candidates for state representative in the 5th Plymouth District, but they have talked of different ways to address it.

Republican State Representative David DeCoste faces a challenge in his Nov. 6 re-election bid from Democrat Alison Demong, who ran a successful write-in campaign for the party nomination after another candidate dropped out. The district includes Hanover, Norwell and Rockland. The candidates both live in Norwell.

“We’re going to continue working with the DA and the governor and various sheriffs on tightening up the ability of people to sell fentanyl and get prosecuted,” DeCoste said.

Demong said she has been meeting with first-responders and others who work with people struggling with addiction to learn how she can help in the fight.

“The opioid crisis has really hit our district hard,” she said. “We need someone who can jump in with both feet and really address this from all different angles.”

DeCoste has held the seat since 2014 and served as a Norwell selectman from 2012 to 2015. He is a current member of the Norwell Permanent Building Maintenance Committee.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in accounting and finance from Northeastern University and a graduate degree in financial economics from Boston University, where he has worked as an instructor in the Metropolitan College. He is an Army veteran who retired as a major in 2009 after 22 years of active duty, multiple tours around the world and a deployment as a paratrooper in the Gulf

War. He is a member of the Rockland VFW, Norwell American Legion and Rockland DAV.

Demong has been a Norwell selectman since 2015 and was re-elected for a second term earlier this year. She also served on the Norwell Community Preservation Committee for ten years.

She holds a bachelor's degree in geology and environmental studies from St. Lawrence University and a master's degree in marine affairs from the University of Rhode Island. She was the first person in her family to go to college and currently works as an environmental planner. She is active in local groups, including the North and South Rivers Watershed Association, Friends of the Norwell Public Library and the PTOs for the middle and high schools in Norwell.

In the lead-up to the Nov. 6 election, Demong said she has been meeting with people who are active in the community and with community leaders to better learn their needs. As a state representative, she would focus on bringing more state resources to the district.

"Right now we don't have a strong advocate that is fighting to address our goals and needs," she said.

DeCoste said that he has been continuing to knock on doors, going to local events with other Republican elected officials and recruiting members of state government to meet with voters alongside him.

He said he is focused on continuing the environmental clean-up at the old National Fireworks site in Hanover, addressing traffic and road issues in the district and plans to push for tougher penalties for anyone who kills a public safety officer, he said.

"I will be one of the primary representatives on the GOP side in the filing for the resumption of capital punishment for those individuals who murder police officers," he said.

As voters head to the polls, Demong wants them to know that, if elected, she will fight for what they want on Beacon Hill.

"I think it's time for a positive change and a positive outlook," she said. "I will be a strong advocate for our district."

DeCoste would like voters to know that supporting him means continuing to support the Baker administration.

"The best way that we can support the Baker administration is to re-elect the representative who has been working with him," he said. "I'm not somebody who is going to try to undermine what the Baker administration has been trying to do."

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