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Abington: New state rep. celebrates inauguration with supporters
By Steven Dodrill, SDodrill@959watd.com

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Republican State Rep Geoff Diehl, less than 24 hours after being officially sworn in as a member of the 187th general court, is making it clear he's ready to get to work.

Diehl took time away from an inaugural celebration at the Abington Ale House for his supporters to tell WATD what's on his mind.

Diehl of Whitman is part of a wave of incoming Republicans to the Massachusetts House. He said the overriding issues, going into his first term as a state rep, include the state's economy, the state budget deficit, health care costs, benefits to illegal immigrants--which he is against--and ethics.

Diehl said there still needs to be work done on lowering healthcare costs, which he believes contributes to budget problems. Diehl also said he plans to file legislation to make local aid a fully-funded mandate, and not discretionary spending as it is now.

He said school budgets are important to him, as are the school building project in East Bridgewater and the potential for a building project in Abington. In Whitman, he cites the construction of a new police station as an issue on his radar.

The event was packed with supporters, local selectmen, a fellow freshman rep, and even three former state legislators who once held the seat Diehl now holds.

Former State Rep. Michael Sullivan, a three-term Republican from Abington, was at the event . He said the issues he faced as a rep in the 1990s are repeating themselves today--and it all starts with the economy.

Sullivan left his seat mid-term, when he was chosen by then Governor William Weld, to become the Plymouth County District Attorney. Sullivan, with his wife, sat at a table with Former State Rep Ron Whitney and his wife. Whitney, a Republican, served the 7th Plymouth District in the legislature until 1996 when he was defeated by Whitman Democrat Kathleen Teehan.

Teehan chose not to seek re-election after five terms in the house. East Bridgewater Democrat Allen McCarthy won the seat in 2006, before being unseated in November by Diehl.

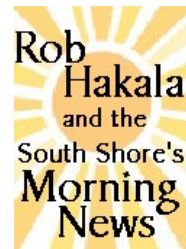
Republican Angelo D'Emilia , who defeated Patty Lawton in November to serve the 8th Plymouth District, was also at the event. His district borders Diehl's and encompasses Bridgewater, Raynham and a Precinct in Easton.

Diehl serves the towns of Whitman Abington and East Bridgewater



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EXCLUSIVE AUDIO

Reporter speaks with former reps

WATD's Steven Dodrill spoke with former State Representative/District Attorney/US Attorney Mike Sullivan and former Representative Ron Whitney. Sullivan left his seat mid-term, when he was chosen by then governor William Weld, to become the Plymouth County District Attorney. Sullivan, with his wife, sat at a table, with Former State Rep Ron Whitney, and his wife. Whitney, a Republican, served the 7th Plymouth District in the legislature until 1996 when he was defeated by Whitman Democrat Kathleen Teehan.

Reporter speaks with new freshman 8th Plymouth District Representative

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