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Senate District 40 Candidates Meet With the Public Ahead of Special Election Primaries

By HOLLY PRETSKY • JUL 13, 2017

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Candidates, from left, Ana Rivas Logan, Lorenzo Palomares and Annette Tiddeo participated in a moderated forum that lasted almost two hours.

HOLLY PRETSKY / WLRN

Three candidates vying for the Senate District 40 seat vacated by Frank Artiles participated in a forum at the Miami Dade College Kendall Campus Wednesday night.



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1:08

The forum was moderated by WLRN morning host Luis Hernandez, and members of the audience had the opportunity to submit questions for the candidates.

Artiles resigned April 21 after making a series of offensive remarks at a gathering in Tallahassee, including a racial slur to African American Sen. Audrey Gibson and in the presence of African American Sen. Perry Thurston. Gov. Rick Scott set a special election for Sept. 26 with a primary election on July 25.

Former state Rep. Ana Rivas Logan and businesswoman Annette Taddeo will face off in the Democratic primary. Both women participated in the forum.

"We need to focus on flipping this seat blue so we can get people up there that are going to represent the people of this district, the working people," Rivas Logan said.

The Republican primary will include state Rep. Jose Felix Diaz, former state Sen. Alex Diaz de la Portilla and attorney Lorenzo Palomares. Palomares was the only Republican candidate to appear at the forum.

Topics discussed included health care, medical marijuana, guns and transportation.

When the recently passed education overhaul came up, all participating candidates said they would have voted against the measure.

"The bill was completely done in secrecy. It was not vetted," said Rivas Logan. "As a former member of the House, I would not vote on anything that came to the House floor that had not been vetted."

"I believe that the school board should supervise charter schools. Privatizing them will take away the obligation of the school board to supervise. And that is a fundamental obligation that they have," said Palomares, who is pro-school choice.

"We need to have people that are going to represent this community and fight for public schools as the one equalizer in this society," said Taddeo. She said taxpayer dollars should never go to for-profit schools.



College professor Christian "He-Man" Schlaerth is running without party affiliation and he spoke briefly at the beginning of the event. He didn't participate in the moderated forum because he won't be on the ballot in the upcoming primary election.

The event was organized by the League of Women Voters.

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College professor Christian "He-Man" Schlaerth had the opportunity to address the audience at the start of the event. He didn't participate in the moderated forum because as an unaffiliated candidate, he won't appear on the ballot in the primaries.

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