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Industry members set record in running for office in R.I.

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Four members of the Rhode Island shelter industry will appear on the November ballot, one of them having won over eight other candidates in a tight Democratic primary race in Senate District 25.

The number of industry members running is a new record, according to Robert Baldwin of R.B. Homes, vice president of the Rhode Island Builders Association. The candidates are members of either RIBA or the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Rhode Island Chapter, or both.

Steven Gianlorenzo of Gianlorenzo and Sons Construction Corp., East Providence, a past RIBA president and the current treasurer, is running for East Providence City Council. He is a third-generation home builder, and is running as a non-partisan candidate.

Richard Welch of North Kingstown-based Apple Construction Corp., a member of the RIBA board of directors, is a Democratic candidate for the District 32 (North Kingstown) seat in the Rhode Island House of Representatives. He is a current member of the North Kingstown School Committee.

John Edwards is running for a second term in the state House of Representatives from District 70 (Tiverton and Portsmouth). He is a past board chairman of ABC Rhode Island and has consistently supported pro-business legislation. Edwards was particularly influential in the battle over the controversial apprenticeship bill in 2009.

Frank Lombardo III of Providence-headquartered Frank Lombardo & Sons Inc., an HVAC and sheet metal contractor from Johnston, is running for the state Senate seat in District 25 (Johnston), where on September 14th he narrowly won the Democratic primary. Lombardo is active in both RIBA and ABC.

Two other candidates lost their respective Democratic primaries on September 14th.

Anthony Gemma of Gem Plumbing and Heating, a member of both RIBA and ABC, ran for the District 1 congressional seat being vacated by Patrick Kennedy. Gemma, a Lincoln resident, is an outspoken advocate for breast cancer research.

Ernest Cabral, is a current member of the ABC Rhode Island board of directors and is president of Cabco Engineering, Pawtucket. Cabral ran for state Senate in District 16 (Central Falls and parts of Cumberland and Pawtucket).

RIBA members are urged to consider the above candidates who will be on the November ballot when going to the polls.

"These outstanding members of our profession are setting the example for all of us by putting their time and dedication toward public office," said RIBA vice president Robert Baldwin.

"We cannot solve the problems of our nation, our state and our communities, let alone our industry, by standing on the outside and looking in. We must be on the inside," Baldwin said.

Paul Eno is the owner and editor-in-chief of New River Press, Woonsocket and is the editor of the

monthly RIBA newsletter, The Rhode Island Builder Report.

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