

Results team Sturgulewski with Coghill for November

by Jeffrey R. Richardson

for the Tundra Times

Arliss Sturgulewski knows she has her work cut out following her victory last week in the Republican primary for governor.

"Now it begins," Sturgulewski said in an interview with the *Tun-*

dra Times.

The politically moderate senator from Anchorage has several challenges to overcome in her race against Democratic primary winner Tony Knowles.

For one, her Republican competitors, businessman Jim Campbell

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and conservative Anchorage Sen. Rick Halford did better than expected, depriving Sturgulewski of the extra psychological edge that a wider margin would have given her.

Knowles got just such a boost by decisively beating rival Steve McAlpine.

At press time, the Division of Elections reported that Sturgulewski had polled 24,460 votes, or 19 percent of the total votes cast. Campbell received 21,405 votes (16.6 percent), while Halford received 20,571 (15.9 percent).

Sturgulewski's other problem arises from the outcome of the Republican race for lieutenant governor. Nenana Sen. Jack Coghill won a surprise victory over Anchorage Sen. Tim Kelly, with a vote of 36,145 (29.2 percent) to 33,401 (27 percent).

The dilemma for Sturgulewski is that Coghill's conservative views have often clashed with her own.

In the flush of victory on primary night, Coghill's remarks to the press suggested he might try to use the General Election campaign as a platform for those views and exercise some control over Sturgulewski's agenda.

But Sturgulewski, who was to meet with Coghill Friday to map strategy, told the *Tundra Times* that her mainstream approach to state policymaking and management would set the tone for the campaign.

The subsistence issues illustrates Sturgulewski's philosophical split with Coghill. Sturgulewski worked in the Senate for a subsistence solution sought by Bush legislators. Coghill, who himself represents a largely rural area, sided with those opposed to a rural preference for subsistence use of fish and game.

"I have very, very strong views on subsistence. I don't intend to give those views up. It's bottomline issue," Sturgulewski said.

In the matter of philosophy and campaign direction, Sturgulewski has more than Coghill's personal politics to worry about. Conservative Republicans, who actually control the party apparatus at present and who rallied around Halford's ill-fated cam-

paign, may try to use Coghill as a way to exert greater influence over Sturgulewski's campaign.

Like Knowles, whose running mate is Willie Hensley, Sturgulewski will look to Coghill in part to generate votes in rural areas, where Coghill has some long-standing constituency. Still, his relationship with Native villages and corporations has not always been smooth and how he and Sturgulewski position him to take on Hensley may be an important factor in the campaign.

Despite the challenges, Sturgulewski seemed refreshed, decisive and delighted with her prospects after the vote count was completed.

She exulted with the unequivocal support offered by second-place finisher Campbell. She planned to meet with Halford, a long-time Senate colleague with whom relations have been strained during the primary campaign.

Sturgulewski also wasted no time in pointing out Knowles' vulnerabilities. A key example is the issue of opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil and gas exploration. Sturgulewski said such a move must be part of an overall national energy policy and noted that future oil revenues were a vital source of funds for maintaining safe and healthy communities in both urban and rural parts of the state.

"There's also the bottom-line that it has to be done safely," Sturgulewski said.

She noted that her rival had taken a similar position, but asserted that Knowles' support for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was half-hearted, and that voters know it.

"It seems to me that Tony has not been as solid on ANWR. He indicates support but lacks zeal," Sturgulewski said.

She acknowledged that the ANWR issue had been somewhat divisive in rural northeast Alaska, but said that if elected, her administration would work to address the concerns of every community that would be affected by drilling.

"I do have a reputation for talking and bringing people together," Sturgulewski concluded.



Republican Arliss Sturgulewski took 19 percent of the vote Tuesday.