

Republican Leading in Ventura Vote

Santa Barbara

Republican State Senator Robert J. Lagomarsino appeared close to victory last night in a special election for the vacant 13th Congressional district seat.

The campaign focused on the Watergate scandals in Washington, and the outcome in this traditionally "safe" Republican district is being watched nationally.

Lagomarsino had about 54 per cent of the vote with about one-third of the precincts in the Santa Barbara-Ventura county district counted.

The 47-year-old veteran legislator could win the seat of the late Charles Teague, also a Republican, by get-

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ting a majority of the votes cast.

Otherwise he will face a runoff against his closest challenger, mayor James D. Loebl of Ojai.

Loeble, 46, an attorney and Democrat, campaigned heavily on the Watergate issue.

He charged that Lagomarsino was a Republican Party loyalist who would support President Nixon on the impeachment question.

Lagomarsino campaigned on his legislative experience — 13 years in the state senate.

He insisted Watergate shouldn't be an issue for a new congressman. "But they (the Democrats) sure made it one," he added.

The election could be affected by another later-day phenomenon — the gasoline shortage. County officials expressed concern about a light turnout.

With 141 of 480 precincts reporting, Lagomarsino had 13,440 votes and Loebl had 5219.

There were six other Democratic contenders, however — a tactical move to draw enough votes to keep Lagomarsino from getting a majority.

Democrats outnumber Re-



UPI Telephoto

ROBERT LAGOMARSINO
Veteran legislator

publicans 48 per cent to 45 per cent in total registration in the two counties, but the agricultural district has long been considered a safe one for Republicans.

Teague held the congressional seat for 19 years. He won re-election with 72 per cent of the vote in 1972.

The other Democratic candidates were attorney James A. Browning Jr. of Oxnard, controller F. Joe Deauchamp of Carpinteria, teacher Robert W. Handley of Santa Maria, pediatrician Roger A. Ikola of Santa Maria, insurance man Tom Jolicoeur of Camarillo and teacher David H. Miller of Santa Paula.

Our Correspondent