

## Editorial: A speaker for state's oft-overlooked voice

Andy Tobin is making history at the Capitol in Phoenix. The Paulden resident and businessman was the unanimous choice by state representatives Thursday to become the new state House speaker.

He follows Kirk Adams, who resigned to run for higher office - a seat in the U.S. House. With Tobin's new role - he was majority leader - he becomes the first House speaker from Yavapai County in 78 years.

It certainly is an honor for Tobin, who helped author a balanced budget that required massive cuts, business tax cuts and pension reform this session. It also says a lot about what his fellow lawmakers think of him; one said his good morals are evident.



Carlos Chavez/The Arizona Republic, AP  
Rep. Andy Tobin of Paulden is congratulated by fellow Republican Kirk Adams as Tobin becomes the new state House speaker on Thursday Phoenix.

The true victory is for us in the Prescott area, Yavapai County and all of rural Arizona.

When so many legislators hail from metropolitan areas, specifically Phoenix and Maricopa County, it is no wonder politicians and residents from other areas have heard or uttered the phrase "Great State of Maricopa." That is because the population centers benefit from their lawmakers, merely by their sheer numbers. It is easy for them to forget that Arizona has 14 other counties.

As Tobin told the Courier, "It's good for rural Arizona because it gives us a fighting chance. We get to have our issues more on the table."

Listing some recent concerns, those issues include water - such as importation; fireworks - and their (mis)use in fire-prone highlands; as well as education, economic development and health care, among many others.

Tobin has been in the state House since 2006. In addition to being majority leader in 2011, he also was majority whip the previous two years.

Kudos to Tobin and cheers for us.

