

SATURDAY
July 2, 2005

Oakland



Tribune

Cityside & Business

Oakland business leaders endorse Swanson

**“Hands
down, that
man knows
how to bring
home the
bacon.”**

**Benjamin
Scott**
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR
OF OAKPAC
ON CHOICE
TO BACK
SWANSON

■ Powerful political action committee lends support in 16th District Assembly seat race

By Cecily Burt

STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — OakPAC, the powerful political action committee representing Oakland's business community, has unanimously endorsed Sandre Swanson in the 16th District Assembly race to replace Wilma Chan.

Swanson, who spent a combined 30 years as chief of staff for former U.S. Rep. Ron Dellums and Rep. Barbara Lee, said he was excited and humbled by the unanimous show of support, which helps broaden his base of support for the seat that represents Oakland, Alameda and Piedmont.

“I'm very appreciative of their recognition of the work I've done and my commitment to economic development, business and job growth,” Swanson said.

Competing for the state Assembly seat are Oakland City Attorney John Russo, attorney Clinton Killian and Piedmont school board member Ronnie Caplane.

Benjamin Scott, public policy director for the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and executive director of OakPAC, said it is a strong field. But Swanson's extensive connections at both the state and federal levels, which helped bring millions of dollars to Oakland, and his hands-on experience producing jobs and promoting economic development for the Bay Area, made him the logical choice.

“Hands down, that man knows how to bring home the bacon,” Scott said.

“We need a candidate that is going to be Oakland-focused. We need someone to pay attention to the growth that is happening and fund it,” Scott said. “The port, the housing, education, after-school programs . . . We have a

Continues on next page

OakPAC backs Swanson

► **SWANSON**, from Local 1

port here that serves all of California, that doesn't have funding for infrastructure, and Sandre has the connections to get that done."

Swanson said he told the committee he will be more than just another vote in Sacramento and will let his record speak for his commitment to the economic prosperity of Oakland.

Among the highlights included in a report to the OakPAC committee were Swanson's successful efforts to secure funding for a \$252 million dredging project, his work on the military base conversions and his creation of a worker-to-

business owner program that helped unemployed base workers start their own businesses.

"The OakPAC board decided that the person who would sit in that seat and hit the ground running with the know-how for Oakland is Sandre," Scott said. "He was articulate, focused, centered, and he had a clear plan."

Russo did not return a call for comment, but Killian called the choice a "political deal" that is not in the best interest of the citizens of Oakland.

"I don't think this is the decision that's best for the business community in Oakland, or to build a better Oakland," Killian said.