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Schneider to Face Dold; Tenth Dems Pledge Unity at Party Celebrating All Primary Candidates

By Eleonora di Liscia

On the evening of March 22, supporters of congressional primary candidates Vivek Bavda, Ilya Sheyman, and John Tree packed the backrooms of Lincolnshire’s Cubby Bear North to pledge their enthusiastic support for

the Democratic Party’s candidate for Congress from the 10th District, Brad Schneider. This Tenth Dems-organized and hosted unity party drew an enthusiastic crowd so large that late arrivals counted themselves lucky

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Tenth News

April 2012 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 9, Edition 4

The 10th District by the Numbers: Schneider Wins the Primary – Onward to November by John Hmurovic

Democrats in the 10th District had it tougher than Mitt Romney’s wife. When she wants to go for a drive, she only has two expensive Cadillacs to choose from. We had four impressive congressional candidates to choose from in the March primary. In the end, we chose Brad Schneider. It was a solid victory, which gave him a solid start in the race to unseat Kenilworth Republican Bob Dold in November.

<i>The unofficial numbers show:</i>	<i>Schneider</i>	<i>Sheyman</i>	<i>Tree</i>	<i>Bavda</i>
	47%	38%	9%	6%

Schneider’s strength was in the precincts of the old 10th District, the part of the district that was in the 10th before redistricting and remains in the 10th. His strongest performance within these townships was in some of the higher-income precincts, with a population that has a higher than average education level, is predominantly white, has a high percentage of Jewish voters, and is traditionally solidly Democratic.

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The 10th District by the Numbers: Schneider Wins the Primary – Onward to November *(continued from page 1)*

Township (Largest City)	Schneider	Sheyman	Tree	Bavda
Moraine (Highland Park)	60%	33%	6%	1%
New Trier (Glencoe)	56%	40%	2%	2%
Northfield (Northbrook)	54%	34%	7%	2%
Vernon (Buffalo Grove)	50%	39%	6%	5%
West Deerfield (Deerfield)	63%	29%	7%	1%
Wheeling (Wheeling)	48%	35%	9%	8%

The above segment of the 10th cast about 54 percent of the vote in the primary, and with a 56 to 34 percent victory over Sheyman in these townships, Schneider built a lead that was hard for his opponents to overcome in the other 46 percent of the District.

The Sheyman campaign put up its best fight in two areas. One of these consisted of the other portions of the old 10th, precincts that are also solidly Democratic but are lower income, with a high percentage of black and Hispanic voters.

Township (Largest City)	Schneider	Sheyman	Tree	Bavda
Waukegan (Waukegan)	38%	42%	10%	10%
Shields (Lake Forest)	36%	48%	11%	6%

Shields Township also includes the high-income, mostly-white (and Republican) precincts of Lake Forest, as well as the low-income, mostly-black (and Democratic) precincts of North Chicago. Schneider won most of the Lake Forest precincts, while Sheyman won most of the North Chicago precincts. Although Sheyman won this area by 15 percentage points over Schneider (48% to 33%), these precincts only cast 15 percent of the Democratic vote in the primary. Sheyman needed victories in other areas if he was to overcome the large lead Schneider built in the Highland Park/Deerfield area.

The victories did come for Sheyman in the more western parts of the District that are in Lake County. In two western townships that were partially in the old 10th District, Sheyman edged Schneider by seven percentage points (44% to 37%).

Township (Largest City)	Schneider	Sheyman	Tree	Bavda
Libertyville (Libertyville)	38%	42%	10%	10%
Warren (Gurnee)	36%	48%	10%	6%

The 10th District by the Numbers: Schneider Wins the Primary – Onward to November *(continued from page 2)*

These two townships are middle-income, with a mostly white population; are strongly Republican; and cast just ten percent of the District’s Democratic vote. The remaining part of the 10th District, the Lake County townships that were added after last year’s redistricting, as well as one township in Cook that was added (Maine Township), cast about 22 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary. Although Sheyman won in these new 10th District townships, his two percentage point edge over Schneider (41% to 39%) was not nearly enough.

<i>Township (Largest City)</i>	<i>Schneider</i>	<i>Sheyman</i>	<i>Tree</i>	<i>Bavda</i>
Avon (Grayslake)	37%	45%	12%	6%
Benton (Beach Park)	33%	48%	14%	5%
Fremont (Mundelein)	41%	40%	11%	8%
Grant (Ingleside)	40%	38%	15%	7%
Lake Villa (Lake Villa)	44%	39%	11%	6%
Maine (Des Plaines)	42%	35%	8%	15%
Zion (Zion)	36%	43%	13%	8%

Schneider’s nine percentage point district-wide margin of victory was greater than the margin Dan Seals won by in 2010, when he beat out Julie Hamos by just two percentage points in the congressional primary. But voter turnout for this Democratic primary was down sharply from 2010. There were under 33,000 votes cast this year, compared to nearly 53,000 two years ago.

So what is our takeaway from the numbers? Well, on paper at least, Brad Schneider has a good chance of beating Bob Dold in November. The redistricting made the 10th District about two percentage points more Democratic than it had been, mainly by taking out some Cook County precincts that were strongly Republican and adding some Lake County precincts that, although still Republican, are not as Republican as

the precincts that were removed. In the old 10th District, for example, Pat Quinn lost in the race for governor with 48 percent of the vote. In the precincts of the new 10th, he would have won with just over 50 percent. Of all the congressional districts in America represented by Republicans, ours is the most Democratic. This is why, on paper Brad Schneider has an excellent chance of winning.

But this is still a district with a close to 50-50 split between Democrats and Republicans. It is a district that has elected a Democrat in only three of the last 59 congressional elections (Abner Mikva in 1974, 1976, 1978), going back to 1894. It is also a district that supports moderate Republicans, and although Bob Dold has voted with Tea Party Republicans overwhelmingly more than he has sided with Democrats, he can be

expected to hammer his claim that he is a moderate Republican. He can also be expected to spend a massive amount of money to deliver that message in an effort to hold onto his seat. So although Schneider has a good chance of winning, we can expect a brutal campaign.

Fortunately for Democrats, Brad Schneider has shown that he can face tough opposition and come out on top. The primary gave him valuable experience as a candidate. For that, Democrats should be grateful for the strong campaigns run by Vivek Bavda, John Tree, and Ilya Sheyman. And now it is imperative that all erstwhile Bavda, Tree, and Sheyman supporters join the Schneider campaign so that Democrats can retake the 10th in November.

Schneider to Face Dold; Tenth Dems Pledge Unity at Party Celebrating All Primary Candidates *(continued from page 1)*



Julie Morrison, nominee for Illinois State Senate, addresses the crowd.



Chris Kennedy, nominee for Lake County State's Attorney, talks to supporters.

to find a parking space in the Cubby Bear's oversized lot.

The evening's theme was the common goal of all present—winning and losing primary candidates alike – to turn the 10th District from red to blue for the first time in more than 30 years. A surprise guest, our 9th District neighbor, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, cited Illinois as ground zero for retaking the House and Tenth Dems Chair, Hon. Lauren Beth Gash,

announced that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee issued a statement saying that Brad Schneider had been selected for its competitive Red to Blue program of top Democratic candidates in the country.

Before the congressional contenders addressed the crowd, several candidates from down ticket races spoke. "In November, we're going to have a fight. After 32 years of Republican control, this seat is up for grabs, and the Republicans are running scared," cautioned Chris Kennedy, candidate for Lake County State's Attorney.

"I'm really happy and thrilled about our Democratic ticket from top to bottom," said Buffalo Grove Village President Jeff Braiman, a Lake County judgeship candidate.

Julie Morrison, candidate for Illinois State Senate, also spoke. "Especially in the last week of the primary, I saw what the Tenth Dems are capable of," she said. "I saw it in the predawn hours on train platforms,

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Event organizer Karen McCormick gets the program started.



Schneider to Face Dold; Tenth Dems Pledge Unity at Party Celebrating All Primary Candidates *(continued from page 4)*

in neighborhoods where volunteers knocked on doors, and at a campaign meeting where a new volunteer raised her hand to canvass. Together we are a FORCE that can win ANY race this fall."

State Representative Daniel Biss, also a candidate for the Illinois State Senate, couldn't be present, but he issued a statement that emphasized the goal of unity. Recognizing that the high enthusiasm of Ilya Sheyman's

a "super-candidate" by infusing the inspiring qualities from their primary campaign into Schneider's general election campaign.

Even before hearing Biss's entreaty, many Sheyman supporters voiced their intention to support Schneider going forward. "We worked long and hard for Ilya, but today is a different day. Today is the second day of the general, and we are here supporting our candidate Brad Schneider,"

same enthusiastic support of the Party's nominee.

Vivek Bavda praised Schneider: "One of the first things I learned as a teacher is that children learn from what we do. Seeing how Brad raised his children speaks more about his character than anything he could have said on the campaign trail. Brad Schneider shows these same qualities of integrity as a candidate."



Nominee Schneider acknowledges Sheyman, Tree, and Bavda's candidacies and talks about the coming congressional campaign.



Congressional candidate Brad Schneider embraces primary candidate Vivek Bavda.



Congressional nominee Brad Schneider exchanges ideas with future constituents.

primary supporters left them deeply disappointed that he was unable to clinch the nomination, Biss urged support for Schneider. Biss imagined Sheyman supporters helping to create

announced Priscilla Sperling, President of New Trier Democrats.

The other primary contenders and their supporters demonstrated the

Maintaining his reputation as the candidate who got the most laughs on the campaign trail, Tree quipped about re-energizing his military career now that he won't be running

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Introduced by Ilya Sheyman, Brad Schneider takes the microphone.



Primary candidate John Tree congratulates Brad Schneider on his victory.



Del Parra, candidate for Lake County Board, calls for victory in November.

Schneider to Face Dold; Tenth Dems Pledge Unity at Party Celebrating All Primary Candidates *(continued from page 5)*

for Congress, warning supporters that the next time they saw him he would be sporting a much shorter haircut. Tree declared his respect and affection for his erstwhile opponents and pledged to help Schneider in any way he could.

Sheyman energized the crowd, reminding those present how he and Schneider launched their campaigns nearly a year ago with the simple idea that “we couldn’t afford to let Bob Dold continue with his policies.... Change requires bold, progressive leadership, and it also requires that all of us come together and help

Democrats take back the 10th.”

When the cheers died down, Schneider took the microphone to praise all the candidates and to thank all the volunteers for their hard work during the primary season. Looking toward the general election, Schneider pointed out that Republican Congressman Dold has proven himself to be a Tea Party Republican who, despite marketing himself as a social moderate, has supported the reactionary Paul Ryan budget as well as anti-woman legislation, voting nearly in lockstep with his ultra-conservative Illinois colleague, Rep.

Joe Walsh. Schneider confessed that he awoke the day after the primary with a pit in his stomach, but he predicted that as long as 10th District Democrats unite, on election day “we will wake up not with a pit in our stomach but with the hope that after 32 long years, the 10th will be as it should be—a Democratic District of Illinois.”

“You, me, and the three here,” Schneider continued, gesturing toward Bavda, Sheyman, and Tree. “One party. One voice. One vision. We will win this District together.”





"IF THERE IS A WAR ON POVERTY, WE ARE LOSING"

In this world of Internet, cell phones, and cable television, it's easy to forget the power of the written word. Yet not so long ago, a handful of books changed America. As historian Maurice Isserman points out, the early 1960s saw the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, which dramatically increased our awareness of dangers to the environment; Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed*, which led to improved consumer safety regulations; and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, which strengthened the feminist movement. And 50 years ago last month, Michael Harrington's *The Other America* was published. His book influenced a key component of President Johnson's Great Society—the War on Poverty.

Harrington was born into a middle class Catholic family in St. Louis. He was taught in Jesuit schools and became a follower of Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement. He later left his religion and the Catholic Worker movement for socialism, which he believed would change the political and social conditions that kept the poor in poverty.

Based on a 1959 article he wrote for *Commentary Magazine*, *The*

Other America was a short, well-organized analysis of poverty in the United States with a clear theme and solution. Using both statistics and gripping anecdotes, Harrington showed that, despite a growing middle class enjoying material wealth, there were millions of Americans, perhaps as much as 25 percent of the nation, living in poverty. These poor were invisible to the rest of America, both because they lived in isolated ghettos or regions like Appalachia and because they had no advocates.

These poor were day laborers in cities; the rural poor including migrant workers who lived in "near medieval poverty;" African-Americans whom he referred to as "America's internal aliens;" the elderly, "lonely, and isolated;" and the mentally ill, who were more likely to be poor than any other group.

Recently, Mitt Romney stated, "I'm not concerned about the very poor—we have a safety net there. If it needs repair, I'll fix it." Yet Harrington pointed out that "[t]he poor get less out of the welfare state than any group in America." Big farms received subsidies; those who had jobs got Social Security. In addition, many poor people simply did not know

how to access aid available to them. Harrington argued that for these poor, "[p]rogress is misery" because they were not equipped to handle advances in technology.

Harrington contended that poor people across the United States shared a "culture of poverty," a similar sense of hopelessness and helplessness. They could not escape a vicious cycle of poor diet, illness, loss of jobs, and inability to pay for decent housing. "The other Americans are those who live at a level of life beneath moral choice, who are so submerged in their poverty that one cannot begin to talk about free choice." For Harrington, the only way the poor could be helped was through a massive effort by the federal government. Such an effort would have to include bringing everyone under Social Security and the minimum wage, creating a comprehensive medical program for all, and fighting racial prejudice.

At that time, Harrington had reason to hope that the Democratic Party would do just that. As Isserman writes in his biography of Harrington, *The Other American*, during the 1950s liberals joined conservatives in believing that the nation's economic growth would

A Conscience Constituency *(continued from page 7)*

take care of poverty. However, in 1959 Illinois Senator Paul Douglas gave a speech in which he contended that close to 25 percent of Americans lived in poverty. Harrington hoped that a coalition of progressive forces within the Democratic Party—including liberals, labor unions, and African-Americans—would force Southern racists out and create “a real second party” that would pass “meaningful and progressive social welfare, labor, and civil rights legislation.”

Indeed, when Lyndon Johnson was elected President in 1964, Congress created Medicare and Medicaid, increased aid to secondary schools, improved environmental standards, and guaranteed the right to vote. In addition, influenced by Harrington’s book, Johnson declared a War on Poverty. Harrington counseled Sargent Shriver, who headed the project, to create New Deal type public works projects to give the poor employment and income. Instead,

Johnson was more interested in offering the voters a tax cut and spent far less on the War on Poverty than Harrington thought necessary.

Still, Harrington was hopeful. He believed in the emergence of a new type of middle class made up of well-educated scientists and technicians who, inspired by our nation’s core democratic values, would use their skills to take on “unmet social needs like housing, public transportation, and the dilapidated public sector.” He called this the “conscience constituency.”

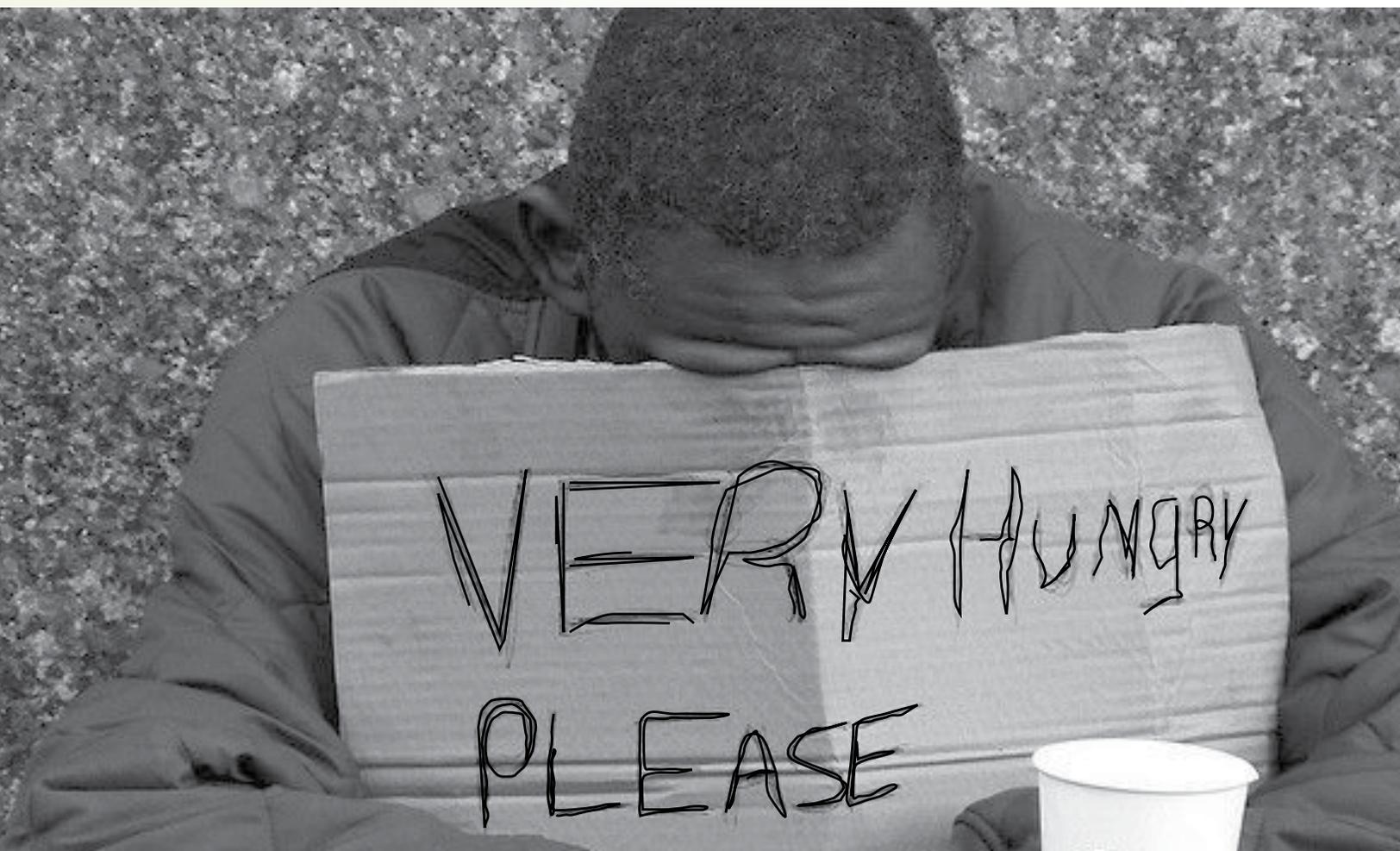
That this failed to happen was a tragedy not only for Harrington but also for our nation. If there is a War on Poverty, we are losing. In October 2010, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that 14.3 percent or 1/7 of Americans lived in poverty, the highest rate since the 1960s. And no part of the United States has been spared. The *Tribune* continued its report by noting that the

poverty rate in the Chicago suburbs stood at 10.4 percent, an increase of 37 percent—double the urban rate increase. To exacerbate the problem, almost half of the non-profits that helped those in need had reported cuts in funding.

Even worse, as Mike Dorning reports in a recent article for *Bloomberg*, over 20 million Americans now have incomes less than half of the poverty rate, considered under \$11,000 for a family of four. These “very poor” have nearly doubled, from 3.7 percent of the population in 1975 to 6.7 percent in 2010. Over 46 million Americans currently receive food stamps. And there are huge gaps in the so-called safety net due to cutbacks in public and private funding, as well as many of the poor not meeting government criteria for assistance.

Poverty is not only a national problem but also a local one. Jane

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McCarthy is Executive Director of the Family Service Center serving Glenview, Northbrook, Kenilworth, and Wilmette. She also worked for Family Service in Lake County. McCarthy has seen “pockets of poverty” in our northern suburbs and among many of the residents “a real sense of hopelessness.” Suburban food pantries are busier than ever. In New Trier Township, 87 percent of cases handled by Family Services are subsidized. Children and the elderly are especially vulnerable, as are the mentally ill. McCarthy worries not only about those helped by her agency but also by the ripple effect—how growing poverty will exacerbate the problems of crime in our neighborhoods, at-risk children in our schools, and an increased burden on our hospital emergency rooms as the poor cannot afford preventive care.

While Mitt Romney can be chided for not placing a priority on addressing poverty, are Democrats much better? Recently, I received a campaign mailing from a Democratic candidate for Congress. He mentioned the term “middle class” six times yet said nothing about the poor. Certainly we need to address the needs of

the middle class, many of whom are slowly sinking into the quicksand of poverty. But as Michael Harrington reminds us, there are others whose needs may be even more desperate.

According to the *Bloomberg* article cited earlier, President Obama’s stimulus program, as well as a temporary extension of unemployment benefits, helped to keep 2.4 million Americans from joining the ranks of the very poor. But just as Congress wouldn’t spend nearly enough to create a real War on Poverty in the 1960s, so too has our current Congress refused to confront poverty today. We must join together as a conscience constituency to make certain that a reelected President Obama, as well as our next Democratic congressman, acts not only for us but also for those invisible people, the poor, until there is no “Other America.”



Bob Dold Supports Republican Assault on Women's Rights

As the congressional race heats up, Congressman Robert Dold no doubt will attempt to portray himself as a social moderate and champion of women's rights. Hopefully, 10th District voters will not allow campaign rhetoric to mask a voting record that reflects allegiance to the Tea Party and its radical assault on women's access to reproductive healthcare and choice.

To be sure, Dold has spent his first term in the House of Representatives supporting the radical right's agenda to roll back decades of progress on women's reproductive health and the right to choose. To wit: On January 20, 2011, he voted for H.R. 3—a radical and multi-pronged effort to reduce women's access to abortion by expanding the existing bans on federal funding and restricting private insurance coverage. Nine months later, Dold voted for the passage of an even more extreme piece of anti-choice legislation: H.R. 358, which proposed to put pregnant women's

lives at risk by allowing hospitals to deny emergency, life-saving abortions.

Here's a closer look at the two anti-choice legislative proposals that Dold supported in his first term in Congress.

H.R. 3—*"No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act"*

Aimed at further restricting women's access to abortion, H.R. 3 proposed to make permanent and expand the Hyde Amendment, which for the past 30 years has banned federally funded abortions (except in cases of rape, incest, or to save a woman's life). If enacted, H.R. 3 would have blocked participants in insurance plans that cover abortions from receiving federal subsidies or medical cost tax deductions—even if the cost of the abortion was separately paid with personal funds.

H.R. 3 also proposed to further limit a woman's ability to cover the cost

of an abortion by denying tax credits to companies that offer health plans that include coverage for abortions; requiring women using tax-free Medical Savings Accounts to pay taxes on the costs of abortions; and eliminating privately-funded insurance coverage for abortion in the state-based exchanges set up under the Affordable Care Act.

H.R. 3 also infringed significantly on woman's right to privacy by subjecting victims of rape and incest to tax audits. As one IRS official explained to *Mother Jones*: A woman receiving a tax credit for abortion-related medical costs would on audit have to demonstrate or prove that the pregnancy was caused by incest or rape or that her life was in danger.

With Dold's support, H.R. 3 passed the House in January 2011, but it died in the Democratic-led Senate. But it wasn't the last Republican effort to deny women access to reproductive healthcare and the right to choose.

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Congress Watch

Bob Dold Supports Republican Assault on Women's Rights

(continued from page 12)

On January 20, 2011, Joseph Pitts (R-PA) introduced H.R. 358, which amends the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to prohibit the use of federal funds to pay for abortions. The majority of U.S. states do not provide funding for abortion services, except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the mother's life. H.R. 358 went a step further, prohibiting women receiving federal healthcare subsidies from purchasing private comprehensive health insurance plans that cover abortion.

The extremist measure also revives the controversial Stupak amendment by forcing health plans to drop comprehensive coverage in state health insurance exchanges, cutting millions of women from the benefits they receive today and preventing women from paying for health insurance with abortion coverage with their own money. H.R. 358 also permits states to enact sweeping refusal laws that would allow health plans to refuse to cover women's preventive services, including birth control, without cost-sharing—undoing a new protection under

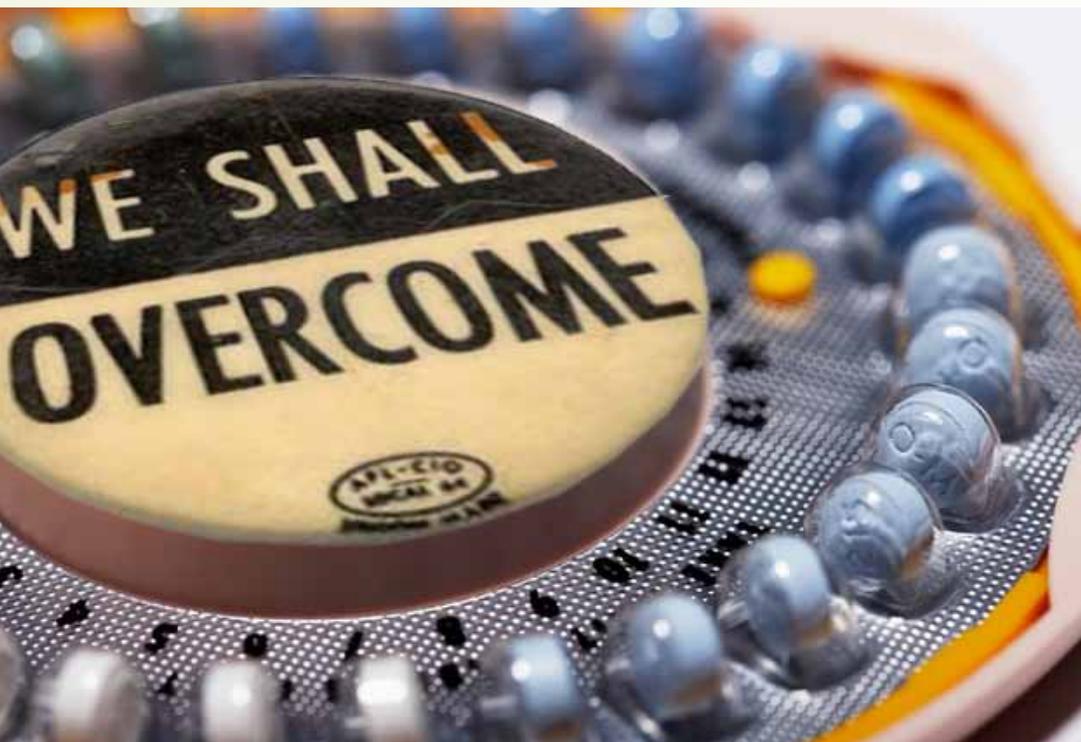
health reform supported by 66 percent of Americans.

H.R. 358 also codifies and significantly expands the 2004 Weldon amendment, which allows hospitals, healthcare facilities, and insurance plans to refuse to provide, pay for, or make referrals for abortions. More extreme than Weldon, it allows healthcare entities to refuse to "participate in" abortion care. Thus, a hospital employee could refuse to process bills, handle medical records, or even set up an examination room for a patient seeking abortion care. Worse, H.R. 358, which bears the Orwellian title, the "Protect Life Act," actually endangers the lives of pregnant women by eliminating long-standing protections under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act that require hospitals to provide abortions when needed to save the mother's life.

Meghan Rhoad, a women's rights researcher at Human Rights Watch, told the *Huffington Post*: "The misnamed Protect Life Act is [really] about allowing women to die if they need an emergency abortion. It is a

vicious attack on women's rights and the most basic right to life."

Dold joined 236 Republican colleagues on October 14 in voting for this regressive, anti-women legislation, demonstrating the insincerity in his campaign promise to protect women's rights. Dold's willingness to support his party in dismantling women's rights to reproductive healthcare and choice makes it imperative that we vote him out of office in November and replace him with Brad Schneider, a Democrat we can depend upon to advance women's rights rather than restrict them.



Social Security Immigration Education Jobs Contraception Global warming Medicare Healthcare Voting rights Taxes on the wealthy Women's choice

We all know that the country is center-right. Perhaps it's there as a result of a pendulum swing from the left in the '60s, and the politicians and pundits now like to tell us we're center-right almost as a throwaway line. Or maybe people just keep saying that and have done so for such a long time that we've come to believe it. But all that repetition wouldn't make it accurate. Take a look at just a few issues before us:

Jobs—An estimated 306 of the 307 million Americans want the government to take energetic action to ramp up the economy and create jobs. The noise from the far-right is the only thing that is making it seem as if there is huge opposition to such government action. As a nation, we are left of center now on jobs.

Voting rights—Americans believe overwhelmingly that all of us over the age of 18, with the possible exception of convicted felons, should vote. That's pretty much smack dab in the center, not center-right. On the other hand, there are Republican strategists who have openly stated that the only people they want to vote are those who will vote Republican.

In the 2010 election, many states voted far-right legislators into office, and these legislators have enacted laws they mendaciously proclaim are to protect us from a blight of voting

fraud. The thing is that voting fraud almost never happens—not even in Chicago. These laws serve solely as an obstacle to voting for young people, the elderly, the poor, and those in minority groups who tend to vote overwhelmingly Democratic. Let's see, righty Rs preventing Ds from voting. Hmmm.

Immigration—Most of us believe that if people do something wrong they should bear the consequences. And most of us believe that children of illegal immigrants, who were born in this country and themselves have broken no laws, should not bear those consequences. Righties don't want to pass the Dream Act, and they are completely out of step with the majority of Americans. The Rs continue to oppose it because they're afraid they'll get primaried in the next election by a fanatic on the lunatic right fringe. That keeps them disconnected from everyone but the aforementioned lunatic right fringe.

This issue is complex, but as a nation we're pretty much in the center.

Taxes on the wealthy—Depending on the week and the poll, anywhere from 62 to 80 percent of Americans favor increased taxes on the rich. Only the Righties who signed Grover Norquist's pledge never to raise taxes, and some already-wealthy people, are opposed to that. That is to say, the country is center-left on this issue.

Contraception—Does this really require elaboration? Even 98 percent of Catholic women have used some form of birth control, and only some fundamentalist Righties have a problem with it. It's just that those few have very loud voices. We Americans are far left in favor of contraception.

Women's choice—The majority of Americans continue to be pro-choice, although by a smaller margin now than in past decades. In part that's because of the loss of institutional memory of how things used to be before *Roe v. Wade*. It wasn't pretty.

Global warming—It's not just all the environmental scientists; most Americans believe that the Earth is getting warmer and that mankind's activities, like burning fossil fuels, are contributing to it. The only question is why anyone denies that. To find the answer, follow the money. It's way on the right.

Social Security & Medicare—These are the two most popular programs ever created by the government, and America is far left on them. Unfortunately, the federal government has raided the Social Security Trust Fund—there is no bucket of cash lock boxed for Social Security. Instead, there are a bunch of U.S. bonds—debt obligations to be redeemed from the general fund as needed. That, of course, is a prime

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APRIL ISSUE

case of political cowardice at best, and something far more sinister at worst. Nevertheless, we have generations of Americans counting on what was promised. Only the Righties want to abolish or privatize these programs.

Note to budget hawk absolutist Righties: We made a contract with the American people, who prepaid for these services, and we must keep our word. I know you'll understand that.

Education—The Righties want to abolish the Department of Education at both the federal and state levels. They are starving schools of funds, so teachers, administrators, and janitors are being laid off. School maintenance and improvement projects are being halted, and the disparity between the education of our poor children and our wealthy kids continues to widen. Our children are suffering, their futures become

bleaker every day we fail them, and we are putting the future of America in peril.

Americans don't like this. They want their children to be educated and think public education is a very good thing. The Righties are completely out of sync with America on this. This country is way left on education.

Healthcare—Most Americans want the government to do more to fix it. All that is standing in the way is the resistance borne of the hundreds of billions of dollars being collected every year by the medical insurance companies and a few others. We've tried letting the market fix this. That has resulted in our having the most expensive healthcare in the world while, at the same time, getting just middling results. Only the far Righties with megaphones attached to their faces think that continuing to let the free market work is the solution.

The list can go on until sunrise. Those saying that we are a center-right nation have either bought into the Big Lie or think they will benefit by making you believe it.

It turns out that the common wisdom isn't so wise after all.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT COMMUNITY CONNECTION



*AND WHAT LIES
ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THIS
STOREFRONT
DOOR, LOOK
OUT FOR THE
MAY ISSUE OF
THE
TENTH NEWS*

Bad things can happen to good people.

Maybe you always worked hard, but then you got sick and lost your job. Living off unemployment, you are forced to choose between paying your mortgage or maintaining the COBRA insurance you so desperately need for life-sustaining treatments.

Maybe you served your country in Iraq, but came home traumatized and couldn't find a job. Now you're living on the street.

While some Republican presidential candidates would tell you to blame yourself, Democrats know that the world doesn't always reward the deserving. For every Bill Clinton or Barack Obama who pulled himself up by his own efforts, there is a Dubya, the mediocre son of a well-connected man. Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, circumstances beyond your control are going to pick you up, or knock you down.

And that's why we need a safety net. President Obama and the Democrats are fighting to keep that net, and, in some cases, they have even strengthened it.

THE HOMELESS: Obama has kept promises to expand help for homeless

veterans by increasing the number of vouchers available to subsidize rental housing. Congress funded an additional 10,000 vouchers per year from 2008 through 2010 but then cut back on the program in 2011, after the Tea Party took control of the House. In July 2011, the administration also started a program to provide support services to veterans including outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA or other public benefits.

In June 2010, the White House launched its "Opening Doors" initiative, which aimed at better coordination among agencies to help end all homelessness by 2020. The effort included \$2 billion in stimulus money for programs that would aid the homeless in finding jobs, obtaining mental health and substance abuse treatment, and securing housing and childcare. The initiative specifically includes LGBT youth.

Spurred by the housing crisis, the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009 establishes a minimum time period that a tenant can remain in a foreclosed property before eviction. The law is aimed at giving tenants time to find another place to live. The White House has also provided a variety of programs for mortgage relief. This includes help with loan modifications for unemployed homeowners, underwater homeowners, and homeowners with second liens

THE SICK: The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is itself a safety-net program. An Urban Institute report estimates that the ACA could decrease the number of nonelderly uninsured by nearly half. The ACA also ends the practice of rescission, an insurance company's ability to nitpick your insurance application in order to deny

you coverage when you really need it. Further, the ACA ends lifetime caps on benefits. If you change jobs, the waiting period for your new health insurance is reduced. For the very sick who cannot get insurance, states are required to set up temporary high risk pools to provide help until 2014, when insurance companies will no longer be permitted to reject you for preexisting conditions.

While Mitt Romney accused Obama of being the only president to cut Medicare for seniors, quite the opposite is true. While the ACA reduces future Medicare spending by trimming payments to bloated Medicare Advantage plans, actual benefits for seniors were improved. For example, within ten years, the donut hole, that gap in Medicare Part D drug coverage where beneficiaries pay all the costs between \$2,830 and \$4,550, will be phased out.

One of President Obama's first acts upon taking office was signing the expanded Children's Health Insurance Program into law. Bush had vetoed the expansion twice. The ACA also expanded eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP programs to all individuals under age 65 with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level.

THE HUNGRY: Under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Obama expanded the availability of food stamps. Benefits increased by 15 percent, and more childless, jobless adults became eligible. (A single person netting less than \$1,000 per month could get up to \$200 per month according to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service guidelines. A family of four netting less than \$1863 per month could get up to \$668.) Able-bodied adults, however, must register for work,



accept suitable employment, and take part in job training programs. The administration also stepped up enforcement on welfare fraud, even though the government estimates this affects only one percent of the program's costs.

Unsurprisingly, the economy has caused the number of people on food stamps to skyrocket to a record one in seven Americans. The White House blog reports that more than half on the program are children, the elderly, or the disabled. Many others are newly unemployed who never thought they'd be poor.

THE UNEMPLOYED: Obama and the Democrats have consistently fought to extend unemployment benefits, against entrenched Republican opposition. In December

2010, Republicans refused to extend unemployment benefits or middle-class tax cuts unless the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy were renewed. After a bitter fight, Obama conceded, in exchange for a 13-month extension of unemployment benefits. He also held on to two highly-effective anti-poverty programs, the earned income and child tax credits, which would likely have been attacked by the House's incoming Tea Party freshmen.

John Boehner-led House Republicans again blocked a temporary extension of unemployment and middle class tax cuts in December 2011. Democrats held their ground, and the battle continues.

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