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CONGRESSIONAL BID

COGNETTI TO RUN FOR 8TH DISTRICT

Mayor officially launches bid to unseat Bresnahan



Scranton Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti speaks June 11 at Weston Field in the city. TIMES-TRIBUNE FILE PHOTOS

By Robert Tomkavage
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Scranton Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti officially launched her congressional campaign Tuesday, maintaining U.S. Rep. Bresnahan’s first months in office were full of false claims and broken promises.

Cognetti, 45, — who has served as Scranton’s mayor since January 2020 — plans to enter the Democratic primary



Bresnahan

for Pennsylvania’s 8th Congressional District, seeking to eventually challenge Bresnahan in next year’s midterm election.

The 8th Congressional District includes all of Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike counties and parts of Luzerne and Monroe counties.

Bresnahan, a Luzerne County businessman who lives in Dallas Twp., narrowly defeated former Democratic U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright in November, earning 195,663 votes to the incumbent Democrat’s 189,411.

Cognetti took aim at Bresnahan’s performance.

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Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti discusses the city’s Good Neighbor program at the Cedar Avenue home of Jack and Donna Borer.

Challengers say one campaign is enough

By Jim Lockwood
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Scranton Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti said “honesty is the best policy” in announcing her run for Congress while at the same time running for reelection as mayor.

Current and former mayoral challengers say she should have picked one race to run — not both.

Cognetti on Tuesday announced she aims to challenge freshman Republican U.S. Rep. Rob Bresnahan for a seat in Congress from Pennsylvania’s 8th Congressional District in the 2026 midterm election. First, she will have to win the Democratic primary nomination next year.

Earlier this year, Cognetti won the Democratic primary in her reelection bid for mayor and

will be on the ballot in the Nov. 4 general election.

In an article last month in The Times-Tribune, Cognetti said she was “taking a hard look” at a potential congressional run. In announcing that run in a video posted on social media Tuesday morning, Cognetti said she decided over the last few weeks to run for Congress.

“Hi, Scranton. I wanted you

to hear it from me that I have announced for Congress, seeing things happening, things taken away from us that are hurting people in Scranton and Northeastern Pennsylvania, hurting my ability to do my job as mayor as I see it in the next few years. So, I’m going to do that (run for Congress),” Cognetti said.

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LACKAWANNA COUNTY COMMISSIONER VACANCY

Dems sue to block a special election

Committee argues county judges must temporarily fill seat with one of its picks

By Jim Lockwood
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The Lackawanna County Democratic Committee is suing to prevent a special election as the method for filling a county commissioner vacancy.

The committee and its three candidates for the vacancy, James Baldan, Robert Casey and Brenda Sacco, jointly filed an injunction lawsuit Tuesday in Lackawanna County Court against the Lackawanna County Board of Elections and its director, Beth Hopkins.

A hearing in the case has been scheduled for Sept. 10 in Lackawanna County Court.

The complaint and emergency petition for injunctive relief stems from Board of Elections vote on Friday to hold a special election Nov. 4 for the seat of former Democratic Commissioner Matt McGloin, who resigned in February.

The board voted 2-0, with Democratic Commissioner Bill Gaughan and county Judge Terrence R. Nealon voting in favor of a special election and Republican Commissioner Chris Chermak abstaining. Chermak and the Lackawanna County Democratic Committee argued against holding a special election and questioned the board’s authority to declare one.

The Democratic Committee argues the Home Rule Charter tasks the county Court of Common Pleas judges with temporarily filling the vacancy with one of three potential appointees selected by the committee. Those candidates are: Sacco, the former county economic development director; Baldan, who is president of Olyphant Borough Council; and Casey, a Scranton school director.

But the county judges have not moved to fill the seat amid legal challenges since Gaughan and the county brought the litigation in March.

Gaughan and the county initially challenged the Home Rule Charter process that gave the Democratic Committee a key role, arguing the charter was trumped by an administrative rule giving judges the sole power to fill the vacancy without committee involvement. But a majority of a panel of three senior county judges ruled the charter, not the administrative rule, controls the replacement process. The state Commonwealth Court affirmed

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Duane Shepard Sr. as Barry and Oscar Nunez as Oscar, in “The Paper.” JOHN P. FLEENOR / PEACOCK

ENTERTAINMENT

Season 1 of ‘The Office’ spinoff releases on Thursday — with a familiar face in the cast

By Melissa Janoski
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Reporters from all over logged on to talk to “The Office” creator about new spinoff series “The Paper” last week. In a city dotted with Dunder Mifflin bobbleheads, the big question was: Why

did you leave us?

“The original cast and I were very pleased with the finale of the show,” Greg Daniels said of the Scranton-set sitcom, which ended in 2013 after nine seasons.

“And the characters had a lot of closure to their stories. And, you know,

I don’t think anybody on the original show wanted to do a reboot, so this is a spinoff,” Daniels said.

Daniels is co-creator, co-showrunner and an executive producer of “The Paper,” set in Toledo, Ohio.

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