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*The opinions expressed are those of the writers, and not necessarily endorsed by Tenth Dems*

# CRITICAL REASONS TO VOTE FOR GIANNOULIAS

by Steve Sheffey

## Alexi Giannoulias Deserves Your Vote

Alexi Giannoulias is the clear choice for United States Senate. His integrity, his track record, his character, and his stands on the issues we care about will make him an outstanding senator.



**Alexi's integrity.** On Alexi's very first day in office, he issued an executive order enacting the most sweeping ethics reforms in the history of the treasurer's office by banning contributions to his campaign from office employees, contractors, and banks. He is now the first U.S. Senate candidate in Illinois history to refuse contributions from federal lobbyists and corporate PACs.

**Alexi's track record.** Since becoming state treasurer, Alexi has purchased \$30 million in

*continued on page 5*

## Voters Should Reject the Kirk We Know

*"I simply misremembered it wrong" — Mark Kirk, June 3, 2010*



No one knows Mark Kirk better than we, the residents of his congressional district, know him. The first president from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, said that you can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. Unfortunately, Mark Kirk only needs to fool a plurality of the people on November 2 to become our next senator. We can't let that happen. This is the Mark Kirk we know:

In addition to the outright lies about his biography, there are the flip-flops. As Alexi Giannoulias said, "Like a weather vane, Mr. Kirk's votes

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# Tenth News

www.tenthdems.org

NOVEMBER 2010

Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter

Volume 7, Edition 10

## Tenth Dems Celebrates Grassroots Politics and Honors Volunteers

by Michael Vanassche

For its annual fundraising event, this year the 10th Congressional District Democrats gathered at the Deerfield Hyatt to celebrate "10-10-10 in the 10th." The Sunday evening affair attracted many federal and statewide candidates from within the 10th District, and neighboring districts, to help rally the base to increase turnout for the November 2 elections, to honor volunteers for their contributions to the organization, and to disseminate Democratic ideals. U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, Governor Pat Quinn, former congressman and federal judge Abner Mikva, U.S. Reps. Melissa Bean (8th District) and Jan Schakowsky (9th District), State Rep. and caomptroller candidate David Miller, and—of course—the 10th's own Dan Seals were all in attendance and spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of more than 200.



The program began with the presentation of awards. The George Rosenblit Volunteer of the Year Award went to Sharon Sanders, who has shown herself both willing and able to do whatever job Tenth Dems needs done, including frequently appearing in these pages as an opinion writer. Sharon's inspiring acceptance speech is reproduced in full [on page 3]. Marcy Maller, one of the seven

visionaries who seven years ago started Tenth Dems, was honored with the 2010 Founders Award. Finally, for the Abner Mikva Leadership Award, Tenth Dems recognized Loretta Durbin's work with women candidates. Nearly a dozen graduates of Ms. Durbin's IWIL—Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership—including current

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## Special Get Out the Vote Issue

Look inside for articles about the 10th District congressional race, the Illinois senate race, and other contested federal and state offices, as well as a complete list of every Democrat on any ballot within the 10th District.



## Tenth Dems Celebrate *continued from page 1*

officeholders and first-time candidates, took the microphone to identify themselves and acknowledge the crucial role Ms. Durbin's organization played in their entry into the political arena.

Following the awards ceremonies, and a brief but inspiring address by former 10th District Congressman Abner Mikva, Democratic candidates for office throughout the 10th District addressed the group. With Democrats nationally fighting against what has been characterized as a Republican tide, the speakers reminded those in attendance not to quit the fight as our support is needed more than ever. Congresswoman Melissa Bean pleaded that "we



need to make this a choice about who's qualified." She remarked, "These people [Republican candidates] are pushing social issues and can't spell 'fiscal responsibility.'"

"The most important thing we can do to make our state better and our country better is vote on November 2nd and vote Democratic," said Gov. Quinn, who is fighting for leadership of our state against hyper-conservative Republican candidate Bill Brady. "We don't want to lose a generation of children. We've got to make sure that we stand up for our principles.... That's what the Tenth Congressional Democrats are all about."

Senator Dick Durbin, in his keynote speech, reminded everyone how we got into this mess. "The Republicans hope that we will suffer from amnesia. They hope we'll forget the economy that George Bush left us."

But the night would not have been complete without hearing from the 10th Congressional District's Democratic candidate, Dan Seals, who reminded everyone that how he first got started as a candidate was through the Tenth Dems.

The main theme of the evening did not escape Seals. Like every other candidate, he drove home the important choices that the voters have when assembling their government come November 2: "I have heard candidates say for years that 'this is the most important election ever.' I can tell you now with no hesitation that in the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, this is the most important election we have ever had."

*Additional photos on pages 3, 11 and 12*





# Sharon Sanders Accepts the 2010 George Rosenblit Tenth Dems Volunteer of the Year Award

## Exhorts Democrats to Get Out and Vote on November 2

### In her own words on 10/10/10:

I want to express my deepest appreciation to the Tenth Dems for choosing me as Volunteer of the Year. It is a great honor, and I'm proud to be part of the organization. The Tenth Dems operates with integrity, honesty, and purpose as they work to inform and educate the public on current events, history, and issues of the day with speakers and educators who are experts in their fields. And Tenth Dems is there to support Democratic candidates at every level of government and to get out the vote at each election.

For me, volunteerism is a means of giving back to society and doing my part to help reclaim what I now consider to be a very fragile democracy. It is my hope that those that follow will be able to realize the same opportunities that I and others of my generation had and that these doors will again reopen for the next generations. Volunteering is a way for me to feel I'm part of the solution.

And let me say a few words about the Democratic Party. We've certainly had our fair share of problems lately. But, to me, the party's weakness is also its strength. We come with a wide range of views. We don't always walk in lockstep with the party. We openly express our dissatisfaction with our leaders. And that is seen as a negative by some. And, yes, it is causing us a lot of angst. But I see this as a positive. Our diversity, our embracing of each other's differences, our acceptance of people as they are – this is what makes us Democrats. We need to be proud of our willingness to open our collective arms to everyone. We can't let the other side intimidate us and our views. But, first and foremost, we must not sit home on November 2nd – and I can't stress it enough: We must wake up our fellow Democrats and vote. If not, we are turning this country over to extremists who do walk in lockstep, who are fearful of others, who don't educate themselves on the issues and facts, who want to rewrite history to reflect their views, and who are willing to turn this country over to global corporations that don't pay their fair share of taxes, that have shipped so many of our jobs overseas, or have helped impoverish our nation by deceptive lending practices and profits through attrition. We can't sit idly by and let this happen.

The last thing I want to say is this. Last weekend my daughter Lisa and one of my grandsons, Conor (who are both here tonight), and I went to Washington, D.C. for the One Nation Rally. You'll never hear the truth from the media; you'll never see the actual attendance numbers; but I can tell you that it was a fabulous and emotional experience. There were people there of every race, every religion, gay rights activists, women's rights activists, unions, anti-war groups, children's rights groups, and on and on – 400 groups in all – several hundred thousand people – saying we are better than how the media is portraying us. We're better than the Fox hate machine. We are one nation fighting for jobs, equal rights, healthcare for all, quality education for all. We can't let fear run our country. So everyone here, all our friends, neighbors, relatives – they need to vote. And, of course, in my opinion, they need to vote Democratic.

All Photos by Ravi Ganapathy

# Unfair to Middling

by Ron Levitsky

When I was a kid, I didn't realize how lucky I was. My dad, who'd never finished high school, worked an assembly line job for Motorola when it made televisions. My mother worked as a long distance operator for a small corporation. Along with my sister, we lived in Morton Grove in a three-bedroom ranch with one bathroom and one telephone. We went to Disneyland. I got a great education at Maine East High School (along with Hillary Clinton), and I went to college. When my dad retired, he received a large amount of profit sharing. It was called being part of the middle class and living the American Dream.

*Both are vanishing.*

Upon graduating college, I became a history teacher. Smugly, I would tell my eighth graders how the advance of capitalism and the Industrial Revolution freed society from feudalism, in which a few were wealthy at the expense of the many—here I drew a pyramid on the blackboard to demonstrate the distribution of wealth. Instead, we now had the rise of the middle class and economically a much more equitable society, illustrated by the shape of a diamond. The bulging middle was the middle class.

As the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville noted when he visited the United States in the 1830s, small farmers and tradesmen were predominant in our nation. It was the age of Andrew Jackson and the rise of democracy—at least among white men. Later, the expansion of voting rights for poor whites, former slaves, and women reflected a growing sense of progress—that democracy and wealth went hand in hand. There were great inequities in wealth—the Vanderbilts and Andrew Carnegie vs. sweatshop workers and coal miners—but the growth of unions (a long, arduous, and courageous process), national wealth, and consumerism promised enough for all.

In a recent *Chicago Sun Times* Labor Day "Comment," Dave McGrath reflects fondly how, as a teenager, he clerked for Jewel as a member of the United Retail Workers. Later, as a member of two teacher unions, he was able to send his three children to college. "Such a union is capable of lifting the American worker out of poverty and up to a level of respect, of decent earnings, of safe and healthful job conditions." My wife and I had the same experience—to be both teachers and members of the middle class.

*But the middle class and the American dream are vanishing.*

A recent *Associated Press* article, "6 Signs That you've Made It To Middle Class," states, "Today the middle class is a vanishing breed according to nearly every survey and statistic on the topic." The six signs—home ownership, car ownership, college education for one's children, retirement security, healthcare coverage, and family vacation—things my parents had, are growing less common. The rise of globalization, technology replacing humans, the elimination of pension plans, the decline of unions, and the rise of college and healthcare costs have made it difficult for this generation to live as their parents did.

And it gets worse. According to the U.S. Census, not only is one in seven Americans living in poverty, but this is the highest level of working poor since the 1960s. The poverty level for a family of four is about \$22,000. Not surprisingly, those without health coverage have increased from 15.4 percent to 16.7 percent, nearly 51 million



people. David Johnson, head of the Census' household economics division, adds that if it weren't for increases in social security payments and unemployment insurance, an additional 3.3 million people would have been added to the poverty rolls.

And it gets even worse. In his introduction to the book *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich notes the increasing disparity between rich and poor. In 1980, America's top 1 percent controlled 8 percent of the national income. In 2007, it was 23 percent. The Walton family (Wal-Mart) is worth \$90 billion, almost equal to the combined wealth of the poorest 40 percent of the American people. Reich warns, "Such inequality undermines the trust, solidarity, and mutuality on which responsibilities of citizenship depend."

There are even more disturbing consequences when a society that is diamond-shaped with a large middle class erodes into one pyramid-shaped with a small number of wealthy and an increasingly growing lower class.

Using numerous statistical studies, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, authors of *The Spirit Level*, assert that far more important than total wealth in a society is the degree of equality among members of that society. They examined the following national characteristics among approximately two dozen developed nations—level of trust, mental illness (including drug and alcohol addiction), life expectancy, infant mortality, obesity, educational performance, teenage births, homicides, imprisonment rates, and social mobility. Wilkinson and Pickett found that those nations with less disparity of wealth between rich and poor were better off in all categories—that is, healthier and happier—than less equal societies.

Consequences for a less-equal society are staggering. As bad as communism was, since Russia turned to capitalism in the 1990s the life expectancy of its people has fallen. When East Germany rejoined West Germany, the rate of obesity among East Germans increased dramatically.

The United States, one of the most unequal of developed nations, has a lower average life expectancy than Greece, which spends half the cost of healthcare per person. A black man in Harlem is less likely to reach age 65 than his counterpart in Bangladesh. And social mobility, a crucial component of democracy and a strong middle class, has decreased in the U.S. since 1980. We have the lowest rate of social mobility among the eight wealthiest nations.

*continued on page 5*

## Unfair to Middling *continued from page 4*

The two researchers also determined that states within the U.S. with more economic equality among their citizens are more likely to have abolished the death penalty, and have fewer homicides, teenage pregnancies, and high school dropouts; higher math and literacy scores; and less obesity. Illinois tends to be more unequal, especially compared to other Midwestern states such as Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Wilkinson and Pickett found that, in any given nation or state, everyone—even the rich—benefits from more equality. Unequal societies have much more violence, stress, competition, conflict over status, and far less trust—conditions that permeate the social fabric.

Therefore, it is disheartening that many working people in this country, listening to Republican claptrap, vote against their best interests. They accept the stereotype of unions as protecting lazy, inefficient workers while collecting big pensions, instead of supporting the right of collective bargaining to improve wages and benefits. They criticize healthcare reform, passed by a Democratic Congress, even though it will benefit them in so many ways, such

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## Alexi Deserves Your Vote *continued from page 1*

Israel bonds, citing the purchases as sound investment decisions for the State of Illinois.

In 2007, Alexi asked banks statewide to voluntarily waive wire transfer fees on Holocaust reparation payments from the German government. The average monthly wire transfer is \$350, with each transfer being assessed a fee of between \$10 and \$40. The fee amounted essentially to a 10 percent tax on reparation and restitution payments, causing unnecessary hardship to the recipients, many of whom are elderly Holocaust survivors with low to moderate fixed incomes. Nearly 100 banks across the state agreed to the plan.

Before Alexi took office, the Bright Start college savings program was ranked one of the worst of its kind in the country. Alexi reformed the program, increasing transparency and offering more investment options for Illinois families. Alexi turned the program around, and in 2009, *Money Magazine* and *Consumer Reports* highlighted it as one of the top programs in the country. In June 2010, *Kiplinger's* named it one of the five best college savings programs in America.

**Alexi's character and his stands on the important issues.** Alexi is not afraid to take a stand and stick with it. When Wells Fargo threatened to liquidate good-paying American jobs at Hartmarx, a 120-year-old men's clothier in Des Plaines, Alexi took action. He made it clear that if Wells Fargo received \$25 billion in bailout money from federal taxpayers, then it had a responsibility to invest in American jobs and American workers, not destroy American companies. Alexi told the president of the bank that if those jobs were liquidated, Wells Fargo would no longer manage \$8 billion in Illinois taxpayer money. Because Alexi and others stood up to Wells Fargo, the bank relented and hundreds of Illinois jobs were saved.

Alexi has come out squarely and unequivocally in favor of full equality under the law for LGBT Americans. Alexi would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (Kirk supports the Act). Alexi would repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell (Kirk supports Don't Ask, Don't Tell—maybe in all his visits to Israel, Kirk hasn't noticed that Israel's armed

as banning lifetime coverage limits and denial of coverage for children with preexisting health conditions while closing the Medicare coverage gap and providing free preventive care. And they oppose President Obama's plan to eliminate tax cuts only for those individuals making more than \$200,000 or joint-filers earning over \$250,000. His plan would spare 97 percent of all tax filers and would save nearly \$1 trillion from the national debt.

Regarding these tax cuts: While flipping channels, I came upon the "McLaughlin Group," in which John McLaughlin was excoriating Obama's plan as "class war." As if the leaders of corporations who hire lobbyists to overrun Washington and the state capitals are seeking only the common good!

This month marks the 150th anniversary of the most important election in our nation's history, one that would eventually lead to preserving our Union and ending slavery. But this month's election will also help to define America. It's worth remembering that Lincoln, our greatest president, saw our nation's strength, not in the power of the few but in the strength of the many.

On November 2, may we show the same foresight.

forces do not discriminate based on sexual orientation). Alexi is endorsed by the Human Rights Campaign, which noted that "while many lawmakers stood on the right side of history in voting to end 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' Rep. Kirk voted to maintain discrimination that hurts our national security. Thankfully voters have a better choice in Alexi Giannoulias who will always stand up for equality."

Alexi is firmly in favor of a woman's right to reproductive choice, earning him the endorsements of NARAL Pro-Choice America and Planned Parenthood, both of which are bipartisan and both of which previously endorsed Mark Kirk—before Kirk jettisoned his principles to run for the Senate.

Alexi can be counted on to protect the environment, earning him the endorsements of the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters, both of which are bipartisan and both of which previously endorsed Mark Kirk—before Kirk jettisoned his principles to run for the Senate.

Alexi is firmly committed to Israel's security. In Alexi's words, "Our first commitment in the Middle East must be the security of Israel, our strongest ally in the region. Our governments are similarly based on beliefs in democracy and freedom—values that continue to be threatened by extremism and hate. The United States and Israel must remain unwavering partners in the shared struggle against terrorism and violence." Unlike the other issues, this issue does not distinguish Alexi from Kirk, but I could not support Alexi unless I was certain that we could count on him to support Israel. And I am certain.

Alexi will cut taxes to create jobs, reform TARP to steer money directly to small businesses, institute pay-as-you-go budgeting, and enact other measures designed to help the economy and prevent the mistakes that were made during the Bush/Kirk years.

Alexi's positions on these issues are the same as they were before the primary, and he takes the same positions, regardless of where he is or what audience he's talking to.

**Let's do all we can to elect Alexi Giannoulias to the United States Senate.**

# Dan Seals, Other Candidates, Speak at BJBE Political Forum; Robert Dold a No-Show

by Carol Hillsberg

Gabriel Rubin, a senior at Chicagoland Jewish High School, set the bar high. In referring to John F. Kennedy's book, *Profiles in Courage*, he called for the election of leaders who can rise above the current malaise in Washington and instead follow the historical imperative exemplified in JFK's book. He called for leaders to exhibit the courage to act on their beliefs, despite the political consequences. That is a challenging goal just three weeks before a midterm election. Gabriel was the first of ten students who introduced the various candidates running for seats in the House of Representatives and the legislature in Springfield. Indeed, the articulate, informed introductions by these students, most of whom are not old enough to vote, inspired hope for the future of our democracy. The Meet the Candidates forum sponsored by B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim (BJBE), Chicagoland Jewish High School and Solomon Schechter Day School was held at BJBE in Deerfield on October 11.

The first to speak was Jan Schakowsky, running for her sixth term in Congress from the 9th District. She was followed by her opponent, Joel Pollak.

Dan Seals, the Democratic candidate in the 10th Congressional District, spoke next. Dan stated that Israel's gains are our gains, and Israel's struggles are our struggles. He praised the Obama administration for starting peace talks early in its first term, and he advocated urging companies to boycott investments in Iran. Dan cited his endorsements by Planned Parenthood, NARAL, and the Sierra Club. Indeed, he has picked up a total of thirteen endorsements that went to his opponent, Mark Kirk, in the previous two elections. In its endorsement the *Chicago Sun Times* stated that Dan is thoughtful, and, as such, is willing to venture beyond safe talking points and to recognize the complexities in major issues. The editorial also faulted his opponent, Robert Dold, for falling back on Republican talking points. We did not get a chance to hear those talking points tonight, as Dold was a no-show.



Dan Seals

The candidates for the Illinois House of Representatives then came to the podium. Elaine Nekritz, who represents the 57th District,

stated that the budget is the biggest problem facing state government. She advocated a multi-pronged approach, including making painful cuts, finding revenues, rethinking the delivery of government services, and fixing the pension system for future employees. She also called for more solution-oriented leaders. Her opponent is a Prospect Heights alderman who in his closing remarks, in a seeming non sequitur, quoted John Lennon saying, "You may think I'm crazy, but I'm not the only one."



Elaine Nekritz



Karen May

Karen May, running for her sixth term representing the 58th District, described her role on the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission. Stating that this last legislative session was really tough, Karen cited her efforts for promoting ethics reform, ending pay-to-play, and increasing transparency. She is an energetic proponent of pension reform, particularly in the wake of the brouhaha over pensions at the Park District of Highland Park. In addition, Karen is the chair of a caucus on "green" schools. Her Republican opponent also spoke.

Daniel Biss, a former professor of mathematics at the University of Chicago, is running in the 17th District to fill the seat vacated by Elizabeth Coulson. His desire is to solve real-world, concrete problems, in addition to the abstract ones he faces as a mathematician. He advocated performance budgeting to deal with the \$13 billion deficit, as well as more transparency and campaign finance reform. His Republican opponent was scheduled to speak, but he was delayed and did not arrive on time.



Daniel Biss

The *Sun Times* has not only endorsed the Democratic candidates for Congress, Jan Schakowsky and Dan Seals, but also all the Democrats vying for the Illinois House of Representatives who participated in this forum—Karen May, Elaine Nekritz, and Daniel Biss.

## Reject the Kirk We Know *continued from page 1*

on the issues can be predicted by the direction the political winds are blowing at this time."

Nothing sums up Kirk's unprincipled politics better than his reversal on the American Clean Energy and Security bill (ACES), also known as cap and trade. When Kirk voted for cap and trade, he justified his vote by saying, "It is time to break the boom and bust cycle of high gas prices and the need to deploy three separate armies to the Middle East (Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom). As you may know, I am a veteran of the Desert Storm and Enduring Freedom missions." Of course, we now know that Kirk isn't a veteran of Desert Storm, but putting that aside, Kirk's justification seems pretty compelling—if he believed it.

But then the political winds shifted and Kirk totally flip-flopped, claiming that he only voted for cap and trade because "it was in the narrow interests" of his congressional district. Who knew that that high gas prices and national security were "in the narrow interests" of only the 10th Congressional District?

Cap and trade is Kirk's classic flip-flop, but this is a close second: In less than 24 hours, Kirk went from supporting the jobs bill for teachers to voting against it (along with every other Republican except one) the very next day.

Kirk compounded his flip-flop with a lie, claiming that the Congressional Budget Office said the bill would create a deficit when in fact the Congressional Budget Office said that the bill would reduce the deficit.

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## Reject the Kirk We Know *continued from page 6*

By comparison, Kirk's other flip-flops seem almost pedestrian:

Kirk said he supports gun control, but then Kirk backed the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that knocked down Chicago's handgun ban. So much for Kirk's commitment to gun control. Alexi, in contrast, believes that "these are not questions of constitutional rights — they are questions of public safety and common sense."

After supporting the selection of Sarah Palin for vice president, he received letters from constituents objecting to Palin's extreme right-wing views. Kirk then said that he would not have picked her for vice president. But in November 2009, Kirk sought Palin's support.

After narrowly winning re-election by misleading his constituents into believing he was pro-choice, on November 7, 2009, Kirk voted in favor of the Stupak Amendment to the Affordable Health Care for America Act. This amendment would have barred any insurance plan that is purchased with government subsidies from covering abortions. (NARAL Pro-Choice America and Planned Parenthood have endorsed Alexi Giannoulis for U.S. Senate.)

After leading people to believe that he supported gay rights, Kirk came out against gay marriage, in favor of the Defense of Marriage Act, and in favor of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Kirk had previously made the nonsensical statement that LGBT issues were not important because his "district is an overwhelmingly suburban district."

After telling people to vote the person rather than the party and touting himself as an independent, Kirk went on to take the Republican position on EVERY major issue this Congress has faced. Says who? Says Kirk for Senate.

After voting to allow the Obama administration to move foreign terrorist suspects from the Guantanamo Bay prison to the United States mainland, Kirk criticized a proposal to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States mainland (Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois). Kirk told President Obama, "If your administration brings al-Qaida terrorists to Illinois, our state and the Chicago metropolitan area will become ground zero for Jihadist terrorist plots, recruitment and radicalization." Kirk was widely criticized for his inflammatory and inaccurate statements.

Kirk criticized earmarks in recent spending bills after procuring millions of dollars of earmarks for his supporters.

Kirk vowed to lead the fight to repeal healthcare reform and then backtracked after it passed.

And where Kirk is consistent, he's consistently wrong. If you're an independent or a Democrat, you might want to consider the facts

that his campaign doesn't tell you, facts that even some of his supporters seem unaware of:

Kirk supported a man for Republican leadership who accused Israel of apartheid. Kirk is among the first to denounce the United Nations when it unfairly criticizes Israel, and this is to his credit. But Kirk voted to elect Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) to Republican leadership even though Issa had previously accused Israel of apartheid. Why does Kirk hold Republicans to a lesser standard than that to which he holds the U.N.? Kirk voted for Issa for the post of Republican Policy Committee Chairman the week after Kirk was re-elected in 2006. This was a vote within the Republican party for a Republican leadership position. It was one Republican against another Republican, and only Republicans

voted. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI) defeated Issa by a 2-1 margin. Ironically, when Kirk did not follow the Republican majority, he voted wrong. Kirk was one of about 60 Republicans who saw nothing wrong with elevating to leadership a man who accused Israel of apartheid. Kirk has never explained why he voted for Issa. Imagine the outrage—the justifiable outrage—we'd hear if Obama appointed someone who had previously accused Israel of apartheid. Kirk owes us an explanation if he expects our vote. It's true that Issa previously contributed to one of Kirk's campaigns, but there's got to be more than that.

Kirk voted against equal pay for women. He voted against the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009. Republicans voted against equal pay for women 166-3. But

Democrats voted 244-5 in favor, so it passed the House, and President Obama signed it into law.

Kirk voted for federal intervention in the Terri Schiavo case. He voted for the Terri Schiavo Restoration Act, which required the federal government to forcibly insert a feeding tube into a woman who had been in a vegetative state for 15 years, against the wishes of her husband. Democrats said at the time that "Michael Schiavo is faced with a devastating decision, but having been through the proper legal process, the decision for his wife's care belongs to him and to God." But Republican leadership thought the decision belonged to the government, so Kirk jetted back to Washington to vote for federal intervention in this family decision —Republicans voted 156-5 in favor, and Kirk went along (of the Democrats who voted, most voted against).

Kirk voted against President Obama's Stimulus Plan (Republicans voted **NO** 177-0). United Jewish Communities supported the Stimulus Plan because it advanced their agenda. Apparently, Kirk's agenda is different.

Kirk voted against bringing the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIP) to the floor. Republicans voted against 175-0. Had Kirk and the Republicans prevailed, the bill would



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# Illinois Voters Have Clear Choice for Senate

Illinois voters who want to make sure the next U.S. Senate will support rather than obstruct President Obama's agenda over the next two years have a clear choice in the November 2 senate race: Alexi Giannoulias. Despite the media hoopla surrounding the failure of the bank owned by his family, Giannoulias has long proved an unwavering commitment to Democratic policy objectives. He is the only candidate in the Illinois senate race who can be counted on to support the legislative proposals aimed at creating jobs, reviving the U.S. economy, and implementing recently passed healthcare and financial services reform. (See "Critical Reasons to Vote for Giannoulias" on page 1 and "The Most Important Vote Obama Supporters Will Cast in 2010," *Tenth News*, October 2010.)

Illinoisans will also be able to count on Giannoulias to confirm—rather than block—prospective Obama Supreme Court nominees and, in the process, to restore balance and justice to a Court now dominated by extreme ideologues determined to use the high court to advance their own regressive political objectives—as evidenced by the recent Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (see a "Supremely Important Decision," *Tenth News*, October 2010 [http://www.tenthdems.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/1010\\_nl.pdf](http://www.tenthdems.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/1010_nl.pdf)).

In contrast to Giannoulias, Republican challenger Mark Kirk has long proved his steadfast commitment to the Republican Party and the corporate interests it represents. During his five terms as 10th District Congressman, Kirk repeatedly voted for policies aimed at protecting the profits of the banking, financial services, and health insurance industries at the expense of the American public. For example, during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, Kirk voted against legislation aimed at providing relief to homeowners and slowing the tide of foreclosures (see "Mark Kirk Happy to Help Mortgage Lenders," [http://www.tenthdems.org/newsletters/0904\\_nl.pdf](http://www.tenthdems.org/newsletters/0904_nl.pdf)).

Since the start of the Obama administration, Kirk has worked in lock-step with Republican colleagues to obstruct Democratic progress at every turn. During last summer's healthcare debate, for example, Kirk held numerous, carefully orchestrated town hall meetings designed to kill meaningful healthcare reform. He vigorously opposed



the President's economic stimulus plan, and he repeatedly voted against extending unemployment benefits to the jobless. He's also voted against numerous bills designed to increase small business lending with their overriding aim of creating new jobs. On the other hand, Kirk was eager to help protect executive pay by voting against legislation that proposed to curb bonuses of top managers at financial institutions receiving TARP funds.

As egregious as these votes are, they pale in comparison to many of the votes Kirk cast during the Bush years when he voted against the 2008 Intelligence Authorization Act, which proposed to prevent the use of harsh interrogation tactics, such as waterboarding by the CIA; for the Military Commissions Act, which enabled the detention of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay; for the Protect America Act—the law that gave the U.S. government the authority to wire-tap; and against fair pay for women by opposing the Lilly Ledbetter Act. (see [http://www.tenthdems.org/newsletters/0902\\_nl.pdf](http://www.tenthdems.org/newsletters/0902_nl.pdf).)

In summary, Kirk has demonstrated a shocking disregard for democracy, a lack of compassion for Americans bearing the brunt of the economic crisis, and an obdurate unwillingness to put partisan politics aside for the sake of what's right and in the best interest of all Americans. His unwavering allegiance to his party and special interests ensures that should he win the President's old senate seat, he would work vigorously to obstruct the Democratic agenda. In our view, this is reason in itself to propel Democrats to the polls on November 2 to cast a vote for Alexi Giannoulias for senate. Fortunately, as highlighted on page 1 and in "The Most Important Vote Obama Supporters Will Cast in 2010" (see [http://www.tenthdems.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/1010\\_nl.pdf](http://www.tenthdems.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/1010_nl.pdf)), Giannoulias gives us many other reasons to vote for him, too.

## Reject the Kirk We Know *continued from page 7*

have been killed. But wait: Democrats voted 244-3 in favor of bringing it to a vote, and when it came to the floor, Kirk flip-flopped and voted in favor of the same bill he had just voted to kill. He can thus truthfully tell opponents of the program that he tried to stop it, and he can tell supporters of the program that he voted for it.

Kirk told the Chinese not to believe US budget numbers. *Market-watch.com* Wall Street columnist David Weidner called Kirk's statement "a colossally stupid thing to say."

Kirk's office threatened to withhold funding from Tel Aviv University. In retaliation for a supporter of Tel Aviv University backing Kirk's opponent in 2006, a Kirk staffer paid at taxpayer expense threatened Tel Aviv University financially. Kirk took no action other than to "reprimand" the staffer.

Kirk's record is not a "moderate" voting record, at least not when it comes to the key votes—it's a right-wing Republican voting record that contrasts with the mostly moderate rhetoric Kirk employed when running for re-election in the Tenth District. If you're a pro-Israel Republican, then Kirk's your guy.

Contrast Kirk's flavor-of-the-hour issues management with Alexi's consistent stands in support not only of Israel, but of the other issues we care about, including abortion rights, women's issues, LGBT issues, environmental issues, and economic issues.

NARAL Pro-Choice America, Planned Parenthood, the Human Rights Campaign, the Sierra Club, and the League of Conservation Voters—all bipartisan organizations, some of which have backed Kirk in previous elections—are now backing Alexi Giannoulias for U.S. Senate over Mark Kirk. So are we. So should you.

# Our Democratic Candidates - Vote November 2nd!

Support your Candidates on November 2nd. The following is an alphabetical list of every Democratic candidate on the ballot in the 10th Congressional District:

**Anne Bassi**

<http://www.annebassi.com>  
Lake County Board

**Linda Birnbaum**

State Representative (District 53)

**Daniel Biss**

State Representative (District 17)

**Michael Bond**

State Senate (District 31)

**Matt Flamm**

State Representative (District 54)

**Robyn Gabel**

State Representative (District 18)

**Alexi Giannoulis**

US Senate

**Kay Hoogland**

<http://www.kayhooglandforboard.com/>  
Lake County Board

**Jennifer Bishop Jenkins**

Cook County Commissioner

**Robin Kelly**

Treasurer

**Mark Levitt**

Lake County Judge

**Lisa Madigan**

<http://www.lisamadigan.org>  
Attorney General

**Karen May**

State Representative (District 58)

**Rita Mayfield**

State Representative (District 60)

**Dan McDermott**

<http://www.mcdermottforsuperintendent.com>  
Lake County Regional Superintendent  
of Schools

**David Miller**

Comptroller

**Elaine Nekritz**

State Representative (District 57)

**Del Parra**

Lake County Board

**Toni Preckwinkle**

Cook County Board President

**Pat Quinn****Sheila Simon**

Governor/Lt. Gov

**Douglas Roberts**

<http://www.robertsforlake.com>  
Lake County Sheriff

**Dan Seals**

US Congress

**Carol Sente**

State Representative (District 59)

**Laura Tomsy**

Lake County Clerk

**Richard Voltair**

State Representative (District 62)

**David Weinstein**

Lake County Board (District 7)

**Jesse White**

Secretary of State

**Mark Walker**

State Representative (District 66)

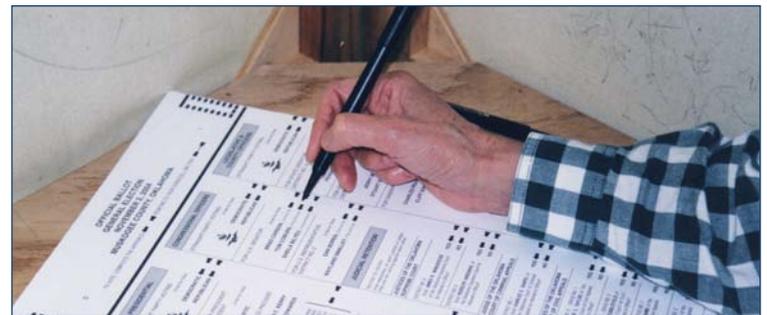
## Questions for Voters by John Gerty

Have you ever noticed that when Republicans are out of power they keep telling us "government doesn't work"? Then when Republicans are running the government, it doesn't work?

Have you noticed that when conservatives pry big government off your back, they immediately want to put it in your pants? Or stuff it in your ears, wrap it around your eyes, and cover your mouth with it? Unless you are a corporation.

How is it that conservatives want to impose all sorts of big government limits on personal social issues, but when it comes to clean air, clean water, healthy food, affordable healthcare, protection from predatory corporations, and safe work places, big government is bad?

Why is it that libertarians seem to favor Republicans? Don't they have a stake in clean air and clean water? Do they like the idea of having to adjudicate everything over and over again? Something like, "... your poorly designed crib killed my baby...." That can happen once, then we can pass laws, which lead to standards, which protect babies in cribs. Libertarians see the big hand of government in such laws. They would prefer to hash it all out over and over. In the courts. Every time another baby dies in a poorly designed crib.



Did you ever wonder why the Republicans always throw up their hands and declare constitutional amendments are necessary to handle day-to-day or year-to-year issues like balancing the budget? Have you ever counted how many constitutional amendments were ever passed? The answer is, 27. Not many for a 223-year history. Maybe that's why we have a Congress to pass laws.

How is it that Democrats, who foster pay-as-you-go government, are labeled "tax and spenders"? Why aren't Republicans, who increased the National Debt by \$12 trillion over the past 30 years, called "borrow and spenders"?

Has any Republican administration ever balanced a budget in the past 32 years?

And, why wouldn't you go out and vote Democratic on November 2?

# Lemmings and Leaders: Kirk Has Followed Fellow GOPers Off that Cliff

by Jack Altschuler

It's a common belief that those cute little lemmings follow one another over a cliff and are dashed on the rocks below to their instant demise. In point of fact, lemmings aren't particularly smart, but they do have enough innate mental ability not to follow others over a cliff and commit suicide. That is a most useful point.

Mark Kirk has held his job as congressman from the 10th District for 10 years. For eight of those years he just did what he was told to do by Republican leadership and voted for every Republican spending bill. He helped to double the national debt, adding more to it than all previous administrations combined, from George Washington to Bill Clinton. This because Kirk was a follower.

When the issue of war, any nation's gravest question, came before him, Mark Kirk asked not a single question in session. He didn't require any substantiation. He didn't offer any skepticism or even appear to raise an eyebrow. He just voted in lockstep with the rest of the Republicans for the wrong war, taking us over the metaphorical cliff. He was a suicidal follower.

Here's another, darker way to see this. Mark Kirk lied about his military experience, claiming he had been in combat – he wasn't. Then he sent our troops over to Iraq to be maimed and killed in combat without so much as a whimper of hesitation on their behalf. That's mortal hypocrisy that has killed over 4,000 of our men and women, all because he wouldn't stand up and lead. Instead, he followed his Republican masters.

My notion is that we elect people to represent us and to be leaders for us. Kirk cannot be a leader, though, if all he does is keep his head down and follow, doing what he is told to do.

We need our leaders to be bolder than that and, certainly, they need to be at least as smart as lemmings and not follow anyone over a cliff. It's time to fire the follower because of his total lack of leadership. It's time to make Alexi Giannoulias our next senator.

## Why I Vote

by Debra Shore

I vote because it's my ticket to complain about my government. That's right, I think you don't get to complain about government or a single lousy politician unless you vote. No whining, not one snide remark for the next four years.

I vote because it's my civic duty.

I vote because it is the work of living in a democracy. If we don't step up and say what we want – through the act of selecting people to represent us – then those choices will be made for us by others. We the people silence our own voices when we don't vote.

I vote because brave women and men before me fought long and hard for the right to vote. What is easy for me to do was not always so. Women went on hunger strikes; blacks demonstrated, were beaten and thrown in jail. My voting honors their sacrifice.

I vote because I believe in no taxation without representation.

I vote because it's fun. My parents took me with them into the voting booth when I was young – and it was a booth with a curtain and levers that you pulled and a long arm to shift in order to register your choices. Then the curtain opened. I took my own son with me when he was young and showed him how to punch holes in the card by the numbers of candidates we supported. No hanging chads for me – thanks, Ben! And now I tap on the screen and listen as the paper record spools on and on and afterwards collect my bright sticker announcing to all, "I Voted."

I vote because every vote matters, every single vote counts. Several years ago a woman I know, Shaunese Teamer, ran for alderman in North Chicago's 4th ward – and the vote was tied. She won the office as a result of a coin toss! If one more person had voted for Shaunese (or her opponent), the outcome would have been the result of choice, not chance. (Four years later, Shaunese lost the primary by one vote!) Every vote matters.

It's GOTV time and **Dan Seals needs your help** to win one of the most closely watched Congressional races in the country! In offices across the district, volunteers are needed to knock on doors, make phone calls, and remind other Democrats how important it is that they get out and VOTE!

Please call 847-945-8900 or visit <http://10thdistrictfordanseals.com/action/volunteer/> to sign up. Whether you have an hour on Election Day or can help every day from here on out, we can use your support. Help us finish strong and turn the 10th BLUE!



On October 22, Tenth Dems co-hosted an event with former Paul Simon staffers to honor the Quinn/Simon team.



**10th Congressional District Democrats**  
**10.10.10**  
**Fundraiser Featuring Sen. Dick Durbin**  
*Special Thanks to Our Hosts/Committee*

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 Susan Alshon  
 Melissa & Robert Andro  
 Joan & John Bennett  
 Susan Benner  
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 Marlene Hummerhal North  
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 Hon. Rita Mayfield  
 Mark, Karen & J.  
 Dr. Michael McCormick  
 John Meyer  
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 Jill Meyer  
 Lauren Moore  
 Homer Migdal  
 James Moore  
 Elizabeth Louise Mueller  
 Michael O'Brien  
 Sue Walker - Prairie Township  
 Alexander Poffel  
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 Jeffrey Schickler  
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