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Republican joining Senate race

BY DAVID SMITH
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Oscar Braun, a publisher and water quality advocate from Half Moon Bay, has unofficially joined the race to replace Jackie Speier as District 8's state senator.

Braun said he would file his candidacy papers March 9, just a day before the deadline, and will run as a Republican in a race in which the primary competition has been on the Democratic side so far.

Assembly Speaker Pro Tem

Leland Yee, D-San Francisco/Daly City; former San Mateo County Supervisor Mike Nevin; and former Assembly member Lou Papan are all vying for the Democratic nod in the heavily Democratic district.

In speaking with the Daily News,

Braun said he was approached last month by Mike DeNunzio, chairman of the San Francisco Republican Party, asking if Braun had ever considered running for office.

In making some phone calls, Braun called the business attorney,

Stan Doty, who helped incorporate his publishing company, Oscar Knows. Doty helped found the firm Doty & Sundheim with Duf Sundheim, the current chairman of the California Republican Party. Two

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weeks ago, with the backing of the San Francisco and San Mateo County and state Republicans, Braun committed to the race.

Braun has a background in health care, working for Johnson & Johnson, but since 1990 he has turned his focus to water quality, founding the nonprofit Save Our Bay Foundation with his wife, Andrea.

Andrea Braun writes a health column for the Daily News.

The Half Moon Bay resident is in the process of pulling his campaign team together with the help of the San Mateo County Republican Central Committee, but he counts Frank Iwama, the general counsel of his charitable foundation, as a close adviser.

He will meet this Friday with staff

from the San Mateo County Republican Central Committee about his candidacy. Braun, a 62-year-old San Francisco native, grew up in Redwood City and Palo Alto. He attended St. Francis High School in Mountain View and then went on to Foothill Community College and San Jose State University. Studying business, finance and international

relations and having enough credits to graduate, he didn't attain a degree because those credits were spread between his interests, and he ultimately had to go to work.

The focus of his campaign will be the sustainability of San Mateo and San Francisco counties with the No. 1 issue being fire protection and the protection of the Hetch Hetchy

water supply. Braun said he didn't consider a bid against Assembly member Gene Mullin, D-South San Francisco, because he wasn't asked to consider it.

"I'm excited, very excited. I have no interest in public office beyond this one. ... I don't aspire to move on to lieutenant governor or Congress or something like that," Braun said.