



Watson vows to be true conservative

Lincoln man running for US Senate seat

JULIE BLUM

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COLUMBUS — Todd Watson read portions of the Constitution while making his pitch to local voters to support his run for the U.S. Senate.

The Lincoln man is trying for a second time to win a Senate seat after being defeated in 2014 by Republican Ben Sasse while running as an independent.

This time, Watson is challenging incumbent Sen. Deb Fischer for the Republican nomination.

Watson spoke during the Columbus Rotary Club meeting Tuesday at Hy-Vee.

The self-described “straight constitutionalist” had harsh words for elected leaders from Nebraska.

“We’re an embarrassment to the Republican Party in this state,” he said.

He pointed fingers at former U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel, who went on to serve as secretary of defense under President Barack Obama, and Fischer, who Watson said tried an unconstitutional move by asking Donald Trump to step aside and allow Mike Pence to take over as the party’s nominee for president. He also said Sasse tried to sabotage Trump during the election.

“We would have had Hillary (Clinton) as president and we would have lost the Supreme Court,” Watson said.

He believes the GOP has been run by big money.

“It’s time to represent Nebras-

kans. We have to lose the reputation of not being a real conservative state instead of being a sell-out establishment Republican state,” he said.

Watson, a certified public accountant and father of four, has never been elected to public office, but he doesn’t see that as a disadvantage. He said he is not

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naive to politics as he served as an intern to former Nebraska Congressman Jon Christensen.

If elected, he is vowing to defend the Constitution in its entirety. Watson said he is more of an old-school conservative with a foundation based on national security, fiscal sanity and economic growth.

He said Fischer, who serves on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell’s leadership team, hasn’t accomplished what she promised to do in 2012, such as repealing the Affordable Care Act and cutting spending.

“A big reason I’m taking her on is she has a very big, ‘Yes, sir,’ McConnell leadership team attitude and rubber stamps almost everything without thinking. We need a thinker. We need someone who understands this document,” he said, referencing the Constitu-

tion.

Bipartisanship can be accomplished if elected officials stand by the Constitution, according to Watson.

“There’s time for peace. There’s time for war. If you are going to violate the Constitution, it’s time for battle,” he said.

Watson said he is pro-life and would vote against any budget plan that funds Planned Parenthood. He is also a supporter of the Second Amendment.

On immigration, he said the U.S.-Mexico border needs to be secure, that the visa system needs to be reformed and that illegal immigrants who commit crimes should be deported.

“I don’t think there is any argument that if you commit a crime that you are gone. Let’s get aggressive on those people who have committed crimes,” he said.

Watson said Trump is a breath of fresh air and he thinks working people are doing much better and there has been economic growth since the president took office. He also said the Islamic State is being defeated, eliminating a major domestic threat.

Watson did question Trump’s fiscal control and social conservatism.

When asked about his opinion on the president’s vulgar comments about

women and developing nations, Watson said that is Trump’s style.

“Do I like everything he’s said? No, I don’t. Have I heard worse? Yes, I’ve worked around construction sites. Some of what he’s said gets caught on the microphone. It’s not acceptable, but styles are styles and I’m looking at results for the people,” he said.

If elected, Watson said he would like to serve on the Agriculture Committee and another committee where he could use his knowledge of tax laws.

He wants to bring change to Washington.

“At the end of the day, what I think is missing is courage and strength. We have smart people, but we have to have strength to do the right things,” Watson said.

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Todd Watson, a Republican candidate from Lincoln running for a seat in the U.S. Senate



JULIE BLUM, THE COLUMBUS TELEGRAM

Todd Watson, a Republican candidate from Lincoln running for a seat in the U.S. Senate, speaks during Tuesday's Columbus Rotary Club meeting at Hy-Vee.



Gotschall named student of month

COLUMBUS — The Columbus Noon Rotary recently announced Mallory Gotschall as its student of the month.

Gotschall is a senior at Lakeview High School,



Gotschall

where she is a member of the National Honor Society and student council. She is also involved in athletic training, FBLA and science club, has been class president and participated in HOBY State Leadership Conference. Gotschall is a four-year letter winner for Viking Voices, and a three-year varsity letter winner for volleyball.

Outside of school, she volunteers with Central Community College and is a women's league referee at the Columbus YMCA. She also works at Nebraska Sports and the Platte County Fairgrounds as an assistant judge and exhibit organizer. She plans to attend CCC-Columbus where she will play volleyball before transferring to the College of Saint Mary for a degree in occupational therapy.