

Full-Blown Satanist Running for Office in California

Steve Hill is a former active duty member of the U.S. Marine Corps, and a stand-up comedian. He's also a Democratic candidate for California Senate District 21, which encompasses northern Los Angeles County, as well as the "high desert" region.

But that's not what has garnered so much national attention to his campaign.

You wouldn't know it by his campaign website, but Hill is aiming to become the first satanist to achieve elected office. In an interview with *TIME* magazine, he explained the impact that has had on his efforts.

"I'm a Satanist as far as trying to get people to understand that I don't believe in the devil any more than I believe in God," he said. "All of it is stupid. But if I have to tell people I'm the devil to get them to listen, then, OK, I'm the devil.

"I don't go worship Satan and pour milk on me. But [Satanism] would influence me greatly because I could deal from a different perspective, as a regular human being."

Hill is helping to organize the Satanic Temple in Los Angeles, despite his atheistic leanings. He told the magazine he reconciles the apparent conflict by merely adhering to the Satanic Temple's goals, which include encouraging "benevolence and empathy" and "keeping church and state separate."

He described it as a "humanist approach that raises levels of consciousness."

The supporter of Democratic presidential candidate U.S. Sen.

Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.) said he has been shunned by the local party because of his extreme views. He also said he is considering running as an independent candidate, which he did unsuccessfully last year when the seat became vacant.

State Sen. Sharon Runner (R-Lancaster), who won the special election with 94.1 percent of the vote as the only candidate on the ballot, has announced she will not seek re-election. Hill, who ran as a write-in candidate, came in second place with about 3.6 percent of the vote.