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## **Former First Selectman Ed Edelson Announces Candidacy for State Representative in 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative District**

Former Southbury First Selectman Ed Edelson has announced his intention to seek the Democratic Nomination for State Representative for the 69<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. The District consists of most of Southbury, Roxbury, Bridgewater and a part of New Milford.

“The 69<sup>th</sup> needs a representative whose voice will be heard in Hartford and who will be in the room when important decisions are being made. With my extensive and diverse experience in Connecticut and around the country, I will be working to improve the quality of life for all those living in the 69<sup>th</sup>, whether they are seniors, families with children or those who own and manage businesses”, said Mr. Edelson.

Many recall the upset victory in Southbury when Edelson’s 2011 campaign resulted in the first ever Democratic majority on the Board of Selectman. He was also the first Democrat to be re-elected as First Selectman in Southbury. “I was able to do this because I listened to what the voters needed and created a comprehensive platform of strategic issues to address those needs. I am proud to say that all of these were either resolved or that significant progress was made on them in my two terms (see below for more details). I plan to do the same with this campaign”, said Mr. Edelson.

Edelson will run his campaign based on the same core principles as in 2011 including commitment to transparency, being pro-active and fostering collaboration.

More recently, Edelson has served as a Commissioner on the Connecticut Siting Council (2018 to 2022). The Siting Council is charged with balancing consumer needs for energy and telecommunications with the environmental and social impacts of power plants, transmission lines and cell towers. “Learning to listen objectively to both the developers and the affected citizens across the State provided further insights on the various needs and values of the citizens of Connecticut as well as the challenges to advancing Connecticut.

In 2022 he was elected as a Trustee of the Heritage Village Master Association and Heritage Village Foundation. He also was elected to the Executive Committee of this acclaimed 55-and-over retirement community. Edelson has been very active in the local television station where he produces a show called “On The Town” that includes in-depth interviews with people who help to make the region “a great place to raise a family, own a business and retire”. Here again, he has practiced his skills at listening to a variety of people’s stories including former Representative Arthur O’Neil, Southbury First Selectman Jeff Manville. Leif Bjaland, Music Director of Waterbury Symphony Orchestra and Carol Peck, Owner and Executive Chef of Good News Restaurant and Bar, as well as executive directors of Southbury Land Trust, Audubon Center at the Bent of the River and Flanders Nature Center.

### **Education and Work Experience Prior to 2011**

Edelson is from the South Shore of Long Island, New York. He graduated from the Engineering College of Cornell University where he majored in Public Systems Planning and Analysis. For several years he worked at two National Laboratories as an Energy and Environmental Analyst: Jet Propulsion Laboratory operated by California Institute of Technology in Pasadena California and Pacific Northwest Laboratory operated by Battelle Memorial Institute in Richland, Washington. His projects included Nuclear Waste Management (for the White House Office of Science and Technology), Large Scale Solar Array Project (Department of Energy) and a Technology Assessment of Solar Energy (a collaboration with six other National Laboratories including Los Alamos, Brookhaven Oak Ridge and Lawrence Livermore). Battelle provided tuition and a stipend for Ed to attend the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University where he received a Master of Public Administration with a focus on economic regulation. “I had planned to return to the laboratory but with the election of Ronald Reagan, many of the programs that I had been working on were in jeopardy because of his intention to eliminate the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency. For a young person with a growing family, I decided to look for more job security in the private sector”, recalled Mr. Edelson.

He was hired to work at Exxon Corporation’s Planning Department at their headquarters in New York City where he worked on the long-range energy outlook and on developing the annual corporate plan. He soon had an opportunity to work at the Exxon Office in Coral Gables,

Florida. That provided the added benefit of being closer to Ed's parents. The Coral Gables office was responsible for most of Exxon's Caribbean and Latin America operations. There he had various assignments including planning, developing accounting and management software and managing public affairs and emergency response. Eventually, Ed was named the Country Manager for the Corporation's operation in Bermuda. In that role he worked closely with the Bermuda government. One of his major accomplishments was leading the effort to make the transition to environmentally friendly (low sulfur) diesel fuel to improve the air quality in Bermuda.

In 2004, Edelson left ExxonMobil with an early-retirement package. He and his wife Christine moved to Southbury to open Cornucopia at Oldfield Bed and Breakfast. "We fell in love with the house and property. We soon began to see what a special place Southbury was: history, beauty and people committed to preserving both while moving forward", said Mr. Edelson. To that end, he became more involved in the community through serving on the Board of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition, Southbury Inland Wetlands Commission, Board of Southbury Historical Society, Southbury Board of Finance, Southbury Investment Portfolio and Oversight Committee and the Southbury Historic District #1 (Main Street North). He also became the chair of the Southbury Democratic Town Committee.

"Of all of these organizations, my involvement with Dr. Marc Taylor of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition was the most important for my appreciation of Southbury", recalled Mr. Edelson. Dr. Taylor was a co-founder of Southbury Medical Associates who retired from being a liver doctor to become a nationally recognized 'river doctor'. The Trail along the Pomperaug River is named after Dr. Taylor.

### **Accomplishments as First Selectman**

In Edelson's campaign for First Selectman, he put forward a platform unlike any other candidate had done before. It contained issues that would be his priorities. As he said in the preamble to the platform "This is what I call planning your work and working your plan. It is the type of deliberate leadership style I want to bring to Southbury." The issues included:

**Developing a Southbury Strategic Plan:** Although this was required per the Charter of the Town, it had not been done. Ed, in association with Selectman John Monteleone developed an initial plan and a process for annual review so that the plan would remain 'evergreen'.

**Focus on the Future of the Southbury Training School (STS):** After decades of talk about making the Southbury Farm lands suitable for new farmers, Edelson was able to get the State to transfer responsibility to the Department of Agriculture from the Department of Development Services. In addition, a conservation easement held by the Southbury Land Trust was established. As a result, five farmers were able to sign long term leases for the land to actively farm, including Hidden Gem Orchards. Edelson was a key

member of the newly formed Governor's Task Force on the future of the Southbury Training School Campus. By November 2015, work had progressed to the point of having the Governor come to STS to view the campus and engage in discussion of its future. No Governor had been to STS since the ground-breaking in 1937.

**Advance Utilization of Information Technology:** Edelson upgraded the Audio-Visual hardware in the meeting room (205) in Town Hall. He created a position for what is now the Digital Media Advisor to focus on the town website and social media presence. Although first opposed by the Republican members, they have now embraced this important position to foster communication with the citizens of Southbury.

**Community Center:** Numerous surveys had shown that there was a need for a Community Center in the Southbury area. Other organizations like the Southbury Economic Development Commission had made efforts to create one. According to some, a community center had been identified as a need for almost 100 years! Edelson created a diverse task force to investigate current needs, assess what other communities in the tri-State area had done and report to the Board of Selectmen. The Board agreed to move forward with a non-profit organization to create a Regional Community Center. The non-profit "Pomperaug Regional Community Center" was established and met throughout 2015. Various land parcels owned by the Town and others were reviewed and analyzed. By late 2015, a parcel was agreed upon. The subsequent administration had no interest in pursuing the commitment to provide vacant land for the Center or working with the new non-profit organization.

The original Compendium of Position Paper will be available on the website soon to give voters a sense of Edelson's commitment to being focused on the future. Over the course of the campaign, he is committed to preparing a similar set of position papers.

### **Personal**

Ed has been happily married to Christine for 52 years. They have three children and six grandchildren who reside in Connecticut, New York and Florida. He currently lives in Heritage Village, Southbury where he enjoys tennis, pickleball, hiking, leading Great Decisions Seminars (an annual program of the Foreign Policy Association), and recording/editing engaging videos about activities and events in Heritage Village.