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## **Buhrmaster energy platform: end ethanol push, increase domestic oil exploration**

The Business Review (Albany) - by [Adam Sichko](#) The Business Review

Republican congressional candidate James Buhrmaster unveiled an energy platform Thursday that includes abandoning the nation's ethanol push, tightening control of the commodities markets and beefing up enforcement of existing regulations on the energy industry.

The array of ideas represents the first detailed explanation of key campaign issues for Buhrmaster, 62, the head of **Buhrmaster Energy Group** in Scotia. Buhrmaster is one of 10 candidates seeking to replace retiring U.S. Rep. Michael McNulty (D-Green Island) in this November's elections.

Buhrmaster equally critiqued Democrats and his own political party, while pointing to his 40 years in the energy business as a strength.

"Republicans need to get on board with the development of alternative energies, and Democrats need to accept the fact that we must increase domestic oil exploration and production," Buhrmaster said.

Buhrmaster decried the oil speculation that helps set record-high prices for crude oil on almost a daily basis. He called for higher margin requirements that would make commodities market participants "have more skin in the game."

"Right now, you can invest \$1 to make \$100. You can buy futures in the morning, and if it's going well, you can sell them in the afternoon," Buhrmaster said. "They play with our future and livelihood. Here we are, almost at a crisis."

Buhrmaster also said that nuclear power must be a part of the nation's energy production portfolio.

"It's very safe and very secure," he said;

Congress' push for ethanol production has driven up food prices, Buhrmaster said. He wants a similar push for alternative energies that make scientific and environmental sense.

"It's the right idea, done the wrong way," he said.

Buhrmaster said government should not increase regulations on the energy industry, but "we'd be fine" if the government did a better job enforcing current laws.

The other Republican in the race is 33-year-old Steven Vasquez, co-founder and chief technology officer of **ReQuest Inc.**, a Ballston Spa company that makes high-end home entertainment systems.

The two will square off in primary elections in early September.

On Thursday, Vasquez announced the endorsement of fellow libertarian and U.S. Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), a two-time presidential candidate.

"We need Steven in Washington to help advance the agenda of those of us committed to limited government," Paul said in a statement.

"Steven has valuable experience in business as a successful entrepreneur in Tech Valley," Paul said. "Steven's experience is critical in advancing the goals of fixing the economy by balancing the budget, cutting wasteful Washington spending, and combating inflation."

Eight Democrats are also vying to fill McNulty's seat. The latest addition to the race was Paul Tonko, who announced his candidacy earlier this month. Tonko is the former chairman of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, and previously served as a state Assemblyman (D-Amsterdam) for 24 years.

In April, businessman Gary Mittleman, a Democrat and the first CEO of Latham-based fuel-cell developer **Plug Power Inc.** (Nasdaq: PLUG), became the first candidate to drop out of the crowded race.

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