By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

A former District 44 state senator wants his old job back.

Tom Baker of Trenton plans to run for his former legislative seat next year, now held by Mark Christensen of Imperial.

Baker, 61, hinted of a possible run in July. He made his intentions formal last week in an email announcement to the paper.

Baker said his priorities in the Legislature will be “job creation, cutting state spending, tax relief and sensible solutions to the state’s water challenges.

“My focus in the legislature will be on serving the people I represent in southwest Nebraska, not special interest groups,” Baker said.

Baker said people across southwest Nebraska have encouraged him to run again.

He said he looks forward to working hard in the upcoming campaign.

The former senator represented District 44 from 1999 to 2007, and served four years during that tenure as chairman of the Legislature’s transportation and telecommunication committee.

Nebraska law limits state senators to two terms, or eight years, in the legislature. Once a former senator sits out one full term he can run for office again.

“I hated being term-limited out,” he said. “I really miss it.”

He resigned last month from the Board of Educational Lands and Funds to be eligible to run for the legislature. State law prohibits board members from running for political office. He was appointed to that post by Gov. Dave Heineman in January, 2007.

Baker is a farmer, rancher and small business owner who lives outside of Trenton. He’s a former Trenton school board member and served on the Nebraska Oil and Gas Commission.

His wife, Pat, is a teacher. They have three grown children and seven grandchildren.