

STATE AND NATIONAL

Challenger criticizes Price's support of spending limit bill

By Tara Duncan
Staff Writer

The decision by U.S. Rep. David Price, D-N.C., to vote for the Campaign Spending Limit and Election Reform Act two weeks ago has triggered criticism from his Republican opponent, Vicky Goudie, who characterized the

bill as "only a Band-Aid" on a "serious wound."

Goudie, Price's challenger in the 1992 election, said Sunday that although she agreed campaign and interest spending should be cut, the congressional reform bill was not the answer.

"(High campaign spending) should make politicians ashamed of all the money spent on campaigns, when we look at the homelessness in America," she said.

"I am a 'citizen legislator,' and look-

ing at this bill, I don't feel real comfortable. (Congress) is trying to cover up the very serious wound of campaign spending with only a Band-Aid."

The reform act would set a voluntary spending cap for congressional races of \$600,000, only \$200,000 of which could come from political action committee contributions. The bill was approved by the House April 9 and will go before the Senate within the next two weeks, although President Bush has threatened to veto the Democrat-sponsored act.

Political reform has become a major issue in the 1992 congressional campaign, in the wake of the House Bank scandal and growing voter dissatisfaction with the electoral process.

Although Price admits that this reform bill isn't perfect, the three-term representative believes it is a significant step in the right direction that should have been taken a long time ago, said Rachel Perry, Price's press secretary.

Throughout his career in Congress, Price has been a vocal supporter of

campaign reform, she said.

But Goudie said Price, a Duke University political science and public policy professor, has abandoned voters by straying from guidelines he set for himself in each of his election efforts.

Before each of his campaigns, Price publicly has asked his opponents to keep spending under \$400,000. But each time, his opponents have declined, and Price himself has ignored that limit, Perry said.

"He has always proposed spending

limits and debates

in order to focus on the issues," Perry said. "He wants to practice what he preaches."

In 1986, Price ran against Republican incumbent Bill Cobey, who had the support of Jesse Helms' Congressional Club.

Again in 1988, Price faced a Congressional Club candidate in Republican Tom Fetzer. Both of these campaigns were very expensive because of the Club's financial capability, Perry said. "The Club set the tone and the cost of the campaign," she said.

Price did not run against a Congressional Club candidate in 1990, but actually spent more than in his two previous efforts. John Carrington, Price's opponent two years ago, financed his campaign without PAC or Republican Party contributions. In his effort to counter Carrington's wealth, Price spent \$793,291, Perry said.

"He has been forced to run competitively," Perry said. "You don't spend money if you don't have to."

Price has not decided whether he will propose limits to Goudie, Perry said. Goudie, who is running a low-cost campaign, has not decided if she will accept proposed spending limits.

"Right now, I don't want to say that I would agree to accepting limits," she said. "He may have said he wanted the limits in the past, but he didn't try to keep them."



David Price

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