

Defeated Gruening Running as Write-in Candidate

Primary election defeated victim, Sen. Ernest Gruening, has formally announced his intention to continue his candidacy to replace himself in the U.S. Senate against Mike Gravel and Elmer Rasmuson.

Gruening was defeated by his fellow Democrat Mike Gravel by 2,000 votes in the contest for nomination.

The write-in campaign for Sen. Gruening was sparked by

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the faculty members and students of Alaska's major universities, the University of Alaska in College and Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage.

Gruening made his formal announcement last Tuesday in Anchorage in a press conference.

"From the campuses," Gruening said, "at Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage and the University of Alaska in Fairbanks a dedicated group of volunteers fanned their communities seeking others to join with them in signing petitions urging me to seek re-election. In the space of a few short days more than 3,500 such names were collected. These were presented to me when I visited those cities as chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Economic Development."

"In an era," he continued, "when the young people of our nation have been subjected to uncommon and undeserved abuse, when the beliefs and ideals they hold dear have been disregarded by a government that does not seem to care, when the best our political system seems able to offer them is a perpetual choice between the lesser of two evils, I am inspired beyond description that so many have found Ernest Gruening a worthy object for their trust and their esteem. It is a trust and esteem which I reciprocate in kind."

In the meantime, Mike Gravel has termed Gruening's campaign as "sad." Gravel is confident that he can still win the election in November. He said the Senator's campaign would hurt Democratic nominees all down the line.

"It won't hurt me enough to cause me to lose. I won in a four-way race, and there's no reason I shouldn't be able to win in a three-way race," said Gravel this week.