

# Eastern Iowa Government



## Blum hopes to tap frustration with federal government



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By James Q. Lynch/SourceMedia Group News

CEDAR RAPIDS – Rod Blum thinks the time is right to run for Congress.

Right for someone who knows how to create jobs, right for someone outside the political arena and right for someone who understands the public's frustration with a federal government that seems to have lost its common sense.

“People are fed up with politicians,” according to the Dubuque business man who is seeking the Republican nomination for the U.S. House in Iowa's 1st District. “I'm not a politician.”

Blum, 56, is CEO of Digital Canal Inc., which develops and designs software for home builders, and a land developer. He's never run for office, but has decided that government has grown “too big, too intrusive and too costly.”

So he wants to challenge three-term Democrat Rep. Bruce Braley of Waterloo. He joins Cedar Rapids businessman Steve Rathje in seeking the GOP nomination. He's been traveling the district to meet with party leaders in the 20 counties, including Linn, that form the new 1st District. The others are Worth, Mitchell, Howard, Winneshiek, Allamakee, Bremer, Fayette, Clayton, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Marshall, Tama, Benton, Jones, Jackson, Poweshiek and Iowa counties.

One of the problems in Congress, according to Blum, is “too many lawyers” Braley is a trial attorney.

“We need people who understand how jobs are created,” he said, because more than anything people want job growth. Even people who are employed are worried about their job security, Blum said.

“They're nervous, so they're not buying and that means employers aren't hiring,” he said.

He attributes that to uncertainty about taxes and regulations.

For example, businesses don't know what new health care regulations will cost them, Blum said, and they are concerned by Democrats talking about tax increases.

“So businesses are frozen,” he said. Nothing will change until November 2012.”

The voter registration numbers in the new district aren't favorable for a GOP challenger. Democrats outnumber Republicans 214,651 to 169,296. However, Blum points out half the counties, including Linn, are new territory for Braley, so he sees an opportunity for a challenger.

He also sees a lot of frustration with Congress and the federal government in general.

“There’s a sense the game isn’t being played fairly anymore,” he said. “They don’t agree with bailouts, they want to get rid of loopholes, lower the tax rates and get everyone on the same page.”

“Joe Q. Lunchbucket just wants equal opportunities for everyone,” Blum said.

Blum thinks his association with the tea party movement will be a factor, too.

“I’m a Republican, but I’m a Tea Party member, too,” he said. “I consider myself both and there are a lot of tea party people out there.”

Blum’s also promising that if elected he won’t serve more than three terms.

“I think that’s what the founders had in mind – citizen legislators,” he said.

County	Total REP	Total DEM	Total NP/Other	GRAND TOTAL
Allamakee	3,659	2,579	3,791	10,029
Black Hawk	21,729	31,361	33,649	86,739
Bremer	5,350	4,322	8,176	17,848
Buchanan	3,264	4,339	6,654	14,257
Butler	4,655	1,969	3,536	10,160
Clayton	3,373	3,764	5,212	12,349
Clinton	7,781	11,716	14,272	33,769
Delaware	4,087	2,936	5,619	12,642
Dubuque	14,537	26,725	23,538	64,800
Fayette	3,968	3,740	4,245	11,953
Howard	1,487	2,050	2,587	6,124
Iowa	3,790	3,025	5,231	12,046
Jackson	2,667	6,519	5,974	15,160
Jones	3,771	3,865	6,015	13,651
Linn	40,073	53,669	55,447	149,189
Mitchell	2,566	1,953	2,843	7,362
Poweshiek	3,881	4,892	5,425	14,198
Scott	32,352	39,155	52,224	123,731
Winneshiek	4,645	4,308	5,678	14,631
Worth	1,661	1,764	2,258	5,683
<b>Totals</b>	<b>169,296</b>	<b>214,651</b>	<b>252,374</b>	<b>636,321</b>

Source: Iowa Secretary of State 11-01-11