

Areias welcomes competition for 28th assembly district seat

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The announcement of Maria Corralejo's bid to seek the Democratic nomination for the new 28th Assembly District, was welcomed yesterday by Assemblyman Rusty Areias, D-Los Banos, the veteran lawmaker who also will compete for the seat.

Sunday, Corralejo, of Watsonville, received the unanimous endorsement of "a four-county alliance of Latino leaders, which evolved into the Coalition to Elect Maria Corralejo.

Areias, the representative for the 25th district who lost Monterey County through reapportionment, will move into the new district. He took the news of Corralejo's foray into the assembly race and her support from Latino political leaders graciously.

"I'm not surprised that Mexican Americans in some parts of the district are coming together to endorse a candidate," he said. "I welcome the exchange of ideas."

Areias, a five-term incumbent, said he plans to seek "at least two more" assembly terms, which run for two years. The official filing period if Feb. 10 to March 6.

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The Los Banos dairyman, chairman of the assembly's agriculture committee, said he considers the industry the "economic engine" of the district.

He invited scrutiny of his record on other issues, such as housing and education, and said, "I will stand up very well."

Areias said Corralejo's participation in the political process is the kind of involvement he likes to see.

"I think more people should run for elective office," he said.

In response to speculation about his campaign treasury, rumored to be in the \$300,000 range, Areias said that while he can't pin down

an exact figure right now, "I don't believe I have more than \$100,000."

It was a perceived absence of financial resources that prompted Lily Cervantes, a Coastal Commissioner from Salinas, to bow out of consideration for the Latino nomination.

She put the responsibility of funding the coalition's candidate on its members, however, and pledged her support for Corralejo.

Corralejo, executive director of the Comité de Octubre 17, 1989, a non-profit housing corporation, said she will resign her position to devote full time to her campaign.