

GOP candidates shun White House 'help'

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Six times in this second year of Watergate, voters have elected congressmen in normally Republican districts and five times they have been Democrats. The Republicans who are trying again say this time they'll stay independent of the White House.

"There would be no useful purpose in inviting him back now," says James Sparling, who invited President Nixon to campaign with him last spring in a Michigan Congressional district that Republicans normally win. Sparling lost to Democrat Bob Traxler.

Four of the five Republican losers are running again in November and so is the one winner, Rep. Robert Lagomarsino of California's 13th District. None want any help from the White House and most say they'd be happier if Watergate would just go away.

"It would be helpful, yes," Sparling says when asked if he would prefer Vice President Ford to Nixon as President.

"I really don't know what may happen regarding Wa-

tergate, a lot could happen. I'm hopeful things will be cleared up by then," says Harry Fox, who lost to Democrat John P. Murtha in a Western Pennsylvania race to fill a seat vacated by the death of Republican Rep. John P. Saylor. Ford visited the district on Fox's behalf.

Here is a rundown on the other four districts:

- Michigan 5th: Democrat Richard Vander Veen defeated Republican Robert Vander Iaan in a special election to fill the seat Ford vacated when he was appointed vice president. Vander Iaan has decided to run for re-election to the Michigan State Senate and the Republican candidate this fall is expected to be. Paul Goebel Sr., a Kent County Commissioner.

- Ohio 1st: Willis D. Gradison, a former Cincinnati City Councilman lost to Democrat Thomas Luken for the seat left vacant when Rep. William Keating resigned to become publisher of the Cincinnati Enquirer. The district had gone Democratic previously only in years when there were national Democratic landslide. There will be a re-

match in November.

Gradison, who had a number of national Republicans — liberals and conservatives — campaigning for him says he will campaign as he did last March, attempting to convince voters he is an individual.

- California 13th: Lagomarsino defeated a field of seven Democrats and avoided a runoff by getting 53 percent of the vote. But his predecessor, the late Rep. Charles Teague carried the district in 1972 with more than 70 percent of the vote, and he will be forced to run in a district that has been reapportioned to include more Democrats.

James Loebel, the top Democratic vote-getter, will be Lagomarsino's opponent in November. Loebel has tried to characterize Lagomarsino as a Republican loyalist like former Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell and former White House aides H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman.

"People know I'm not that way," Lagomarsino says. "They trust me."

- California 6th: John Burton, a Democratic state Assemblyman, was elected last Tuesday by getting a bare majority of 50 percent over the combined vote of seven rivals. Burton, whose brother Phillip represents a neighboring district, will fill the seat vacated by Republican William Mailliard.