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Democrat Diana Lawrence to challenge Republican U.S. Rep. Steven Womack for Arkansas' 3rd Congressional District seat

May 29, 2025 by [Doug Thompson](#)



VAN BUREN -- Diana Lawrence moved to Arkansas to be near her grandchildren, then decided her new state needs a new representative for its 3rd Congressional District, she said.

"I'm doing this because I want a better future for my kids and grandkids," said Lawrence, 62, of Van Buren in a phone interview this week about her intention to run for Congress. Lawrence will run as a Democrat as she has done before in Wisconsin, she said.

"I think people are unhappy with what Trump is doing and what Steve Womack is not doing," she said, referring to President Donald Trump and to the district's incumbent representative, who is a Republican. Womack may

have started as a moderate Republican, but he is now an unquestioning supporter of the president, she said.

Her new home district lost a lot of industry recently in Sebastian County, she said. Now government services that would help the people left behind by the loss of those jobs are being cut, she said.

"This district really mirrors where I come from," she said, referring to Wisconsin.

"I really love Arkansas. The people here are so nice," Lawrence said. "I've never lived anywhere where the people are so nice."

She and her husband settled in by January, moving from Virginia, she said. She spent much of her life in Wisconsin and also spent time in Texas, according to her campaign website.

Lawrence is new to Arkansas but not to politics as a Democrat running in a largely Republican district. She ran for the Wisconsin State Assembly, that state's equivalent to the Arkansas House, three times. She won the Democratic primary there twice, election records show. She garnered more than 40% of the vote in a 2018 general election race against incumbent Assemblyman Dave Murphy, a Republican, election records show. She gained 39.5% in a 2020 rematch, but increased the number of votes cast for her during a higher turnout in that election.

She also ran once for the county board, Wisconsin's equivalent to a quorum court, in 2014 in Outagamie County, Wis. She also ran as a Democrat there and lost against the Republican incumbent. Those races taught her how to campaign, she said.

No Democrat has won election as Arkansas' 3rd District congressional representative since 1964. Womack first won election there in 2010 and has announced his reelection bid.

Womack, 68, has faced Democratic opposition for the seat five times in his eight elections so far. He won each of those general election contests by either a margin of more than two-to-one over the Democrat or close to it, election records show. His closest contest to date came in the 2024

Republican primary, when state Sen. Clint Penzo, R-Springdale, took 46.1% of the vote.

Lawrence holds a geography degree from the the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, she said. She has worked "in customer service at every job I've done," she said, adding she would make constituency service a priority if elected.

"He doesn't do town halls, and that frustrates people," she said about Womack.

Her work history includes a variety of positions, from bank teller to real estate agent to the health care field. She most recently did some substitute teaching in public schools in Virginia. She is now a full-time grandparent, she said.

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Doug Thompson is a reporter with more than 40 years of experience, including more than a quarter-century in Northwest Arkansas. He covers state politics from a Northwest Arkansas perspective and issues of regional importance for the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. He previously served as a state Capitol reporter, business and agriculture reporter, editorial writer, columnist and regional reporter for southwestern Arkansas. Before that he covered city government. He moved to Northwest Arkansas in 1998.

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*Shared and Paid for by Diana Lawrence for Congress, Alan Lawrence, Treasurer
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