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New Poll Shows Kirk Can Be Beat in '06

by John Hmurovic

After two elections in which he received over 60 percent of the vote, no one denies that Republican Congressman Mark Kirk is a formidable candidate in a district that was drawn to make his seat in Congress safer. But a new poll conducted by the Washington, D.C. polling firm Penn, Schoen and Berland shows that despite his past performance and the advantages of incumbency, Mark Kirk is vulnerable in 2006 and can be defeated by a strong Democratic candidate.

Kirk receives a high favorability rating from 10th District residents, but once they begin to hear the details of how Kirk voted in Congress (see "When the Truth Is Told" on page 3), his support drops. It drops even more when they hear about some of the prospective Democratic candidates lining up to oppose him in 2006.

Kirk is being hurt by two factors: the sinking popularity of fellow-Republican, President George W. Bush; and by his own votes on a variety of issues. Specifically, the poll, which was taken in late September, shows:

- President Bush has a 40 percent approval rating in the 10th District, with only 31 percent of voters feeling the country is headed in the right direction. Bush's support in the District has dropped since



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Tenth News

NOVEMBER 2005 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 2, Edition 11

Feingold Says Hard Work Is Key to Political Landscape Change

by Ross Nickow

It was a magical autumn afternoon. Chicago hosted a World Series for the first time since 1959. The nation awaited word of imminent indictments against high-level administration officials as the Republican Party continued its spiral downward toward self-destruction. Meanwhile, in Illinois' 10th Congressional District, a maverick senator appeared before hundreds of devoted Democrats working toward the common goal of electing Democrats to recapture control of Congress in 2006.

United States Senator and potential Presidential hopeful Russ Feingold (D-Wisconsin) was the keynote speaker on October 23 at the second annual fundraiser for the Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats. More than 200 Democrats ignored the chilling rain and jammed a north suburban home to hear from the man who co-authored the McCain/Feingold Federal Campaign Finance Law, cast the single vote in the Senate against the Patriot Act and repeatedly called for setting a target date for U.S. troops to withdraw from Iraq.

Feingold said the enthusiasm and size of the crowd were "extremely encouraging." He said the Tenth Dems could be counted on to be "always dedicated to the cause." Still regretful that he is not working for a President John Kerry, Feingold remarked, "That's the tragic reality." Hopefully, he added, "We can turn it around." Feingold thanked Tenth Dems members who traveled to Wisconsin last year to help his reelection campaign.



U.S. Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin spoke to Tenth Dems members about the future of the Democratic Party, issues troubling voters throughout the nation and the tragedy of the Iraq War.

Traveling recently to traditionally Republican areas around the country and happily finding many people who share his progressive vision, Feingold stressed the importance for Democrats to contest every state. "We need to bring them into the fold," he declared. "They are ready to fight." He identified the three most salient issues among voters today as health care coverage, job loss and energy independence.

Noting the number and fervor of the crowd at the fundraiser, Feingold said he sees a chance to win a Democratic seat in Congress in Illinois' 10th District. "Mark Kirk is no slouch," he said. "But if I were him, my knees would be knocking. I would be worried."

Continued on page 8

Obama: Dems Need to Stick to Guns on Core Values

by Mark Paul

U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois), has already emerged as one of the leading voices of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. Although Obama voted against confirming John Roberts, he responded on the *Daily Kos* Internet blog to harsh criticism of Senate colleagues who voted to confirm with a strong defense posted on his diary on the Internet blog. It is an eloquent reply to many progressives who tie themselves into rhetorical knots that lead to losing elections. As we gird ourselves to defeat a Republican congressman, we ignore Sen. Obama at our peril.

Here is an edited version of his post, which can be found at <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2005/9/30/102745/165>:

There is one way, over the long haul, to guarantee the appointment of judges that are sensitive to issues of social justice, and that is to win the right to appoint them by recapturing the presidency and the Senate. ... I am convinced that, our mutual frustrations and strongly held beliefs notwithstanding, the strategy driving much of Democratic advocacy, and the tone of much of our rhetoric, is an impediment to creating a workable progressive majority in this country.



According to the storyline that drives many advocacy groups and Democratic activists ... we are up against a sharply partisan, radically conservative, take-no-prisoners Republican party. ... In order to beat them, it is necessary for Democrats to get some backbone, give as good as they get, brook no compromise, drive out Democrats who are interested in "appeasing" the right wing, and enforce a more clearly progressive agenda. The country, finally knowing what we stand for and seeing a sharp contrast, will rally to our side and thereby usher in a new progressive era.

I think this perspective misreads the American people. From traveling throughout Illinois and more recently around the country, I can tell you that Americans are suspicious of labels and suspicious of jargon. They don't think George Bush is mean-spirited or prejudiced, but have become aware that his administration is irresponsible and often incompetent. They don't think that corporations are inherently evil (a lot of them

work in corporations), but they recognize that big business, unchecked, can fix the game to the detriment of working people and small entrepreneurs. They don't think America is an imperialist brute, but are angry that the case to invade Iraq was exaggerated, are worried that we have unnecessarily alienated existing and potential allies around the world, and are ashamed by events like those at Abu Ghraib which violate our ideals as a country...

Our goal should be to stick to our guns on those core values that make this country great, show a spirit of flexibility and sustained attention that can achieve those goals, and try to create the sort of serious, adult consensus around our problems that can admit Democrats, Republicans and Independents of good will. ... It's a matter of actually having faith in the American people's ability to hear a real and authentic debate about the issues that matter.

My dear friend Paul Simon used to consistently win the votes of much more conservative voters in southern Illinois because he had mastered the art of "disagreeing without being disagreeable," and they trusted him to tell the truth. Similarly, one of Paul Wellstone's greatest strengths was his ability to deliver a scathing rebuke of the Republicans without ever losing his sense of humor and affability.



U.S. Senator Russ Feingold spoke to over 200 guests in a Winnetka home at a fundraiser to help Tenth Dems raise money for its work in the 2006 election. Regarding the congressional race he commented: "If I were Kirk, I would be worried."



The head of the Democratic Party, former Vermont Governor Howard Dean, met with Democrats in Chicago this past month, including some members of Tenth Dems. (Left to right in photo above): Ross Nickow, Glenn Stier, Gov. Dean, Marianne Wood and Lauren Beth Gash.

Poll, continued from page 1

the 2004 election, when he received 47 percent of the District's vote.

- When asked if they would vote for Kirk or for a Democrat in 2006, 45 percent chose Kirk compared to 25 percent for a Democrat. After voters were informed of Kirk's votes on various issues, his support dropped to 35 percent, with 33 percent choosing a Democrat. After they heard details about some of the specific Democratic candidates, Kirk received only 32 percent compared to 40 percent for the Democrats.

"These numbers are very bad for an incumbent," said Craig Smith, the former White House political director under President Clinton and principal at Penn, Schoen and Berland. "When an incumbent is at 50 percent or below for re-elect ... that incumbent is in trouble."

The only Democrat to publicly announce his candidacy is Winnetka attorney Zane Smith, who actually finished ahead of Kirk in the poll (37 percent to 35 percent) after voters heard about Kirk's voting record. Two other potential candidates, teacher Barry Bradford and former White House aide Jay Footlik, came within the margin of error in a match-up against Kirk. Four others are publicly considering a run against Kirk but were not included in the poll: Attorney Clint Krislov; Lake County Board member Angelo Kyle; Dan Seals, a former aide to U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman (D-Connecticut); and David Robin, an actuary and computer software developer who is about to be sworn in as an attorney. There are also others considering a run who have not yet gone public with their interest.

The poll was paid for by Tenth Dems in an attempt to discover how voters would feel about Mark Kirk if given the facts on his voting record. A total of 401 likely voters were surveyed. The margin of error is plus or minus 4.89 percentage points. Penn, Schoen and Berland is one of America's most respected polling firms, with clients like Microsoft, AT&T and Merrill Lynch in the business world, Bill and Hillary Clinton in the political world, as well as government agencies such as the U.S. Department of State, Treasury Department, and Census Bureau.

When the Truth is Told, It Hurts

by John Hmurovic

All of us have received mailings from Congressman Mark Kirk. Many of us have seen his photo in the paper when there is a ribbon needing to be cut at a new bridge, or a first shovel of dirt that needs to be dug for a new road project. We may even have heard about meetings he holds within the 10th District on such issues as gang violence. But take a closer look at what you see and hear from Mark Kirk.

Do you ever hear him talk about some of his votes on the tough issues that are before Congress? Does he address them in his mailings? Does he pose for pictures with recently indicted Congressman Tom DeLay (R-Texas), his political ally? Does he ever hold a meeting in his district on tough issues like Social Security, Iraq or the huge budget deficit that he supports? The answer to all of those questions is "no," and here's the reason why: The Truth Hurts.

A recently completed poll commissioned by Tenth Dems (see "New Poll Shows Kirk Can Be Beat in '06," on page 1) shows that when voters are made aware of how Kirk votes on the key issues before Congress, his support plummets. Below are some of the statements read to voters about Mark Kirk's actual votes, phrased as a campaign ad might read in next year's election, and how they responded when asked if those votes made them more likely or less likely to vote for Kirk.

- Mark Kirk voted with conservative Republicans to intervene in the Terri Schiavo case. Instead of letting those closest to her make medical decisions, he voted to let the government decide her fate.



Less Likely to Vote for Kirk	65%
(Much Less Likely)	40%
More Likely to Vote for Kirk	22%

- Instead of asking tough questions, Mark Kirk was a cheerleader for the war effort and said he knew that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. He continues to say the war was the right thing to do.



Less Likely to Vote for Kirk	60%
(Much Less Likely)	38%
More Likely to Vote for Kirk	27%

- Although he is a strong supporter of the war in Iraq, Mark Kirk voted against increasing funding that would help veterans wounded in that war.



Less Likely to Vote for Kirk	70%
(Much Less Likely)	35%
More Likely to Vote for Kirk	16%

Voters were also asked to respond to his support for big oil companies at the expense of consumers and the environment, and about his support for a prescription drug plan that benefits the huge pharmaceutical companies by banning import of cheaper drugs and prohibiting the government from negotiating for lower prices. Voters were asked about his 87 percent support for President Bush and Tom DeLay; and about his refusal to come back to the district to talk about these and other key issues. In every case, the poll shows that voters changed their minds about Mark Kirk once they heard how he actually votes.

So, when you receive your next mailing from the Congressman, when you next see his picture in the paper, when you read the next article about him, don't expect him to address any controversial topic, any fundamental issue. He can't. His votes, his views, do not reflect the beliefs and values of 10th District residents. Mark Kirk doesn't want you to know, because he realizes that once the truth is told, it hurts.

Mark Kirk: Navy Guy (But Not Always)

by Ron Weiner

Mark Kirk has used every opportunity to let us know about his successful Naval Reserve career. It has always been good resume material for any politician or executive as an example of a unique accomplishment. To be sure, I've put my military achievements on my resume. But Mark Kirk has made quite certain that all of his constituents are continually well-informed as to his.

You may remember how certain he was two years ago about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, because, he told us, as a reserve intelligence officer he was privy to information that the rest of us couldn't be told. Never mind that one of the main tenets of intelligence gathering and analysis is that intelligence information is closely held and is disseminated only to those with the proper security clearance -- and then only on a "need to know" basis. Those of us familiar with the rules and policies of any intelligence service may have wondered then about the Congressman's loose lips and whether or not he was authorized to broadcast that information. I spent much of my Navy active duty time as a crypto-graphics officer with the highest possible security clearances and can remember well the strict adherence to communications security we practiced. I doubt things have changed at all in the past 50 years - - despite Mr. Kirk's position in Congress.

In any case, the information Mr. Kirk was "in on" has, of course, proved to be false and, therefore, could not have come to him by virtue of his "need to know" in the judgment of any responsible intelligence agent or agency.

Clearly, his oft-announced declarations about his special credentials have been sheer bombast and braggadocio.

More recently, Mr. Kirk made much of his promotion to commander, with a picture in his last newsletter showing him being "pinned" with his new rank by none other than President George W. Bush. I must immodestly say that, although retired, I outrank the Congressman by a full gold stripe, and upon official notification of all six of my promotions, I simply went over to the uniform shop, bought the new insignia and "pinned" myself, as did others of my fellow officers when they were promoted. A round of drinks at a nearby bar, or a small group dinner (paid for by the promotee in celebration of the raise in pay), and that was it.

But notice how quiet Mr. Kirk has been after his unconscionable refusal to vote for legislation (HR 1815, Taylor Amendment) that would have provided health care coverage for all Guardsmen and Reservists...who now comprise 40 percent of our total force in Iraq and Afghanistan. Notice his silence after his refusal to support a proposal (HR 2528, Obey Amendment) that would have slightly reduced tax cuts for those earning over \$1 million a year and which would have used that money to improve medical care at VA hospitals, which expect their patient load to double from what it was a decade ago thanks to the war in Iraq that Kirk supported. Notice how quiet he is about the Melancon Amendment to that same bill, which would have shifted money being used for base closings to pay for trauma care, research on prosthetics for wounded soldiers, and provide help for widows and children of soldiers. That bill failed to pass by one vote...Mark Kirk's vote.

How, we must wonder, can this Naval Reserve Officer, so proud and voluble about his own personal military accomplishments, justify turning his back on the present and future needs of all those men and women, reserve and active duty, who are now and have been his comrades-in-arms?

Serving Our Country Also Means Supporting Our Troops

by Ben Struhl

Veterans Day is November 11, and as this anniversary of World War I's Armistice Day approaches we should take a moment to remember all the brave men and women who have served our country in uniform, as well as those who have supported our soldiers and our country in times of war. However, although we can certainly praise Congressman Mark Kirk for the former category, his record in the latter area borders on shameful. Although Kirk, a Naval intelligence officer, is the only member of Congress currently serving in the armed forces, he also has one of the worst records in the House when it comes to votes on veterans' benefits.



Although not all Americans agree on the morality of the Iraq war or the idea that it must be continued, Americans are nearly unanimous in their support for the soldiers serving our country in Iraq. It is rare to find anyone who doesn't feel that military families should have access to good housing and a living wage, or feels that it isn't important that our soldiers have access to clean drinking water. Sadly, however, Kirk is one of those rare few -- his votes speak for themselves.

In 2003, Kirk voted to cut off debate on an amendment that would have increased funding for military family housing, because he felt tax cuts for the wealthy were more important. Not even willing to vote on the amendment itself, Kirk voted to prevent it from ever reaching the House floor. In October 2003, after learning that only 20 percent of U.S. soldiers had access to clean drinking water, Congressman David Obey (D-Wisconsin) proposed an amendment that would have improved access to clean water for U.S. troops in Afghanistan. The amendment would have also extended military health benefits. Even though soldiers were contacting dysentery from the unclean water sources, Kirk provided a key vote against the amendment, which was narrowly defeated.

Even worse, in 2004, Kirk voted against raising pay for all U.S. service personnel by \$1,500, even though such an increase would have only represented \$256 million in an \$87 billion spending bill. The vote was a tie, which means that it did not pass, and that Mark Kirk cast the deciding vote. As a result, many of the families of National Guard members serving in Iraq suffered financially because, unlike full-time soldiers, National Guard members often leave better paying jobs behind when called up to serve. Was Kirk unaware of this, even though he himself is a

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Kirk: Representative of Shell Oil or You?

by George Rosenblit

Tenth District Republican Congressman Mark Kirk's vote ensured passage of a controversial bill providing taxpayer subsidies to the tune of \$3.5 billion to an oil industry already scoring record profits.

The House of Representatives narrowly approved the so-called "Gasoline for America's Security Act of 2005" (H.R. 3893), sponsored by Congressman Joe Barton (R-Texas). Kirk voted for its passage in a close 212-210 vote (Roll Call No. 519). In a shameful abuse of power, the Republican leadership held the five-minute vote open for nearly 45 additional minutes to orchestrate this outcome. Kirk's vote against this bill would have produced a tie vote, which would have killed it. What's wrong with the bill?

The bill does nothing to "provide reliable and affordable energy for the American people," as it claims. It does nothing to ease soaring gas prices. Instead, it grants enormous subsidies to energy companies that are already enjoying record-breaking profits, while doing everything to roll back clean air safeguards.



The bill also seeks to delay existing smog cleanup deadlines until 2015 or beyond. More than 150 million Americans now live in areas where smog levels are high enough to cause serious health problems. The state of Illinois is no exception. There are 23 old, dirty, coal-fired power plants generating electricity in Illinois. The plants generate pollution that can trigger asthma attacks, heart attacks and even death—especially to children and the elderly.

The justifications for the bill's rollbacks of the clean-air deadlines use the false assumption that public health protections prevent companies from investing in additional refining capacity needed to supply an oil-thirsty nation. What do the multinational oil conglomerates do with the enormous profits they have already made from our cash-strapped citizens?

In addition to the clean-air rollbacks, the bill also limits the development of clean fuels. These fuels are highly desirable to drastically reduce the major

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What Others Are Saying About H.R. 3893

The Barton Bill, sponsored by Congressman Joe Barton (R-Texas) and strongly backed by Congressman Tom DeLay (R-Texas), was passed by the House of Representatives by a vote of 212-210. One of those voting for H.R. 3893 was Congressman Mark Kirk, who claims to be an environmentalist. This bill was opposed by almost every major environmental group in the United States, as well as by consumer-rights groups which see its passage as a gift to the oil industry. Kirk's vote in support of the bill sealed its passage, because a tie would have defeated it. Here's what others had to say about the Barton Bill:



San Antonio Express-News

"On the consumption side...the bill ... does next to nothing to diminish the nation's dependence on foreign oil. House leaders rejected efforts to increase fuel efficiency standards for cars, SUVs and light trucks, a change that would have a dramatic effect on oil consumption."

Toledo Blade

"Refining capacity now is very tight, and Big Oil actually prefers to keep it that way because it boosts their profits, even as it encourages shortages. ... It is the refiners, rather than the corner filling stations, who are netting record gasoline profits: \$1 for every gallon today, nearly three times the profit a year ago. ... Using high fuel prices as a pretext to gut environmental laws is as unconscionable as it is sneaky."

Congressman Sherwood Boehlert (R-New York)

"A misguided Energy Bill that will not help consumers; it will only benefit oil companies. And the bill will harm taxpayers, states and the environment. ... The bill is opposed by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the association that represents state environmental commissioners (ECOS), and the association that represents state air officials (STAPPA/ALAPCO)."



League of Conservation Voters

"Rather than working to solve our long term energy challenges, the House of Representatives... passed legislation that rewards an already profitable oil industry with billions in giveaways and does nothing to promote energy independence or protect consumers from rising energy prices. This deeply flawed legislation limits the use of cleaner fuels and delays clean-up deadlines for harmful smog."



Sierra Club

"This deeply flawed legislation eliminates environmental protections on new oil refineries and funnels even more taxpayer dollars to the oil industry. Repealing the Clean Air Act's New Source Review program, as Barton proposes in the bill, would allow more than 20,000 industrial facilities to expand or upgrade in ways that increase pollution without installing modern pollution controls and allowing cities around the country to delay improving air quality."

The Wilderness Society

"This bill is anti-environment and anti-consumer."



Natural Resources Defense Council

"This bill is more about rewarding oil and gas companies that already are reaping record profits, and less about actually solving our energy problems. Nothing in this bill will reduce consumer energy prices or protect our economy against future price shocks."

Republicans For Environmental Protection

"Congress should be helping Americans use energy more efficiently and speeding up fuel diversification. Instead...H.R. 3893...endangers public health while doing nothing to lessen oil dependence."



Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership Trains State's Future Leaders

by Ellen Gill

In 2004, former Illinois Senator Carol Moseley-Braun pointed out that on a list showing the number of women serving in their country's legislature, the U.S. ranks 58th. At the rate we are going, we will catch up with the top country for representation of women (Sweden) by the year 2353. However, things are looking brighter in Illinois, thanks to a training program offered by the Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership (IWIL) for Democratic women who are interested in running for political office or helping other candidates.

"We don't have a long tradition of numerous women holding high positions in public office in the U.S., but we are getting there," says Loretta Durbin, public affairs consultant and wife of Illinois Senator and Minority Whip Dick Durbin. "Many more women are governors, for example. We are nearing the time when a woman will run and win the Presidency. When that happens, the gender issue will be less and less a factor in the outcome of elections and more women will view public office as an option for them. Hopefully, there will also be more programs for women like IWIL's."

When Loretta Durbin established IWIL, she modeled it after a concept developed by Senator Richard Lugar (R-Indiana), to train Republican women for political office. IWIL's first class graduated in 2002, and by September 2005, IWIL had trained 49 Democratic women to become leaders in Illinois politics and government. There is an open application process to join the program and applications for the next class will be accepted starting in February 2006.



Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (D-California) meets with IWIL students in Washington.

The training spans several months and takes participants around the state and to Washington for classes, lectures and events. Classes range from campaign organization, financing, media training and public speaking, party organization and relationships with other institutions, to legislative lobbying and policymaking. The media training and public speaking class is a favorite with both IWIL leaders and students. The class puts students into a simulated press conference and tapes their presentation.

Village of Deerfield Trustee and 2005 IWIL graduate Michelle Feldman particularly appreciated the feedback she received after having her speeches taped and critiqued by experts. 2004 IWIL graduate Bev Hmurovic of Libertyville appreciated the visits to Springfield and D.C. and found learning about the inner workings of government and the party to be the most interesting aspect of the program. Hmurovic is using her training to help others run and said that the program was not only valuable for anyone working in campaigns, but that it was also fun. She cited as an example an evening the 2004 class spent at Hillary Clinton's D.C. home.

Another 2005 IWIL graduate, Lake County Board Member Anne Flanigan Bassi, appreciated her IWIL training because it helped give her a "broad sense of what is involved in campaigns at all levels," and helped her see that "if approached with hard work

and knowledge, the components are manageable." Both Feldman and Bassi believe that a great value of IWIL is the realism in the training that showed both the difficulty and manageability of campaigning. Bassi noted that the training was useful not only for our own campaigns, but also to leverage the knowledge to help other candidates run for elected office.



Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-Evanston) and IWIL Founder Loretta Durbin at an IWIL event.

As for helping women take leadership positions in politics and government, IWIL takes women with a passion for issues and public service and helps them channel it and develop a plan for achieving their goals. It teaches women who are often the caregivers in their families how to ask others for help and how not to take things too personally, and as Bassi said, "it helped us understand our responsibilities and opportunities... and how to be effective leaders once in office."

For more information on IWIL visit www.il-democrats.org/IWIL

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Things To Do, Places To Be!

These are events of interest during the month of November to those with an interest in politics, issues and government. To find out more about them, as well as similar events in November, go to www.tenthdems.org.

Protecting Your Family From Mercury

Tuesday, November 1, 7:00 p.m.
Highland Park Country Club
201 Park Avenue West
Highland Park

Crash Course on Universal Health Care

Tuesday, November 1, 7:00 p.m.
Quenchers Saloon
2401 N. Western
Chicago

Sen. John Edwards in Northbrook

Sunday, November 6, 5:15 p.m.
Renaissance Hotel
933 Skokie Boulevard
Northbrook

West Deerfield Democrats Block Party

Sunday, November 6, 3:00 p.m.
Heller Nature Center
2821 Ridge Road
Highland Park

Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Information

Monday, November 7, 10:00 a.m.
Des Plaines Public Library
1501 Ellinwood Avenue
Des Plaines

Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Information

Monday, November 7, 1:00 p.m.
Patty Turner Senior Center
375 Elm Street
Deerfield

Meet the 10th District Candidates for Congress

Monday, November 7, 7:00 p.m.
Celtic Knot Restaurant
626 Church Street
Evanston

Wheeling Township Democrats Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 p.m.
Wheeling Township Hall
1616 N. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights

Armistice Day Event: Honor the Warrior, Not the War

Saturday, November 12, 7:00 p.m.
Countryside Unitarian Church
1025 North Smith Road
Palatine

Women's Health at the FDA: Evaluating the Evidence

Wednesday, November 16, 12:00 p.m.
School of Public Health Auditorium
University of Illinois at Chicago
Chicago



A Sad Milestone

A crowd of about 100 gathered in Port Clinton Square, Highland Park, on October 26. Taps was played and candles lit to honor the 2000 soldiers who have died since the beginning of the Iraq War.



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Feingold, continued from page 1

Feingold also took the opportunity to attack President Bush for his "insanely mistaken policy" regarding the war in Iraq. "He completely blew it. I never bought it. I voted against it. What a disservice to our brave troops to go in without a plan," Feingold lamented.

The fundraiser was held in the Winnetka home of Anne and Marcus Wedner. The event kicked off the Tenth Dems third year as a grassroots, political force for area Democrats.

Monies raised at the event will be used to further the goals of the all-volunteer group, which include helping to elect Democratic candidates on the local, state and national levels.

Feingold's high school prom date surprised him by attending the fundraiser. He joked about how lucky he was that he got to take a girl from Skokie to the prom.

Announced 10th District Congressional Democratic Candidate Zane Smith appeared at the event, joined by Barry Bradford, Clint Krislov, David Robin and Daniel Seals, who are considering entering the Congressional race. Elected officials attending the fundraiser included Illinois State Representatives Julie Hamos and Kathy Ryg, and Lake County Coroner Richard Keller.

Feingold told the crowd, "If we work as hard as we did in 2004, we can turn this whole thing around. In 2006, we can regain control of the Congress and retake the Presidency in 2008."



Anne Wedner (right) and her husband Marcus were the hosts for the Tenth Dems fundraiser in Winnetka, at which U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold was the guest speaker.

Supporting Our Troops,

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soldier? Or did he just not care?

Since then, Kirk has voted against extending full disability and retirement benefits to wounded veterans, and against bankruptcy protection for active duty soldiers. He also voted against providing healthcare to U.S. reservists. If it wasn't recorded in the Congressional Record it would be difficult to believe. According to the Disabled American Veterans website (www.dav.org), Mark Kirk voted against veterans' interests on every single key vote, giving him an abysmal 0 percent score.

In light of these votes, the fact that Kirk is in the military, which in and of itself is honorable, makes his voting record all the more dishonorable. As someone who should know better, he has a responsibility to protect the interests of American soldiers in Congress. He has failed in that responsibility in Congress.

Kirk and Oil, continued from page 5

source of air pollution, the exhaust of cars and diesel trucks. Typical alternative fuels being considered for large scale use are E-85 (85 percent ethanol and 15 percent petroleum products), compressed natural gas and hydrogen. Development of these fuels domestically would reduce our dependence on imported petroleum products. Doesn't that suggest why the Bush/Cheney team is not interested in clean fuels?

And I am absolutely astounded that Kirk voted against an amendment to this bill to give the Federal Trade Commission authority to define price gouging and to authorize new civil penalties of up to three times the amount of unjust profits gained by companies which engage in price gouging. Doesn't he care how much we in the 10th District pay at the gas pump?

The Washington Post recently reported that the money going to crude oil producers has climbed 46 percent over the last year. For refiners, revenues have increased 255 percent from September 2004 to September 2005. It's easy to see that Kirk supports making the rich richer and the rest of us poorer. This Amendment failed 199 to 222 (Roll Call No. 517). Kirk could have made a difference if he voted in favor of this amendment and urged the 35 member "Tuesday Group" of "mainstream" Republicans to also support it. He is co-chair of that group.

It is unconscionable that our representative would condone unwarranted massive corporate welfare at the monetary and health expense of taxpayers in the 10th Congressional District. It's obvious that Mark Kirk really represents the interests of large corporations, and doesn't care about us, his constituents.

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