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RIPON FORUM

Volume 40, No. 2

April/May 2006



The Suburban Agenda

John McLaughlin. Nancy Johnson. Dave Reichert.

Plus: Tom Schatz discusses the Sunset Commission,
Bill Beach and Rudy Penner debate dynamic scoring, and
John Boehner looks at the year ahead in Congress.



Steps to a Healthier Future

When it comes to building healthy diets, everyone has a role to play. And the U.S. Department of Agriculture's new MyPyramid gives each of us the tools we need to improve our diets. That's why the food industry has committed itself to promoting MyPyramid and to helping Americans choose the foods that meet their nutrition goals. We are sponsoring education campaigns, including GMA's partnership with Weekly Reader to develop curriculum based on MyPyramid. Food and beverage companies also are making and marketing products that incorporate the new MyPyramid's nutrition recommendations. In the coming months, you'll see even more changes as we do our part to help Americans build healthier diets.

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RIPON FORUM

Volume 40, No. 2, April/May 2006

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since 1965.”*

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In publishing this magazine, the Ripon Society seeks to provide a forum for fresh ideas, well-researched proposals, and for a spirit of criticism, innovation, and independent thinking within the Republican Party.



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The Ripon Society is a research and policy organization located in Washington, D.C. There are National Associate members throughout the United States.



A Note from the Chairman

It struck us, as we were beginning work on this issue in the first part of February, that this is something of a milestone moment in the history of our magazine. The *Ripon Forum* turns 40 this year.

For the record, we have been publishing since 1965. This obviously makes us 41 officially, but like a lot of others entering middle age, we lost a year somewhere along the way and have rounded things downward. Regardless, it is a significant event in the life of the *Ripon Forum*, and one in which we take a certain amount of pride.

To mark the occasion, we have changed the look of the magazine somewhat to reflect its original design. The one thing that has not changed, however, is the content. Our goal — today as it was 40 years ago — is to provide a forum for ideas that matter. In that regard, let me reiterate that we are open to good ideas from anywhere. No one group has a monopoly on original thinking. Accordingly, we welcome ideas from any place on the political spectrum, including, of course, the center.

We have tried to continue that tradition in this issue by focusing on a number of important topics that we believe will have some prominence in the coming weeks and months. We lead off with a discussion of the Suburban Agenda, an effort by a group of House Republicans to craft a positive, issues-oriented strategy that they hope will not only help a vital part of the American voting population, but also help the GOP hold and build its majority in the elections this fall.

We also feature a discussion of the Sunset Commission by good government expert Tom Schatz, a debate over dynamic scoring by respected economists Bill Beach and Rudy Penner, and an overview of the year ahead in Congress by a man who is helping to shape the agenda on Capitol Hill — House Majority Leader John Boehner. And, for those fans of TV's *The West Wing*, we take a look at the program as it ends its seven year run on the air, and examine its impact on how politics is perceived in America.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and join us once again in congratulating the *Ripon Forum* as it turns 40 (or 41!).

Bill Frenzel
Chairman Emeritus
Ripon Society

The Suburban Agenda

A plan to win the new political battleground

JOHN MCLAUGHLIN

There are two basic truths to mid-term elections in America – they are won on themes, and, historically speaking at least, they are usually lost by the party in power.

In the mid-terms of 1994, the elections were about the corruption of the Democrat-controlled Congress and the failed attempt by the Clinton Administration to establish a socialized health care system.

In 1998, the elections were about President Clinton's impeachment, and the belief among many voters that the Republican majority in Congress had overreached and was ignoring other important issues in its drive to hold the President accountable.

In 2002, the elections were about the September 11th terrorist attacks, and the belief that our country – led by President Bush and a Republican-controlled House — needed to do everything possible to keep the American people and our homeland secure.

In the first two cases, the party in power either lost seats in Congress (Republicans in 1998) or lost control of Congress altogether (Democrats in 1994). In the 2002 elections, Republicans defied history and actually gained seats. But if Republicans proved the exception to the rule in 2002, it was because 2002 was an exceptional year; the elections were held in the shadow of 9/11, with the memory of that awful day still fresh in voters' minds.

As we approach the five year anniversary of the terrorist attacks, one thing should be clear: political partisanship has returned to America, which means the basic truth of the 2006 elections will be that the Republican majority is likely to lose seats in November – unless, of course, they do something about it by putting forward a positive agenda that will help them win seats instead.

One member of Congress who is playing a key role in doing just that is Republican Representative Mark Kirk of Illinois. Congressman Kirk is the leader of a group of just over 20 members of the House of Representatives who are working on an agenda geared around the lives of people who reside in America's suburbs.



Why the suburbs?

Over the past few decades, suburban voters have usually been a key to Republican victories. However, in more recent elections, they have gone from being a bastion of electoral success to a political battleground where previously reliable GOP votes are now up for grabs.

As part of the effort to craft a suburban agenda, Congressman Kirk commissioned a national poll among 1,000 likely suburban voters between January 24 and 26, 2006, to learn more about the issues that are important to them and their views on the election this year. These suburban voters were chosen from predetermined suburban counties across the nation in targeted Congressional districts. For Republicans, the results reveal not only the challenges that lie ahead, but the opportunities, as well.

The challenges lie in the numbers. On the generic vote for Congress, for example, Democrats are leading 36 percent to 33 percent. There is also a pronounced gender gap among suburban voters, with men supporting Republicans for Congress by a margin of 37 percent to 33 percent, and women supporting Democrats by a margin of 39 percent to 29 percent. Two other segments of concern are independent voters, who are 62 percent undecided with a plurality favoring Democrats, and suburban pro-choice women, who prefer Democrats for Congress by a margin of 50 percent to 19 percent.

Among all suburban voters, 56 percent believe the country is heading down the wrong track, while only 32 percent see it headed in the right direction. Generally speaking, if suburban voters say America is on the wrong track, they will vote Democrat by a margin of 56 percent to 14 percent. A lot of this has to do with perceptions about the war in Iraq. A plurality of suburban voters — 40 percent, to be exact — believes that America is losing the war. Even more distressing is the fact that among those who are undecided in their choice for Congress, only 26 percent say America is winning the war, while 34 percent think we are losing.

Moving beyond the numbers.

Clearly, this survey confirms that Republicans face a real challenge in winning over suburban voters in 2006. It also confirms that just as homeland security was on the minds of American voters in 2002, the war in Iraq is on the minds of many suburban voters today. But beyond these numbers and beyond this one issue, the survey reveals one other key thing — mainly, that the GOP can win the suburban vote if it puts forward a plan that makes a difference in people's daily lives.

The agenda being developed by Congressman Kirk and the other members of the suburban caucus would achieve that goal. In fact, the survey revealed that the issues and ideas being developed as part of the Suburban Agenda have a real resonance among voters in suburban America. These issues and ideas, and the response they received in the survey, include:

Helping small businesses provide health coverage for their employees — 92 percent of those surveyed favor providing tax credits to small business owners who provide health insurance for their employees.

Making sure our kids are secure in the classroom — 89 percent favor passing a school safety bill, permitting federal background checks on new teachers to prevent criminals or pedophiles from being hired. Only 7 percent opposed such background checks as an invasion of privacy.

Making sure our kids are secure online — 87 percent favor requiring schools and libraries to install internet filters to protect children from child

pornography and Internet predators. Only 9 percent thought that this proposal violated free speech.

Keeping drugs and firearms out of schools — 86 percent favor allowing school officials to check their students' lockers for illegal drugs or weapons without the permission of the student. Only 11 percent felt this would invade the privacy rights of students.

Making sure people don't lose their health care when they change jobs — 84 percent favor requiring health insurance plans to be portable so that when people change jobs, they do not lose their insurance. Only 9 percent thought this would be too burdensome a federal regulation.

Helping parents plan for their kids' future — 84 percent favor establishing what is being called a "401 KIDS tax" deferred savings account plan to give parents the ability to establish tax free savings accounts for their children.

Making sure teachers are qualified — 83 percent favor requiring teachers to pass a periodic competency test to ensure they are current in their subject matter. Only 13 percent opposed this idea because it increases demands on teachers' time and attention.

Strengthening personal property rights — 81 percent favor protecting homeowners' property rights by limiting the ability of local governments to seize property for the purpose of private development. Only 15 percent would allow seizing property for private development with compensation.

Making sure attorneys can't take advantage of Superfund legal fees — 80 percent favor limiting the Environmental Superfund legal fees to 10 percent so that 90 percent of the fund is spent on restoration. Only 11 percent would not limit time and cost.

Helping people buy their first house — 75 percent favor a \$5,000 tax credit for first time homebuyers to make homeownership more affordable.

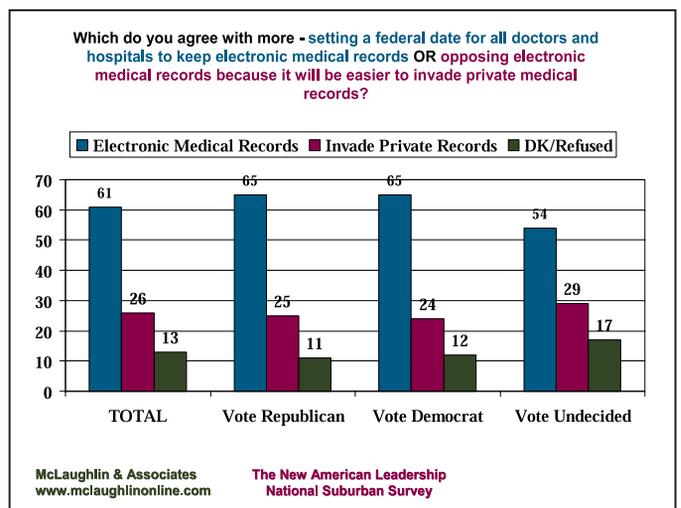
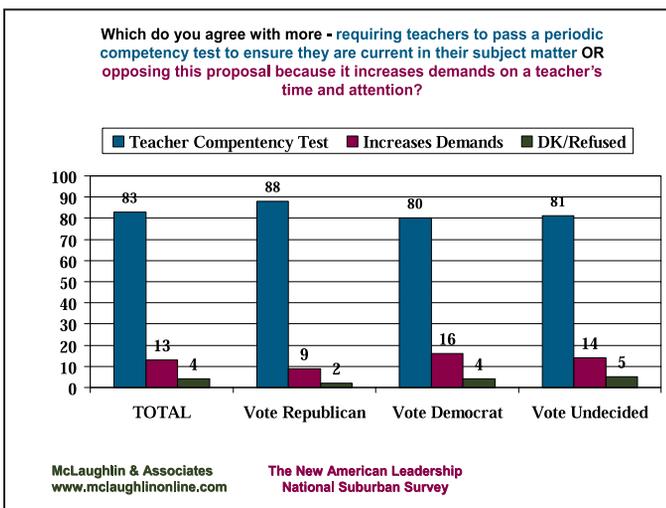
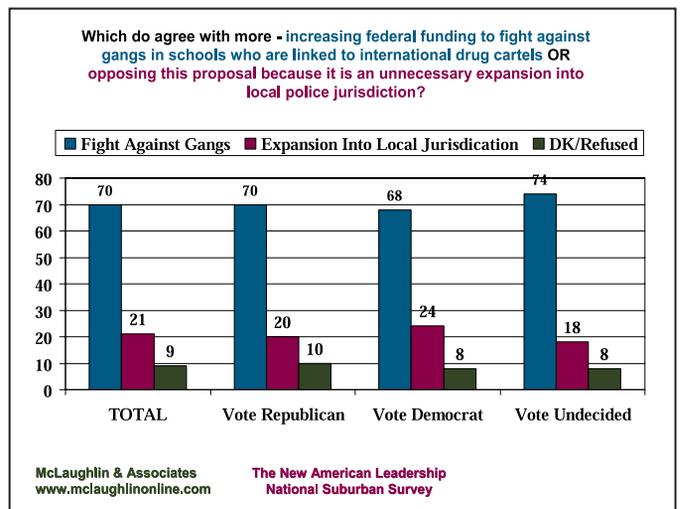
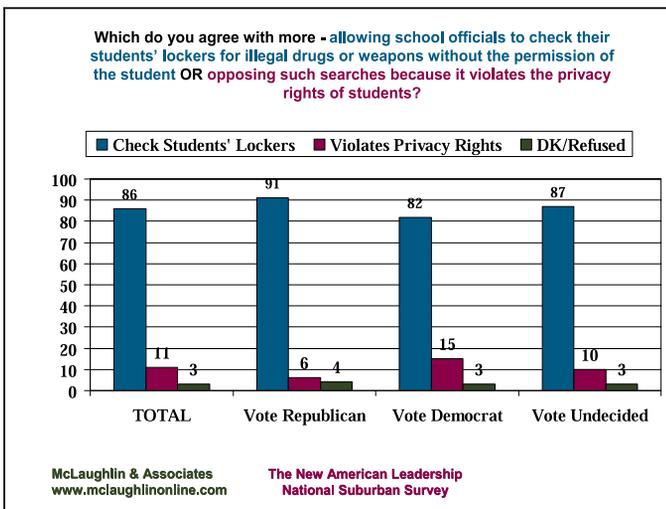
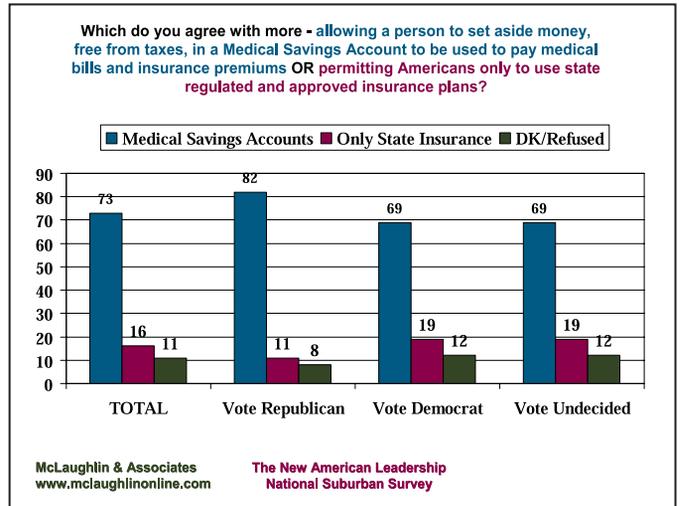
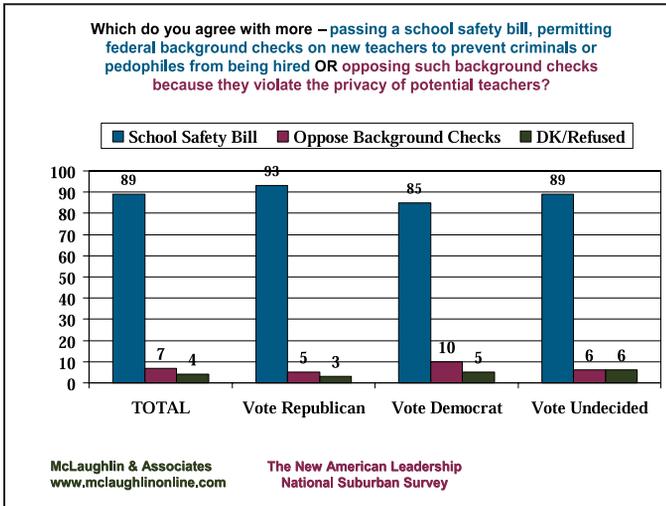
Helping people save for when they get sick — 73 percent favor allowing a person to set aside money, free from taxes, in a Medical Savings Account to be used to pay medical bills and insurance premiums. Only 16 percent would permit Americans to only use state regulated and approved insurance plans.

Keeping driver's licenses out of illegal
(Continued on page 33)

Over the past few decades, suburban voters have usually been a key to Republican victories. However, in more recent elections, they have gone from being a bastion of electoral success to a political battleground where previously reliable GOP votes are now up for grabs.

From the Field

McLaughlin & Associates conducted a national poll among 1,000 likely suburban voters between January 24 and 26, 2006. These suburban voters were chosen from predetermined suburban counties across the nation in targeted Congressional districts. Some of the results of this survey are below:



Suburban Health Care

Moving from a pen and paper system to a 21st century world.

NANCY L. JOHNSON

The legislative agenda developed by the suburban caucus is meant to address our everyday concerns: the safety of our children at school, congested and overcrowded roads, and dwindling open space, for instance.

At the very top of that agenda is health care. Seniors enjoying their retirement, couples raising children, and individuals in the suburbs face barriers to quality, affordable health care.

Overcoming these barriers and improving our overall health care system requires the adoption and use of electronic medical records and “e-prescribing” systems. Health care information systems can save lives, improve the quality of care, and lower costs.

While the health care we receive in the suburbs is state-of-the-art, the way patients, physicians, pharmacies and other providers record, retain, and securely exchange health information is not. It’s a pen and paper system. Without new technologies and digital information systems, health care quality cannot take the next leap forward.

Consider that a person rushed to an emergency room may not get the best treatment because their private records are locked in a physician’s office across the street - and not available to the emergency room doctor treating them in a potential crisis such as a car accident, a heart attack or serious infection. An interoperable health information system would make accurate health information available to us and our doctors when we need it.

We know the consequences of a pen and paper system. A landmark U.S. Institute of Medicine study from 1998 found that preventable medical errors — such as misread hand-written prescriptions — caused as many as 100,000 deaths in America each year, far more than even motor vehicle accidents.

Lost or incomplete medical records cost the health system billions and the economy millions more in lost time at work. Some estimates put just Medicare’s cost for duplicative testing at \$5.4 billion a year. Suburban families bear these costs for themselves and for Medicare and Medicaid



beneficiaries as well.

Despite its promise for better health care at lower cost, widespread adoption of electronic health records and information systems has been disappointingly slow. The current system of overlapping or conflicting state and federal laws is complicated and not designed for an era in which records can be transmitted electronically anywhere, accurately and securely.

That is why I introduced legislation to help develop a health information technology system with uniform privacy and security standards. My legislation, supported by 41 bipartisan co-sponsors, will enhance privacy protections and allow for the secure health information systems we deserve in the digital age. And it helps hospitals and doctors’ offices to coordinate so everyone uses health information systems that can talk to each other.

And as suburban families change jobs, it requires their health insurance to change with them. Consumer-controlled plans like Health Savings Accounts (HSA) are portable, and can be brought with you from job-to-job. With the benefit of using pre-tax dollars, HSAs can go to pay for things employer plans may not cover — like braces for our kids.

But greater use of HSAs requires another major improvement in our delivery of health care: more information available to the individual on the quality of care providers deliver and the price they charge. Medicare and some of the big employers are leading the way, developing specific measures of quality and publicly reporting provider performance. As Chairman of the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, I will continue working to improve

(Continued on page 33)

Q&A

with Dave Reichert

Dave Reichert represents Washington's 8th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Elected in 2004, he first came to national prominence as the detective who led the effort to capture the Green River serial killer. He serves on three committees in Congress, and is Chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology. He is also a member of the Suburban Caucus. The Congressman discusses his role in the Caucus below:

RF: *There's been a lot of discussion so far this year about developing a Suburban Agenda that would be geared toward helping families in their everyday lives. You are part of a core group in the House of Representatives working on a plan to do just that. Could you tell us about this effort?*

REICHERT: Up until very recently, we viewed our nation as one third rural, one third urban and one third suburban. That's just not accurate anymore. America is overwhelmingly suburban, with less than 20 percent of constituents coming from rural areas or big cities. Over half of all voters live in suburbs or small cities. Additionally, these voters tend to be the "swing" voters we always hear about. If you look at the swing districts in Congress, almost all of them are suburban districts. But our political agenda in Congress has thus far failed to recognize and specifically target this.

If you look at the swing districts in Congress, almost all of them are suburban districts. But our political agenda in Congress has thus far failed to recognize and specifically target this.

So Congressman Mark Kirk of Illinois went to about 20 suburban areas and asked the families who live there what was important to them, what concerns were on their minds. They told him the country is on the "wrong track." Repeatedly, he heard about concerns with health care, crime, education, taxes and the environment. Every single one of those concerns is one I hear over and over again in



my own district in Washington State.

The members of the Suburban Caucus have made a top five list of priorities for the Suburban Agenda, which came out of those discussions with suburbanites: keeping pedophiles from becoming teachers; making health insurance fully portable; long term saving for children; more cleanup and less court for the superfund environment program; and expanding federal backup to fight international drug gangs. This last priority is where my own background and expertise comes in, but these ideas together form the backbone of the Suburban Agenda.

RF: *What is your role and what issues are you personally looking at?*

REICHERT: I was tapped by Mark Kirk chiefly for my experience fighting drugs and the spread of gangs from urban communities into the nearby suburban areas. Gangs backed by international drug cartels are moving beyond cities into suburban schools, threatening to overwhelm local police departments. As Sheriff of King County, which is the 12th largest county in the nation and includes Seattle and the surrounding suburbs, I wrestled with the spread of gangs and drugs from Seattle to outlying areas. With over 500,000 registered members in the U.S., drug gangs in America would be the fifth largest army in the world. I took the lead as Sheriff of King County to expand the federal prosecution of gang members, emphasizing the importance of prosecuting gangs who have a presence in schools and that seek to recruit new members there.

The increased presence of meth labs and all of the problems that go along with that are something I'm particularly experienced with. The West coast has been

The increased mobility of our population requires that we take necessary steps to ensure that those we entrust with the care and education of our children are worthy of that responsibility.

dealing with a severe meth problem since the early 1990s, and has actually fought through the worst of it due to Washington State's very progressive, aggressive approach to fighting the movement of meth into our communities. I'd like to say I played more than a passing role in that fight. I hope that our experience in

Washington State will help other communities in the Midwest and East.

I believe my role as a vocal opponent of domestic violence could also have a place as we determine what this group's priorities will be.

RF: *Some people might scoff and say this is just another attempt by Washington to put a slogan on an issue and impose a "one-size-fits-all" solution on people's problems. What makes this effort different?*

REICHERT: The relatively recent development of suburban neighborhoods as important political areas produced a new reality, which has not been given the same study or consideration that rural or urban areas have. It's only a natural progression to move our focus as the population migrates as it has from rural to urban to suburban.

RF: *On a similar note, some people might say that some of the issues being talked about as part of the Suburban Agenda – teacher checks and mandatory Internet filters are two examples — are issues better addressed and handled by the states. Why do you believe there is a role for Washington in these areas as well?*

REICHERT: The Internet isn't just an intrastate capability—it crosses state lines. It crosses national boundaries and is an international issue. Teachers also can move as they please, changing state residency when they wish. Information may not be easily or readily available from state to state. The increased mobility of our population requires that we take necessary steps to ensure that those we entrust with the care and education of our children are worthy of that responsibility.

RF: *What about costs? The federal government is running a deficit as it is. Can we afford to be undertaking something as ambitious the Suburban Agenda?*

REICHERT: There is no dollar figure attached to the Suburban Agenda. It is more accurately described as providing a focus for suburban priorities which can be included in current bills. We're already doing that with things like permanent tax cuts, small business incentives and programs to reduce drug and gang activity. A very recent example was the inclusion of teacher background checks in the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act, which the House voted on recently.

RF: *Your background as a Sheriff makes you ideally suited to tackle these issues head-on. How much does your experience in local law enforcement shape your efforts on the issues you are working on today?*

REICHERT: My experience as a cop has a substantial influence on the issues I'm working on. Peter King, Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, tapped me last year after Hurricane Katrina to be Chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology. He did so despite my relative inexperience in the House—I am only the sixth freshman in the history of Congress to chair a subcommittee—because he understood the value of my law enforcement experience. That experience is the reason Mark Kirk tapped me for the Suburban Agenda as well. I'm also Vice-Chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure because of my experience working with the Coast Guard and protecting ports in Washington State.

Beyond that, my experience as a cop shapes my



Subcommittee's agenda too. We've dedicated ourselves this year to solving the problems our first responders face with operability and interoperability as they attempt to communicate during a disaster. Operability is the ability of communication devices to function when their users require them to and interoperability is the ability for the varied types of communication devices used by all emergency response personnel and various other officials in the event of a disaster to work together, ensuring information is shared in a timely, efficient and effective manner. I know from firsthand experience what it's like to call for back-up and not be able to reach your colleagues.

My experience as Sheriff also taught me the importance of collecting useful, timely intelligence. As a Congressman, I'm doing everything I can to make sure our intelligence community has information gathering capabilities that ensure they have access to the best, most accurate information available.

RF: *Finally, this is very much a vision-based plan, where you have a number of different issues held*

together by one overarching theme. What one message would like people to come away with as they become more familiar with the effort and some of the goals you and your colleagues are trying to achieve?

REICHERT: Suburban issues are different from rural and urban issues. Our suburban priorities are transportation — suburban dwellers often commute to and from their jobs, making their roadways of utmost importance — the migration of gangs into suburban areas, and the increasing prevalence of drug use by suburban students. We are listening to our constituents in suburban areas and the Suburban Agenda is the response to what we're hearing. Suburban constituents' concerns are unique and they require a focused, coordinated approach, which the members involved in this effort are dedicated to providing. **RF**

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How I See It

The House Majority Leader discusses the year ahead in Congress.

JOHN BOEHNER

From the moment I was elected to serve my fellow House Republicans as Majority Leader, I've been asked the same question innumerable times by innumerable people: "What do you think about [insert issue of the day here]?"

The question is simple enough. What do I think about increasing access to health insurance for American workers? Strengthening border security? Lobbying reform? I'm for them all, and House Republicans are taking aim at each. But beneath the veneer of these simple questions is, I believe, a fundamental misunderstanding of the role a Majority Leader is supposed to play.

The answer to those questions shouldn't be what I personally think, but what the Members of the House Republican Conference think. As I see it, the Majority Leader

isn't here to issue commands from the top down based on personal preference. The role of a Majority Leader is to facilitate, to guide, and to build consensus from the ground-up.

Already in the last few weeks I've had the opportunity to do just that.

The House Republican vision for the year is taking shape from the ground-up. We've already identified a set of themes we'll drive in the coming months. We're pledging to keep America prosperous,

Remember: the Majority Leader and the rest of the elected Leadership are important. But the lifeblood of the House runs through the Committees and their Members.



ensure affordable and accessible health care, spend tax dollars wisely, and strengthen national security and border security.

Our united vision will be critical as a lodestar to guiding our legislative efforts, ensuring Republican unity, and ensuring our

constituents clearly understand why we're here and what we're all about. It is my job as Majority Leader to ensure whatever policy we put forth reflects that vision. I will do so the same way I have approached crafting the vision — from the ground-up.

Remember: the Majority Leader and the rest of the elected Leadership are important. But the lifeblood of the House runs through the Committees and their Members. I will work to facilitate planning for success without interfering with the Committees' prerogatives to set policy, and to make sure that any bill that will subject Members to political risk will have sufficient political and communications support.

How will I do that? First, I will work to take our collective vision and implement it across Committee jurisdictional lines. These lines are necessary for the efficient working of the House, but

they can also present obstacles to developing and advancing our very best ideas. And many important themes cross jurisdictional lines. We must identify key substantive themes based on our vision, and then ensure that the appropriate Committees work

together to develop agendas to drive those themes.

Second, I will work with the Committees and their Members to lay the groundwork for successful outreach. Battles are ultimately won with superior preparation — planning, strategy, identifying weaknesses early and solving them before they become exposed. We are most successful advancing both policy and political goals when we integrate policy-making with strategy.

Big goals take communications and outreach strategies as well as policy strategies, and each is stronger when informed by the others. This is why an aggressive communications effort isn't just about communicating with the press; it's communicating with Members. It's ensuring every Member knows where we're going and how we'll get there and ensuring everyone is part of the decision making process. Again: success begins at the ground level.

In addition, any communications effort must help prepare Members to win the debate as well as the vote. After all, if our goals are serious, we have

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A Bipartisan Solution to Our Big Government Problem

THOMAS A. SCHATZ

It's not often that Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush agree on an issue. But when it comes to cutting programs and getting government spending under control, there is one issue on which they see eye to eye.

The issue is the establishment of a Sunset Commission. For the second straight year, President Bush is proposing the creation of such a commission as part of his budget plan. Under this proposal, every federal agency and government program would automatically receive a 10-year expiration date, at which time they would essentially be required to justify their existence. It would be the job of the Sunset Commission to determine whether their justifications have merit.

The Sunset Commission would be comprised of seven members – two selected by the majority in Congress, two by the Congressional minority, and three by the President. Their task would be to evaluate every federal agency and program and recommend if it should be abolished, streamlined, consolidated, or reauthorized with recommendations for improvements.

The overarching mission of the Sunset Commission would be to make government work better, and make sure federal programs earn the taxpayers' dollars. By consolidating programs and

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eliminating waste, the Commission would save tax dollars and improve program performance. At a time of skyrocketing deficits, war, and concerns over how well our government is doing its job, these are two goals that are desperately needed.

Indeed, federal spending has increased at an alarming rate over



The late Senator Edmund Muskie (D-Maine).

the past 11 years. Total outlays were more than 60 percent higher in 2005 than in 1994. The situation will reach a crisis level when entitlement spending explodes with the retirement of the Baby Boomers. Short-sighted as ever, Congress is not taking the necessary steps to get spending under control. Congress fails to oversee and evaluate a large chunk of the programs it funds year after year. About 30 percent of the discretionary budget – or \$170 billion in fiscal 2005 – is unauthorized. Congressional leaders usually waive the rule that requires federal spending to be authorized. Consequently, a number of federal programs coast under the radar without being reviewed by a congressional authorizing committee.

Government programs are often launched with great fanfare but receive scant attention when they crash and burn. The lack of accountability has allowed the federal budget to fester with wasteful, duplicative, outdated, and ineffective programs. Thirty percent of federal programs reviewed by the administration's Performance and Assessment Ratings Tool have been found to be either ineffective or unable to demonstrate results. Citizens Against Government Waste's report, *Prime Cuts 2005*, identifies wasteful spending that totals \$232 billion in fiscal 2006 and \$2 trillion over the next five years.

Members of Congress have little incentive to eliminate waste one program at a time. Every government program develops a constituency that profits from its continued existence. A Member of Congress must overcome fierce resistance to eliminate a single program, and the resulting savings is a miniscule slice of the total federal budget. Furthermore, proposals to eliminate programs must

navigate a cumbersome process that requires approval from multiple congressional committees and committee chairmen who are not inclined to give up any turf.

Of course, such problems are not new; nor are they problems that only one political party has tried to address. In fact, the idea of establishing a Sunset Commission is very bipartisan in nature. It was first proposed by the late Democratic Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine in 1976. His bill mandated that all federal programs would be automatically shut down every ten years unless Congress voted to continue them. The bill enjoyed bipartisan support in the Senate with 55 co-sponsors, including Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.).

Jimmy Carter endorsed the idea during his presidential campaign. In his 1976 biography, *Why Not the Best?*, Carter reflected upon his time as a Georgia state senator. He wrote that he was, “appalled to discover that we spent all of our time assessing proposals to finance new programs only. Once a program had been in operation for a year, there was little likelihood that it would ever be closely examined again. It would just grow inexorably like a fungus...” Carter’s opponent in the 1980 presidential race and his successor in the Oval Office expressed a similar sentiment. “The nearest thing to eternal life we’ll ever see on the earth,” Ronald Reagan once stated, “is a government program.”

Thirty years later, many people inside the Washington Beltway still do not see the wisdom of establishing a Sunset Commission. But a growing

number of Americans outside the Beltway do. There are 28 states that currently use some form of a Sunset Commission to promote fiscal accountability and responsibility within their respective state governments. In Texas, for example, strong support from the legislature has resulted in 90 percent of the State Sunset Commission’s recommendations being passed into law. According to Texas Republican Congressman Kevin Brady, the prime sponsor of the Sunset Commission bill in the House, it has also resulted in the elimination of 44 state agencies, saving state taxpayers \$720 million along the way.

The federal response to Hurricane Katrina sparked renewed public attention on government accountability. It also reawakened congressional interest in waste-cutting commissions. In the wake of the storm last September, the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Federal Workforce and Agency Organization held a hearing on the issue, with one of the focal points of discussion being whether the time was right to establish a Sunset Commission.

Let there be no doubt – the time is right to establish a Sunset Commission. In fact, the time is long overdue. Taxpayers deserve the establishment of a common sense way to rein in spending and keep federal programs under control.

The Sunset Commission would do just that. It deserves to be enacted today. **RF**

Thomas A. Schatz is President of Citizens Against Government Waste.



Devising a Terrorism Insurance Solution

CHARLES M. CHAMNESS

When Congress enacted the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (also known as TRIA) in 2002, the government-backed terrorism reinsurance program it established was designed as a temporary stopgap to give insurers time to regroup and sort out the complexities of dealing with terrorism risk. The insurance industry was still reeling from the effects of the then-costliest disaster in U.S. history—at least \$33 billion in insured losses. President Bush proclaimed that America was engaged in a protracted war with a shadowy but sophisticated global terror network, and warned that the country should brace for more attacks.

In 2005, however, proposals to extend the TRIA program beyond its original three-year lifespan caused some federal policymakers to conclude that the insurance industry had grown too comfortable with TRIA. Opponents argued that by providing government reinsurance for this particular risk, TRIA made taxpayers liable for insurer losses that would ordinarily be covered under private reinsurance contracts. This argument was based on the theory that the same law of supply and demand that governs other economic sectors must apply to insurance as well, not realizing that insurers are constrained by regulator-mandated price controls and underwriting restrictions.

Some officials further implied that if TRIA were left to expire, the invisible hand of the market would

...our understanding of the nature of terrorism risk prevents us from indulging the fantasy that an effective solution can be found that precludes government participation.

generate a supply of reinsurance—that is, the insurance that allows primary insurers to transfer a portion of the risks they insure—sufficient to meet the total demand for reinsurance. Under TRIA, insurers had in fact purchased billions of dollars' worth of private terrorism rein-



Charles M. Chamness

insurance just to cover their TRIA deductibles, which for some companies ran as high as \$3 billion. But reinsurers made clear that they had little appetite for taking on additional terrorism risk. Indeed, the reinsurance industry was among the strongest proponents of TRIA renewal, a fact that contradicts the assertion that TRIA was depriving them of market share as TRIA critics maintained. Because these opponents had the power to prevent either an extension of TRIA or an overhaul of the law, supporters of an ongoing program – a bipartisan majority of Congress – had to settle for a two-year extension of TRIA.

Today the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) is working with other industry leaders to fashion a long-term solution to the seemingly intractable problem of terrorism risk. Our principal objective is to create new mechanisms to maximize the role of the private sector to the greatest extent possible. Some of the ideas being studied include innovative investment vehicles that would tap the capital markets, as well as various types of insurer risk-pooling arrangements. At the same time, our understanding of the nature of terrorism risk prevents us from indulging the fantasy that an effective solution can be found that precludes government participation.

NAMIC has developed a statement of principles that recognizes that the way to responsibly maximize private sector capacity for insuring against terrorism risk is to attract as many individual insurers as possible into the terrorism insurance market. To that end, we urge Congress to preempt state laws that prevent the free market from setting adequate rates for terrorism insurance. We also call upon Congress to pro-

vide a permanent reinsurance program to supplement the private reinsurance market, with insurer deductibles set at levels that would enable the insurance industry to continue to meet its financial obligations and perform its vital economic role after paying off its share of losses following a terrorist attack. We also recommend the establishment of a permanent event trigger set at no more than \$50 million. A higher trigger would drive small and medium sized insurance companies from the market because reinsurance costs would be too high, forcing these insurers to either exclude terrorism coverage or charge premiums that many of their policyholders couldn't afford. And because there are limits to the amount of loss exposure that even very large insurers can absorb, no one should assume that large carriers would fill the void created by the middle market's exit.

That's because in addition to being a man-made risk that is deliberately unpredictable, terrorist attacks are intended to produce large-scale catastrophes for which losses tend to be correlated. In other

words, the terrorist's objective is to inflict damage that results in thousands of concurrent losses whose aggregate cost reaches staggering sums. If too much of this risk is covered by too few insurers, a single event could bankrupt a company, leaving it unable to pay claims. For this reason, insurers prudently attempt to avoid overexposure to extreme events such as terrorism, earthquakes, and hurricanes.

Because the frequency and magnitude of terrorist attacks is less predictable than natural disasters, the need to avoid overexposure to this maddeningly capricious risk is especially great. Public policy should therefore attempt to establish conditions under which many different insurers are capable of bearing a portion of terrorism risk. Maintaining a government reinsurance backstop is essential to achieving that objective. **RF**

Charles M. Chamness is President and CEO of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, a trade association of more than 1,400 member companies.

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Dynamic Scoring:

The Time is Now.

WILLIAM W. BEACH

It is hard to find any serious economist who would argue that the federal government's tax and spending policies make no difference to U.S. economic performance.

Indeed, all across the political spectrum and throughout the leading schools of economic thought, a broad consensus exists that what governments do with tax dollars and how they raise those revenues matters in the larger, dynamic, economic world.

Thus, one would suppose that President George W. Bush's call for a new Dynamic Analysis Division in the Department of Treasury's Office of Tax Analysis would be met with overwhelming approval. After all, the new division's purpose is to advise the President and key policy makers on how proposed tax policy changes would affect economic activity and to use the latest advances in economic modeling to prepare that advice.

This new division may also be laying the groundwork for dynamic scoring, which is a revenue estimation technique that uses models of the U.S. economy in conjunction with so-called static, non-economic models to estimate revenue change. That's good news, if you believe that better government results from improving the information policy makers get when they are deciding on competing choices. It is even better news when one realizes that dynamic scoring not only involves more experts in the policymaking process, but provides engaged citizens, who are now outside of the "secret chambers" of policy formation, a better ability to see into the process, itself. The result is better tax policy and more transparent government by including more economics in our tax policy work.

The only criticism to greet this wholly sensible move toward better tax policy has focused on the likelihood that creating this division for dynamic or economic analysis does, indeed, constitute a major step toward dynamic scoring. Those analysts who worry

about dynamic scoring base their concern in large part on a suspicion that the only reason for implementing this technique is to show that tax cuts cost less than current official estimates. For example, a static, non-economic tax model says that a tax rate reduction might cause the government to lose \$25 billion dollars, but a dynamic score that includes economic activity might estimate the revenue loss at only \$12 billion, because a stronger economy produced more taxable income than the static model assumed.

At a deeper level, opponents of dynamic scoring generally also oppose tax policy changes that focus primarily on the after-tax price of labor and capital, which most economists believe are the crucial connectors

between tax policy and the economy. They favor instead targeted tax cuts, or tax credits and deductions that subsidize certain types of economic and social behavior over others.

These critics believe that if the government were to adopt dynamic scoring, the economic models would show that targeted tax cuts do little for the economy when compared with across-the-board rate reductions on labor and capital income. This showing might induce policy makers to abandon targeted tax cuts in favor of more broadly applied tax policy changes (like the 2001 and 2003 Bush tax cuts).

No one knows, of course, what policymakers will do, even when they possess the very best analytical tools. This we do know, however: the standard, conventional or static tax models

that are used today by the official revenue estimators in Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) and the Congressional Budget Office are highly inaccurate because they do not include the economic effects of tax policy changes. It is this record of inaccuracy and, thus, bad policy advice which has fueled the interest in dynamic analysis and scoring and will, I believe, lead to the inevitable adoption of dynamic scoring techniques.

In the real world, we know that businesses and consumers will respond to both tax cuts and tax hikes, and they do so in fairly predictable ways. Tax cuts spur investment, which spurs hiring, which spurs additional payroll taxes – and that leads to a positive feed-

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Dynamic Scoring:

Not so Fast!

RUDOLPH G. PENNER

Advocates for pro-growth tax cuts are frustrated.

They are frustrated because formal revenue loss estimates used by Congress during the budget process ignore revenues recouped from the increase in economic activity which occurs as a result of the pro-growth tax cuts. Thus, formal revenue estimates tend to exaggerate a pro-growth tax cut's negative effects on the budget deficit. This is obviously illogical, but those who are frustrated and want the error corrected should be cautious. They may be cursed by getting what they wished for.

The fact of the matter is that economists differ significantly in their assessment of the effects of tax cuts. A good number of economists also believe that more research into these effects — also referred to as dynamic analysis — may narrow some of the differences in these assessments, and that new research should definitely be encouraged. These economists should be happy, for that is exactly what's happening.

The president's 2007 budget would establish a Division on Dynamic Analysis in the U. S. Treasury. The establishment of this office follows up on the decision of the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) to provide a full dynamic analysis of the 2003 tax bill. The JCT has done similar studies of other tax options, as well. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) also routinely conducts dynamic analyses. The dynamics of the president's budget are analyzed annually, and numerous papers study the economic effects of different tax and spending policies. Of course, in these cases, dynamic analysis is conducted for informational purposes only and plays no formal role in Congressional budgeting.

Formal, static scoring is used to enforce budget discipline. For example, the Congress's budget may set a limit on revenue losses. Analysts from the JCT

or CBO then evaluate tax policy changes, and if the estimated revenue loss exceeds the limit, the legislation is subject to a point of order that can only be overcome by 60 votes in the Senate. Formal scoring is said to be static, because tax policy's effects on macroeconomic variables such as gross domestic product (GDP) and the consumer price index (CPI) are not considered. However, not all effects on individual behavior are ignored. If, for example, the Congress is considering a cut in the gasoline excise tax, the revenue estimate will assume that the demand for gasoline will rise as its price falls. It will not, however, consider any effect on the CPI. Thus, the estimate will ignore the deficit reduction from using a lower CPI to index benefit programs and the income tax rate structure.

It seems illogical to ignore such effects, but there are important conceptual, political, and logistical reasons why a more complete analysis would be difficult, if not impossible. Conceptually, the tax cut's effects on economic activity depend crucially on how it is financed. Is it by immediate spending cuts, or spending cuts in the future? Is it by future tax increases, or by more government borrowing? Or is it financed simply by printing more money? To produce a single estimate, analysts would have to decide which of these mechanisms is most likely. That would immediately land them in political hot water, because the Congress gets very annoyed when

their employees forecast future votes on policy issues.

However, there is a more unseemly political problem. Many tax cuts have a negative impact on economic activity. For example, increasing the generosity of the tax treatment of housing will draw investment from more productive activities and, in the process, dampen economic growth. It would bias the policy process terribly to examine positive, but not negative, impacts. One can be sure, though, that Congress will tire of dynamic scoring quickly if negative impacts are made explicit.

But they need not worry. Consistent dynamic scoring is logistically impossible given current

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back effect for government treasuries. Yet it is exactly this kind of feedback effect that static analyses miss.

It happened in the early 1960s, when President Kennedy's plan to cut the top marginal tax rate from 91 percent to 70 percent took effect. Total tax revenues actually climbed 4 percent, despite predictions that the cuts would plunge the country deeply into debt. It happened again when President Reagan cut the top rate from 70 percent to 50 percent in 1981. Economists employing the static models now in use at key government agencies predicted federal revenues would fall by \$330 billion over five years. Instead, they fell by \$79 billion, and the economy boomed.

Even more interesting is the recent revenue growth from capital gains. The JCT forecast revenue declines following the 2003 tax rate reduction. That's exactly what many in official Washington expected, too. However, the recent explosion in capital gains revenues — now well above the \$40 billion forecast — indicates the strong economic reaction that followed the cut in the after-tax price of trading appreciated assets, like stocks and bonds.

In these cases, taxpayers got higher post-tax incomes, expanded economic opportunities and better financial security. The government got a faster-growing economy, more people working, more taxable earnings per worker and, thus, more revenue than "static" estimates had predicted.

Advocates of dynamic scoring must be careful not to oversell its capabilities or benefits. There are legitimate disagreements about which economic models best capture the economic effects of tax policy changes. There also is little reason to believe that tax cuts, even the best ones, will pay for themselves right away through super-nova revenue reflows from a stronger economy. Finally, the technical difficulties of economic modeling mean that this technique should be reserved for only the most important tax issues.

Even so, we get better, more transparent government by encouraging the introduction of more economics into the evaluation of tax policy choices and the occasional use of dynamic scoring models to advise policy makers on the really big tax bills. Better government and better tax policy is, I believe, a winning combination of benefits that assures the widespread adoption of dynamic analysis and scoring. **RF**

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technology. Scoring is a hectic process. The CBO and JCT produce hundreds of scores each year. Congress always wants scores instantaneously, and analysts often work through the night to keep them happy. Dynamic scoring would force analysts to make many more judgment calls than they do today. Quality control would be difficult, and that implies a high risk that ideological biases will pollute the analysis. Even if that doesn't happen, dynamic analysis would be just as logically inconsistent as static analysis.

As it stands now, all analysts work from the same assumptions regarding the GDP, CPI, and other macroeconomic variables. But under dynamic scoring, analyst A may decide that provision 203(c) of a tax bill raises the GDP. Theoretically, that probably should affect the score provided by analyst B for section 413(d) of that same bill. But what if analyst B decides that his provision reduces GDP? Analyst A should then redo her estimate, but she probably won't have time. The problem grows exponentially, because dozens of analysts may be working on tax and spending proposals simultaneously, all changing macro variables at will and using inconsistent assumptions without the full knowledge of anyone in authority.

There may come a day when there is sufficient agreement about dynamic effects to automate the process using powerful computers. But we are many decades from such technology. So, for a very long time, the Congress will have to be satisfied with static scoring. That is not so bad. The CBO's dynamic analysis suggests that static scoring is usually pretty accurate. The middle of their wide range of estimates of the dynamic effects of a 10 percent income tax rate cut implies that static analysis overstates the increase in the deficit by less than 14 percent over a 10-year period.

Oratory praising the beneficial effects of tax cuts may be more effective when unrestrained by such analysis. **RF**

Rudolph G. Penner is a Senior Fellow at the Urban Institute and a former director of the Congressional Budget Office.

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to take them seriously. When we stop caring urgently about winning the debate as well as the vote, we lose confidence in our accomplishments, and even victories seem a little hollow. We shouldn't be satisfied with winning just because we have more votes; we want to win because we're right on the merits as well.

I'm hopeful the lessons I've learned over the last 15 years will serve our Conference well. When I served as Chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, we worked from the ground-up on every major piece of legislation we moved. We developed principles that guided us through the entire process; asked the tough questions about policy, message, and where our support would be; and we sought bipartisan support without sacrificing Republican principles. When we asked Members to take tough votes, we provided them with press and coalitions support in their districts. Our victories were the products of the same extensive planning, Member outreach, press and coalitions support I will bring to the entire Conference.

In the end, I see a tremendous opportunity for House Republicans to recapture the energy, spirit, and creativity of the early years of our majority. During my tenure, the success of our ideas, our principles, and our Members will come first. As a result, the final answer to the "What do you think..." questions won't simply be my personal preference — it will come from a united House Republican Conference. RF

John Boehner represents the 8th District of Ohio in the House of Representatives and is the House Majority Leader.

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Politics Never Sounded So Good.

After seven years, *The West Wing* calls it quits.

ROBERT J. THOMPSON

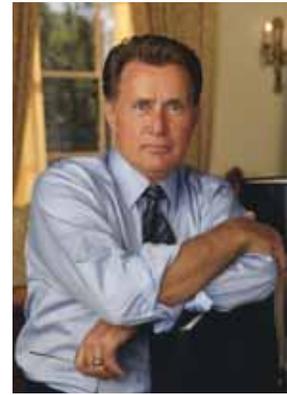
We wring our hands in this third century of the American Experiment. More of us, we're told, can identify Paris Hilton than Paris, France. Frothy celebrity magazines thrive while serious political journals struggle. Citizens seem more excited about voting for the American Idol than the American President. Entertainment trumps civic engagement; staying amused is more appealing than staying informed; and in the struggle for the American soul, Hollywood, not Washington, seems to have been our capital for a long time now. Perhaps it's because Hollywood knows how to talk. In the ancient old art of rhetoric, Hollywood has Washington beat hands down — even when it's telling stories about Washington.

What was so compelling about *The West Wing* wasn't its politics, but the way its characters talked about politics. Their speech was literate, intelligent, and sophisticated; open to nuance and ambiguity. Sure, the orations of President Bartlet (Martin Sheen) and the monologues of his staff could be melodramatic, overwrought, idealistically naïve, and hyperbolic. But they were also usually convincing and always refreshingly candid. And it's not like Cicero, Lincoln, or Martin Luther King were adverse to a little melodrama and hyperbole. Public political communication is a rhetorical performance — an act of persuasion.

More than anything, *The West Wing* was about language, and how to find language with which to talk about politics with vision and sincerity in a nation where cynicism has been metastasizing since Vietnam, Watergate, Monica, and beyond.

More than anything, *The West Wing* was about language, and how to find language with which to talk about politics with vision and sincerity in a nation where cynicism has been metastasizing since Vietnam, Watergate, Monica, and beyond. Remarkably, *The West Wing* present-

ed government as something noble, civic life as something to be proud of. An episode in the fall of 2000 actually ended with the whole staff repeating the phrase "God Bless America" in a toast. Wized, thinking citizens in this time between the Clinton impeachment and the



terrorist attacks of September 11 might have been expected to roll their eyes at the Capra-esque jingoism of such a scene, but they didn't. The scene worked. In spite of their hip, ironic, Machiavellian dialogue, the characters on *The West Wing* exhibited an earnestness that seems impossible in the era of Jon Stewart's *Daily Show*, and unlikely since the era of *Laugh-In*.

Around the same time that episode was playing, George W. Bush and Al Gore were engaging in the first of a series of televised debates. Here, the rhetoric wasn't quite so inspiring. The debate offered little in the way of memorable imagery or metaphor. The best one-liner of the night was Bush's, "I'm beginning to think not only did he invent the Internet, he invented the calculator." Needless to say, it was no, "You're no Jack Kennedy." The entire debate revealed a notable poverty of political rhetoric. A good late-night infomercial was better at selling an idea; a taped-delayed Olympic medal ceremony better at eliciting pride of nationhood. A viable language, style, and vocabulary seem very often to elude contemporary American leaders.

People spent a lot of time uncovering and exposing the liberal messages in *The West Wing*, which was kind of like spending time uncovering and exposing the traditional family values in *The Waltons*. *The West Wing* was, after all, a show about a liberal Democratic administration. Its principal characters were liberal Democrats, as were many (but certainly not all) of the people who made the show.

It wasn't just the president and his staff who were articulate on *The West Wing*, however. Their Republican opponents were also masters of the language. If the victories of the superheroes are to mean anything, of course, they have to do battle with adversaries that are worthy of the fight. Arch-Republican and recurring character Ainsley Hayes (Emily Procter) was such an adversary. She could deliver pitch-perfect oratorical flourishes that left her

Democratic listeners speechless on more than one occasion. In the presidential election campaign of the final season, the Republican candidate Arnold Vinick (Alan Alda), has proven a formidable opponent indeed, his rhetorical skills matching, if not surpassing, his adversary in the live debate that aired last November.

As for the larger claims made by fans of *The West Wing*, we should tread carefully. It isn't a civics lesson. One should no more turn to *The West Wing* to learn about presidential politics, policy, and procedures than one should turn to *ER* to learn about emergency surgery or to Shakespeare to learn about the reign of Richard III. Sure, some insights may be gleaned from these sources, but they are all, in the end, fiction and fantasy.

Political rhetoric at its best is supposed to move its audience — to engage them, to make them care, to make them interested. Much political speech today doesn't do that. It succeeds only in making the other side angry. Television is often blamed for the “dumbing down” of political discourse, but the political discourse we heard on *The West Wing* was usually a lot

more intelligent and complex than what we hear in actual political speeches, even big and important ones.

In this regard, perhaps it could also be argued that *The West Wing* set the bar too high when it came to American politics. It raised our expectations of how public officials should talk, only to have these same expectations lowered when we realized that politicians in real life are not nearly as eloquent as the actors who play them on TV.

While this last point is obviously debatable, one thing is certain — Hollywood and Washington are both in the business of communicating with our nation's citizens. Washington, these days, just isn't very good at it. RF

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Lincoln, King and Scripture

LARRY R. HAYWARD

When Americans marked the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr., earlier this year, we were paying tribute to two leaders who did more to advance the causes of equality, human dignity, and civil rights in this country than perhaps any other Americans.

We were also paying tribute to two leaders who found their source of strength in one common place – scripture. As we reflect on their lives and consider how their actions helped shape our world, it might also be worthwhile to reflect on how their use of scripture helped unify the nation, and how the example they set remains highly relevant today.

American history has been marked by one glaring contradiction – slavery – followed by its godchild – segregation. While many defenders of slavery came from the ranks of learned Protestant clergy, particularly in the South, Christianity had a significant role in eradicating slavery – in its first stage, one hundred years after our founding; in its second stage, another hundred years later.

During the first stage, the language and cadences of scripture, which had been used to justify slavery, played a significant role in its elimination. Lincoln’s use of scriptural language, perhaps best exemplified in his Second Inaugural Address, is significant in this regard:

“Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other.”

“It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged.”

“Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue...as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be

At the deepest, most personal level, Lincoln and King affirmed that the opportunity for individuals to live freely and flourish is a — if not the — fundamental promise and premise of American life.



said ‘the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’”

These most remembered phrases operate at a mythical level. They give voice to the idea that a nation cannot be free as long as some of its citizens are enslaved. This combination of community and individualism marks American society at its best.

A century later, scripture played an equally significant role in eradicating segregation through the voice of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His famous “I Have A Dream” speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, is resplendent with Biblical language and images:

“We are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until ‘justice rolls down like waters, and righteous like a mighty stream.’”

“I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; ‘and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.’”

King’s most memorable passage, which emerges from these Biblical images, leans toward individualism as a constitutive element of community in America:

“I have a dream that one day my four children will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Lincoln and King used Biblical language that spoke to community. Their language transcended differences, religious and otherwise. At the deepest, most personal level, Lincoln and King affirmed that the opportunity for individuals to live freely and flourish is a — if not the — fundamental promise and premise of American life. These two speeches of these two leaders are certainly among the most his-

torically significant uses of scripture in American history.

The reason their use of scripture was so powerful is that it addressed a fundamental dimension of American culture – one that is spiritual and existential. Their use of scripture was much deeper than the way today’s political parties and religious camps volley individual verses across the net at one another – with great intensity – seeking to score political or theological points and drive one another out of the game.

The capacity to give voice to individualism is crucial to Americans. But at our best, we recognize that for individualism to flourish, communities must be healthy.

Lincoln and King captured this creative balance in their use of scripture. For our nation to flourish, we must capture the balance between individualism and community. For our nation to flourish “under God,” we would benefit by looking at the way Lincoln and King used scripture.

Indeed, whoever aspires to lead our nation at this crucial point in our history – a time when Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have come to play such an important role in our domestic and international affairs – needs to affirm the individualism so important to our heritage in a way that lifts the community as the context in which individuals can flourish.

Lincoln and King affirmed that premise in a way that resonated and shaped American history. Despite the plethora of religious books in the marketplace and of religious leaders influencing national policy, no political or religious leader of recent decades has connected scripture to the creative tension between individualism and community that marks our society.

I hope someone will. Soon. RF

Larry R. Hayward is the Pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

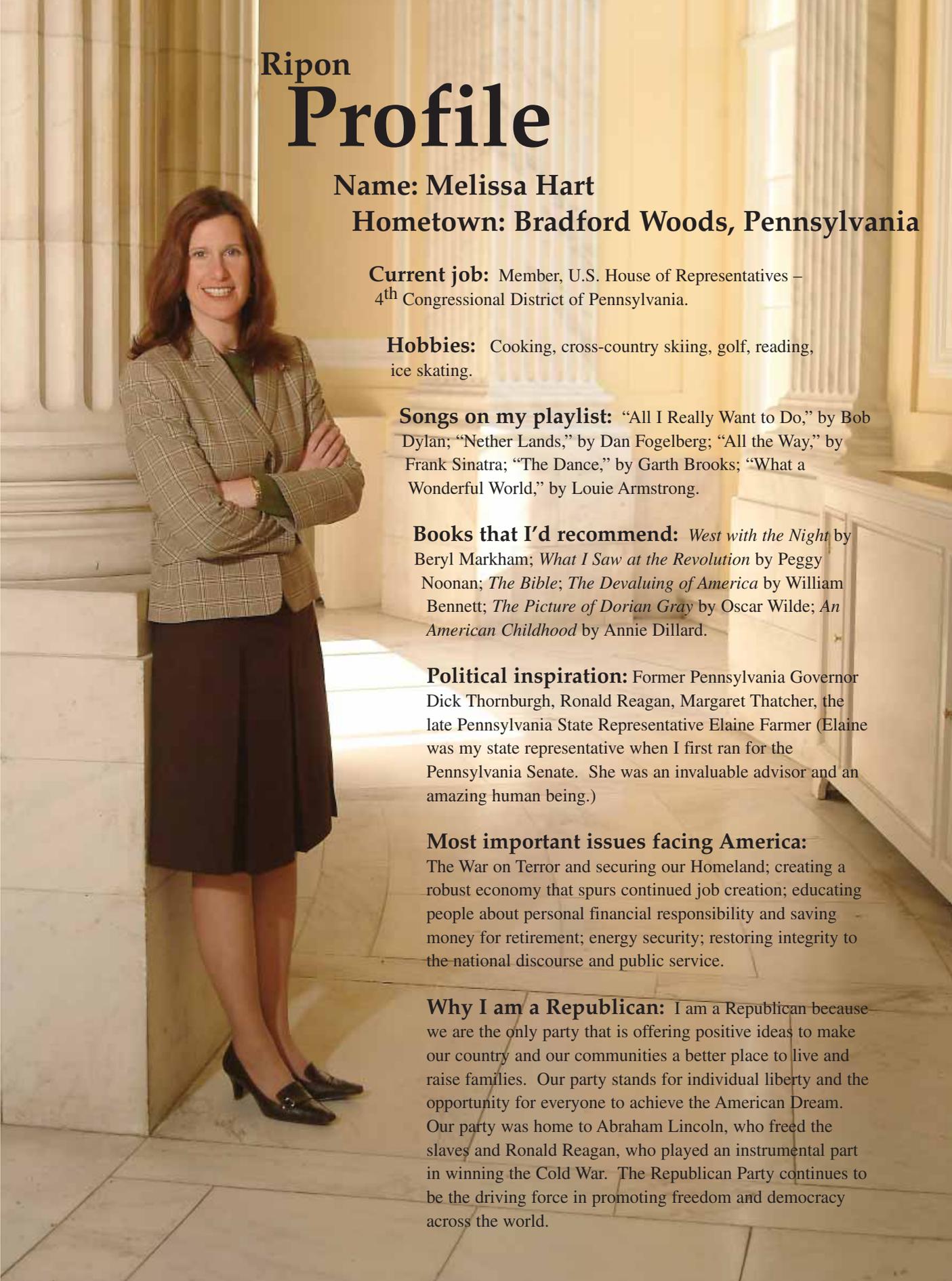


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Ripon Profile

Name: Melissa Hart

Hometown: Bradford Woods, Pennsylvania

Current job: Member, U.S. House of Representatives –
4th Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

Hobbies: Cooking, cross-country skiing, golf, reading,
ice skating.

Songs on my playlist: “All I Really Want to Do,” by Bob
Dylan; “Nether Lands,” by Dan Fogelberg; “All the Way,” by
Frank Sinatra; “The Dance,” by Garth Brooks; “What a
Wonderful World,” by Louie Armstrong.

Books that I’d recommend: *West with the Night* by
Beryl Markham; *What I Saw at the Revolution* by Peggy
N Noonan; *The Bible; The Devaluing of America* by William
Bennett; *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde; *An
American Childhood* by Annie Dillard.

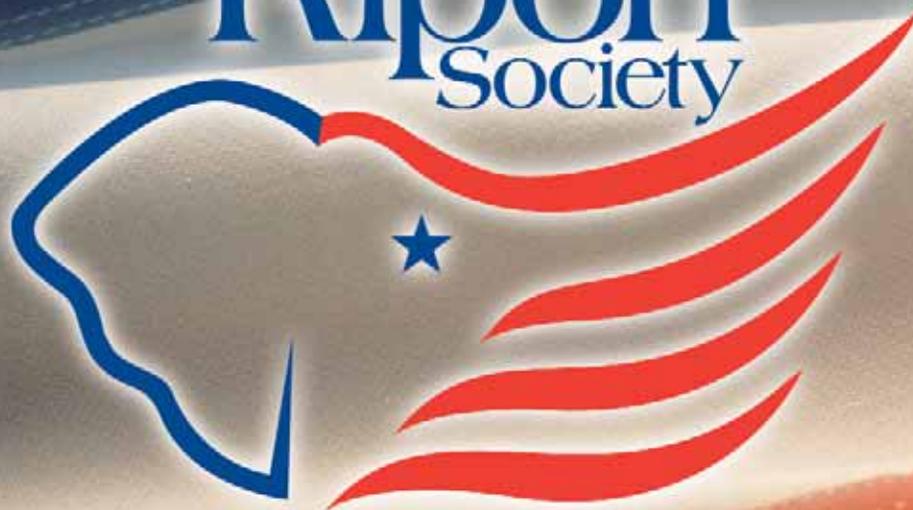
Political inspiration: Former Pennsylvania Governor
Dick Thornburgh, Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, the
late Pennsylvania State Representative Elaine Farmer (Elaine
was my state representative when I first ran for the
Pennsylvania Senate. She was an invaluable advisor and an
amazing human being.)

Most important issues facing America:

The War on Terror and securing our Homeland; creating a
robust economy that spurs continued job creation; educating
people about personal financial responsibility and saving
money for retirement; energy security; restoring integrity to
the national discourse and public service.

Why I am a Republican: I am a Republican because
we are the only party that is offering positive ideas to make
our country and our communities a better place to live and
raise families. Our party stands for individual liberty and the
opportunity for everyone to achieve the American Dream.
Our party was home to Abraham Lincoln, who freed the
slaves and Ronald Reagan, who played an instrumental part
in winning the Cold War. The Republican Party continues to
be the driving force in promoting freedom and democracy
across the world.

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Society



Growing the Republican Majority

The Ripon Society is one of the country's leading public policy and research organizations, dedicated to advancing the principles of responsible government, equality of opportunity for all citizens and winning the war on global terrorism. Join us as we promote many of the key ideas and political strategies that will be pivotal to the Republican agenda during this important year.

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The Party Line:

Great Republican Quotes from Lincoln to Reagan and Bush.

“The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot do as well for themselves in their separate and individual capacities.”

*Abraham Lincoln
Speeches & Writings
1832-1858*

“Ideas are the great warriors of the world, and a war that has no ideas behind it is simple brutality.”

*James A. Garfield
Maxims of James
Abram Garfield
1880*

“There is no one thing which does so much to bring about a reduction of wages and to injure the American wage earner more as the unlimited introduction of cheap, foreign labor through unrestricted immigration.”

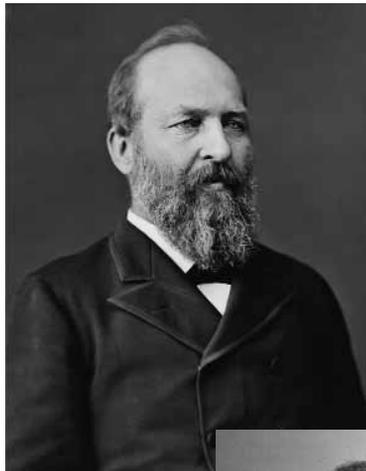
*Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr.
Speech in the U.S. Senate
August 16, 1896*

“Into the life of every generation comes some opportunity for great public good.”

*Robert La Follette
Accepting Nomination for Governor
August 8, 1900*

“The mother is the one supreme asset of national life; she is more important by far than the successful statesman, or businessman, or artist or scientist.”

*President Theodore Roosevelt
Speech in Washington, DC
March 10, 1908*



James A. Garfield



Katherine St. George

“It must be remembered that the welfare of our people is not recorded on the financial pages of the newspapers. It cannot be measured in stock market prices. The real test is to be found in the ability of the average American to engage in business, to obtain a job, to be a self-supporting and a self-respecting member of his community.”

*Alf Landon
July 23, 1936*

“Peace is never handed to a nation on a platter of complacency. Peace must be waged. Peace must be earned.”

*U.S. Rep. Katherine St. George (NY)
Chicago, IL
July 9, 1952*

“A responsible patriotism does not deny – but does demand – a responsible partisanship. For the way a party speaks and acts can – and should – inspire the way a nation speaks and acts.”

*Nelson Rockefeller
June 8, 1960*

“Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will or moral courage of free men and women.”

*President Ronald Reagan
First Inaugural Address
January 27, 1981*

“Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.”

*President George W. Bush
Speech before Joint Session of Congress
September 20, 2001*

From the Archives

*An editorial, printed verbatim from the
March/April 1966 edition of the Ripon Forum:*

Political Scene

Last month forty-five different House Republicans joined in groups of varying size to issue two in-depth statements, one on the draft, the other on foreign aid; eighteen introduced a Civil Rights Law Enforcement Act of major significance. The spearhead for this initiative was once again the Wednesday Group of moderate Republicans, joined in the draft study by Congressmen John Anderson (Ill.), Tom Curtis (Mo.), Albert Quie (Minn.) and Don Rumsfeld (Ill.)

It is good to see initiative among Congressional Republicans, in spite of glaring non-leadership at the top. At long last, it appears, Republicans who want the GOP to have the opportunity someday to solve the nation's problem have set about themselves to convince the voters that Republicans have something worthwhile to say.

Foreign Aid

The statement on foreign aid is the product of a six-month study by minority members of the Foreign Affairs and Appropriations Committees. Their analysis is comprehensive and provocative. Pointing out that "if we made no effort to guide the revolution of rising expectations in a peaceful course toward political stability and economic prosperity, we will soon have to choose between 'war of national liberation' everywhere or an illusory isolation in a world where the cause of freedom seems doomed to failure," the Congressmen assert that "[a]n economic infrastructure cannot provide meaningful human progress unless it springs from a vibrant human infrastructure."

Specifically, the Republicans recommend defined criteria to assure that aid recipients are encouraging broad popular participation in government and development, and are taking steps to minimize inefficiency. Emphasizing the short as well as the long term role education must play, the statement calls for: the establishment of a Latin American Civil Service Academy funded in part by the U.S.; a Latin

American Institute for Democratic Development under the joint sponsorship of the Republicans and Democratic Parties; technical and management training by U.S. business abroad; expanded links between U.S. labor unions and workers in the developing countries; and increased efforts by U.S. farm and agriculture workers' organizations to export agricultural modernization.

Urging a greater role for the private sector of the U.S. economy, the Congressmen recommend: the loan by business (at its own expense) of junior executive talent to AID on a rotating 1-year basis; Congressional consideration of the Watson Committee recommendations to increase U.S. investment in the developing countries; and greater use of U.S. private investment to fund and manage specific projects, thereby freeing AID to concentrate on the overall political administration of development.

Perhaps the most innovative proposal is that the U.S. states establish aid programs to individual countries in Latin America by enlisting the state's business, academic and professional communities' support of a state coordinated program.

The thrust of the analysis is that U.S. foreign aid must be used aggressively rather than as an exercise in goodwill. The concrete recommendations coalesce in a plea for recognition of an obvious fact Democratic administrations insist on ignoring; that there are some things the federal government cannot do better. It is shortsighted to think that AID officials are always more competent than practicing businessmen and lawyers to forge the tools of economic development. Conversely, the statement recognizes that political supervision and overall administration by AID is essential.

The Draft

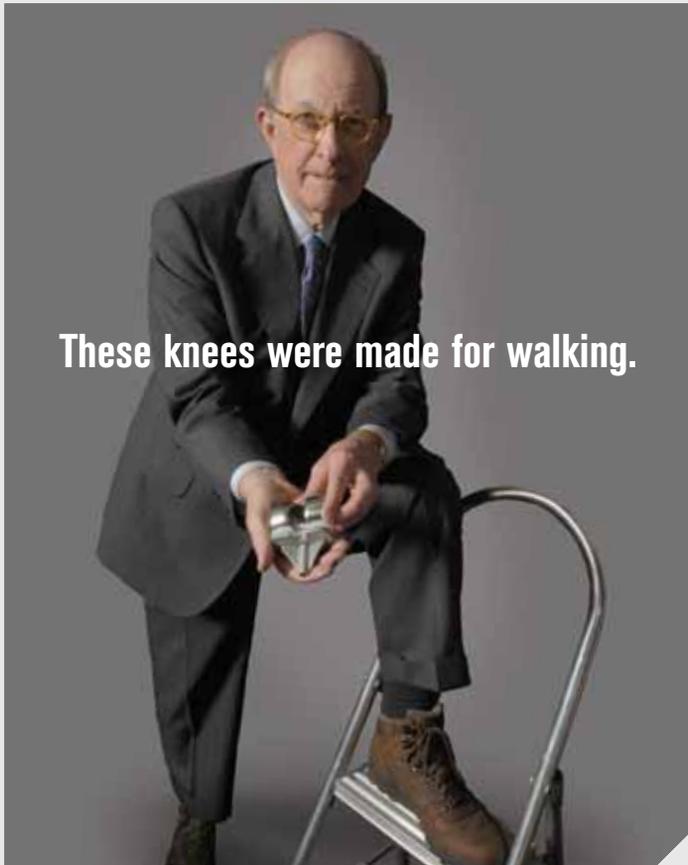
The statement calling for an immediate Congressional investigation of the draft and the methods used to persuade our allies to supply manpower to Vietnam and Southeast Asia received extensive coverage by national news media. It charges inequities in the ad hoc prescription of limits on age, mental and physical capacity, and inequities in the operation ill-defined guidelines for student deferment. It charged bureaucratic inefficiency in the processing of papers, and Defense Department inefficiency in the employment of drafted service personnel on jobs (such as golf course maintenance and officer club bartending) which should be held by civilians.

Finally, the Congressman point out that a year ago the President directed the Secretary of Defense to undertake a study of the Selective Service System and to provide precise recommendations on how the service manpower needs of the nation could best be met. The completed study, which General Hershey has never seen, sits unpublicized on Mr. McNamara's desk.

And Civil Rights

The introduction by Republican Congressmen of the Civil Rights Law Enforcement Act of 1966 is a notable event in the Party's history. The legislators recognize that courts are handicapped by inadequate, imprecise and antiquated criminal statutes. With studied deference to the federal system they also recognize that the scope of the Fourteenth Amendment is broad enough to accommodate legislation aimed at: providing an objective and equitable standard for jury selection; protecting civil rights workers from privately organized violence; and making governmental employers civilly liable in damages for acts

of violence committed by public officials. Recent Supreme Court opinions in the Guest and Price cases would seem to support this judgment. The progress of the bill should be watched with care; we intend to do so. **RF**



These knees were made for walking.



Mike Deaver. Bethesda, Maryland. For more than 20 years Mike Deaver stood alongside Ronald Reagan, trusted counsel to one of America's most beloved and effective political leaders. By 2000, he could barely stand on his own without debilitating pain. Mike's knees were hobbled by osteoarthritis, and he was seriously considering leaving his successful career as communications counsel to CEOs and political leaders across the globe.

Fortunately, innovative medical technology allowed Mike's doctor to replace his diseased knee joints with prosthetic knees. Like millions of Americans, this procedure put Mike back on his feet – and let him keep doing the work he loves.

Whether giving doctors the tools to detect disease early or opening new doors for patients like Mike Deaver, medical technology creates new possibilities for millions of people. So they can continue sharing their wisdom with us all.



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The Ripon Society is a research and policy organization located in Washington, D.C. There are National Associate members throughout the United States.

(McLaughlin, continued from page 7)
immigrants' hands — 73 percent favor prohibiting states from issuing driver's licenses to illegal immigrants. Only 19 percent thought giving undocumented workers driver's licenses would encourage more car insurance and driver testing.

Keeping gangs out of schools — 70 percent favor increasing federal funding to fight against gangs in schools who are linked to international drug cartels. Only 21 percent thought this was an unnecessary expansion into local police jurisdiction.

Encouraging people to conserve land — 69 percent favor federal tax incentives to individuals and businesses for donating their privately owned open space for environmental conservation.

Putting an end to frivolous lawsuits — 68 percent favor stopping frivolous lawsuits against doctors by capping medical malpractice awards at \$250,000 in economic damages. Only 26 percent would give patients unlimited rights to sue their doctor or hospital.

Improving electronic medical recordkeeping — 61 percent favor setting a federal date for all doctors and hospitals to keep electronic medical records. Only 26 percent opposed it because it would be easier to invade private medical records.

Helping parents save for college — 61 percent favor providing parents with a \$1,000 educational tax credit to be used for their child's educational expenses. Only 32 percent preferred increasing federal spending on government programs to assist public schools over the tax credit.

The consensus for these issues is so broad and so wide, that they can certainly attract support from a majority of suburban voters. Nine of these issues poll over 80 percent support. Another eight issues receive an over 60 percent majority. If political strategy is based upon significant public opinion numbers, it would be hard to develop a more popular agenda.

The real challenge, of course, will be to make progress on these issues before November. Time is running short. Work needs to begin immediately to get this done. Legislation needs to be strategically introduced in the House in the spring and early summer, and then promoted by the membership when they return to their districts for their August work period. Likewise, Republicans also need to craft a comprehensive communications strategy to sell this plan for what it is — a positive effort to make government work.

Implemented successfully, the Democrat opposition will have only two real choices: 1) adopt and pass

this legislation, which will give the Republican majority real accomplishments to point to in the election; or, 2) fight a losing battle against this agenda, which in turn will give the GOP important contrast issues in November.

For Republicans, it's a win-win proposition either way, which is why the Suburban Agenda is not only the kind of plan parties win elections with, but the kind of plan parties in power need to retain and build upon their majority. RF

John McLaughlin is the CEO of McLaughlin and Associates.

(Johnson, continued from page 9)

care quality and to empower our families to be better health care consumers.

Of course, improving the quality of our health care would be in vain if suburban families cannot afford that care in the first place. I was proud to offer the law creating the state children's health insurance plan (SCHIP) in the House, and it has made health care more affordable and accessible for millions of children in the last nine years.

In the short term, however, we can do more to make sure all children eligible for public safety net health programs like SCHIP are enrolled in them. Studies show that families of these children are not aware that these programs are available to them. Along with Dr. Bill Frist in the Senate, I have introduced in the House the "Covering Kids Act," legislation authorizing \$100 million in federal grants to states, schools, community and non-profit groups to conduct the creative outreach that we know works.

For suburban families with so often two parents working, the goal of maintaining family health, minimizing work disruptions and preventing illness can be far more effectively accomplished with advanced, broadly disseminated health information and health care that is more portable and affordable.

Concerns about cost and quality demand that we continue working to make such a system a reality for families in every community across America. RF

Nancy Johnson represents the 5th District of Connecticut in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Maybe Clinton was right.

(...not about school uniforms and the V-chip, but about smart government initiatives in a small government world.)

Ten years ago this past January, Bill Clinton delivered his State of the Union Address in which he famously declared that “The era of big government is over.” In this same speech, he also reiterated his support for school uniforms and the V-chip.

His endorsement of these two initiatives won him praise and criticism from both sides of the aisle. It also helped set the stage for a run of political successes over the next 10 months that culminated not only in his victory over Bob Dole in November, but in Democrats picking up seats in Congress, as well.

During this period, President Clinton pushed forward with a series of proposals intended to help show that he was in touch with the American people and was working on their concerns. He talked about tuition tax credits for college students, proposed that workers be able to take time off instead of extra pay for overtime, and went after deadbeat dads by garnishing their federal benefits and plastering their mugshots in post offices across the country.

In his book, *Behind the Oval Office*, former Clinton advisor Dick Morris described these initiatives as being part of a positive values agenda that sought to put Republicans on the defensive. “Trivialized in the press as ‘small bore,’” Morris wrote, “it [the values agenda] nevertheless showed voters what an activist President could do for the average person with the help of Congress and often without it.”

Clinton’s support for these “small bore” initiatives also showed voters something else – mainly, how a President or political party could express their support for limited government and pursue an activist government agenda, too. It was a balancing act Republicans, at the time at least, never quite understood. Indeed, in the years after they took control of Congress in 1994, GOP rhetoric and talking points focused almost exclusively on the need to cut the size of government. While this appealed to the party’s

base, it failed to recognize that most Americans do not just want smaller government. They want smarter government, as well.

Bill Clinton recognized this. So, too, did George W. Bush, who, when he ran for President as a compassionate conservative in 1999, stated that, “Government should do a few things, and do them well.” Some might argue that some of the President’s problems these days stem from the fact that he seems to have forgotten these words. Under his administration, government has gotten larger, not smaller. And, given the response to Hurricane Katrina, it’s safe to

say that most Americans do not perceive the federal government as being very smart.

The challenge for Republicans this November is to change these perceptions. And to do this, they need to put forward positive ideas designed to reaffirm to voters that Republicans are committed to making limited

government more effective. The Suburban Agenda is one such idea. It is a comprehensive effort by House Republicans to make government work without making government bigger. The proposal to establish a Sunset Commission is another idea. It is an attempt to set limits and promote accountability within the Washington bureaucracy – two things that are essential if smaller, smarter government is to succeed.

The key thing for Republicans is to present a positive plan. In his book, Dick Morris referred to this as a “message of relevance.” Maybe that’s the key lesson to take away from the values agenda President Clinton promoted in 1996. It wasn’t about school uniforms. It wasn’t about the V-chip. It wasn’t about any of the initiatives he pushed in his drive for reelection that year. Rather, it was about being relevant – which, when you think about it, is not just smart government, but smart politics, as well.

Louis M. Zickar
Editor, Ripon Forum





spirit

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