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Congress Watch: Make Your Voice Heard and VOTE!



With the midterm congressional election just a few days away—on Tuesday, November 4—we are devoting this column to one last look at the 10th District congressional race. If you're feeling overwhelmed by campaign rhetoric and haven't yet voted, we'd like to remind you why it's so imperative for you to get to the polls and exercise this basic democratic right.

The stakes are high. American democracy has been under assault, and our nation is at a critical juncture. Whether we reelect Brad Schneider or allow his challenger, Republican ex-Congressman Robert Dold, to take office will help set the course of our nation for decades to come. Will we allow ourselves to be represented by someone willing to help the radical right continue to weaken, if not dismantle the

cornerstones of our democracy? Or will we ensure that our 10th District continues to be represented by a congressman who will support the values and institutions that once made our country great, including:

- A strong middle class
- The safety net of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and, now, the Affordable Care Act
- Women's access to reproductive healthcare, including the legal right to choose to terminate a pregnancy
- Women's right to equal pay for equal work

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Tenth News

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Boo!

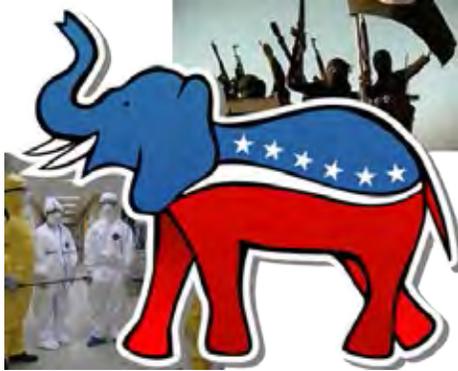
by Adrienne Kirshbaum

This is one big scary world! Just a few weeks ago, all you could find in your newspaper, on television, or on the Internet were images of ISIS, or ISIL, also known as the Islamic State.

Men dressed in black were seen laughing and waving black flags as they marauded through the Mideast, chopping off heads and terrorizing the people of Iraq and Syria. A tall masked man with hostage in hand mocked the U.S., daring us to enter yet another desert war. And President Obama, who vowed to do away with never-ending war, sent in our planes.

Then those images of ISIS were supplanted by pictures of people dressed in space suits, caring for the victims of Ebola, a terrifying disease that has been raging across western Africa, killing thousands in its wake. Now that the disease has reached our shores, like all issues of public concern it has been politicized. It's

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A Time To Stand

by Eleonora di Liscia

There are moments in politics that I will never forget:

Election night of 2006 when the Senate unexpectedly turned blue. The euphoria in 2008 when they called Ohio for President Barack Obama. Watching the vote count when the House passed the Affordable Care Act. Turning on the television in 2012 to hear Brad Schneider say: "For the first time... For the first time..." because he'd just won his congressional seat over reliable Republican incumbent Robert Dold, turning parts of the 10th Congressional District blue for the very first time.

And there are the dark moments:

My husband's hopefulness in 2000 when they called Florida for Vice President Al Gore and how devastated we were

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Rep. Brad Schneider accepts the Abner Mikva Leadership Award at Tenth Dems' Annual Awards Dinner. See pages 6-12 for more photos and full coverage of the event.



Congress Watch: VOTE! *continued from page 1*

- Civil rights for all, regardless of sexual preference
- Quality public education for all, including immigrants and minorities, and access to affordable post-high school education
- A safe and clean environment

Comparing Rep. Schneider's record to that of ex-Congressman Dold reminds us why we must do all we can to reelect Brad Schneider.

The Social Safety Net: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and Children's Healthcare

Rep. Schneider has demonstrated a strong commitment to protecting our social safety net. During his first term in Congress, he voted against numerous measures aimed at repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and decreasing federal funding for Medicaid, including budget bills (*i.e.*, H. R. 45 and H. Con. Res. 25). He also opposed the Ryan budget, which would have ended Medicare as we know it.



In contrast, during his term in Congress, ex-Congressman Dold went along with every Republican effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act. He also consistently voted for the Ryan budget.

Women's Reproductive Health and Right to Choose

A member of the pro-choice caucus, Democratic Congressman Brad Schneider has shown an unwavering commitment to protecting women's access to quality reproductive healthcare and their right to choose to have an abortion. For example, he voted against two key bills aimed at weakening women's rights: H. R. 7 and H. R. 1797. H.R. 7 proposed to prohibit federal funds from being used for an abortion or health benefits if the insured's plan includes abortion coverage. H. R. 1797 proposed to prohibit any abortion after 20 weeks.

Rep. Schneider's voting record with respect to women's reproductive rights earned him a 100 percent score on the Planned Parenthood 2014 scorecard as well as endorsements from the Planned Parenthood Action Fund and Planned Parenthood Illinois Action.

Rep. Schneider's commitment to women's rights is also evident in his cosponsorship of two other important bills: the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and a measure aimed at reversing the Supreme Court's *Hobby Lobby* decision (which allows a for-profit corporate employer to deny health insurance coverage for contraceptives based on the shareholders' religious beliefs).

In contrast, despite claiming to be "pro-choice," Robert Dold spent two years in Congress helping his fellow Republicans try to roll back decades of hard-won progress on women's rights. For example, Dold voted for H.R. 358—a measure known by its opponents as the "Let Women Die" bill. The legislation would have allowed federally-funded hospitals to refuse to perform an abortion—even for a woman whose life was in jeopardy without the procedure.

Marriage Equality

Congressman Schneider has been an unwavering supporter of marriage equality. He helped introduce the Respect for Marriage Act (RMA), which would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in its entirety. The RMA currently is in committee in both the House and Senate. Rep. Schneider also signed an Amicus Brief to the United States Supreme Court in the *United*

States v. Windsor case that argued that Section 3 of DOMA, which bars same-sex marriage, is unconstitutional. "Half the American people now live with the freedom to marry whomever they choose, and I will continue fighting in Washington for the rights of all couples," he said.

Rep. Schneider also is a cosponsor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would bar

employment discrimination against gay people.

In contrast, Robert Dold emphatically opposed marriage equality when he served in Congress. Toward the end of his term, Dold was quoted in the *Chicago Sun-Times* as saying: "I support the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as between a man and woman. I believe same-sex partners should have the ability to enter into contractual agreements."

Environmental Protection

Congressman Schneider has consistently voted to protect our environment, earning a 96 percent score in the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) 2013 National Environmental Scorecard. Consequently, the LCV Action Fund has strongly endorsed his reelection. Rep. Schneider also offered two successful amendments aimed at strengthening protections for the Great Lakes. One measure called for a coordinated national strategy to address the invasive Asian carp. The other sought to reduce the Army Corps of Engineers infrastructure project backlog, enabling it to move on to other pending projects, including 23 in the 10th District. Rep. Schneider also offered measures to protect the Great Lakes from oil and gas drilling.

In contrast, ex-Congressman Dold spent his one term in Congress voting in virtual lockstep with the House Republican leadership as it waged an unprecedented assault on the environment. In the process, he voted for innumerable legislative proposals that sought to strip the Environmental Protection Agency of its authority to enforce

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difficult to believe, but true. Our hopelessly polarized politicians have taken sides on Ebola!

So let's talk about the real elephant in the room—the truly scary event that's coming up in just a few days—the mid-term election! Because the issues of the day, including ISIS, Ebola, the killing of Michael Brown, and any of the other matters that have captured media attention are less important and will have less impact on our lives than the election. During the Halloween season, the things that go bump in the night are thoughts of Mitch McConnell as majority leader of a Republican Senate, intensifying Washington's gridlock and ensuring two more years when nothing is done to move the country forward. Or worse, two years when some things are done by a McConnell/Boehner-led Congress to move the country backward!

Illinois' Economic Comeback Under Pat Quinn: The Facts

Bruce Rauner would like voters to believe that our state is on the brink of ruin. Here are the facts, and the sources:

- Illinois' most recent unemployment rate, 6.6 percent, is the lowest in more than six years—lower than when Governor Quinn first took office. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS))
- There are more people working in Illinois today than when the Governor took office. (BLS)
- Illinois led the Midwest and was second in the nation in job creation. (BLS)
- Illinois has experienced the sharpest one-year decline in unemployment of any state in the U.S. (BLS)
- Illinois has added more than 300,700 private-sector jobs since the recovery began in 2010, 69,000 jobs over the past year, and 40,000 in the last two months alone. (BLS)
- Illinois income taxes are ninth lowest among the states with an income tax, and the overall tax burden on businesses puts Illinois in the middle of all states. (*Crain's Chicago Business*, 8/13/14)
- Illinois ranks third among states for corporate expansions and locations. (*Site Selection Magazine*)
- Illinois has the fourth-highest number of Fortune 500 company headquarters in the United States. (*Fortune*)
- Illinois workers' wages are the eighth-highest in the country, outranking all our neighbors, including Indiana (38), Iowa (40), and Wisconsin (33). Wage growth is one of the key indicators of economic growth. (BLS)
- More than 39,000 more businesses are registered in Illinois today than in 2009. (Illinois Dept. of Employment Security)

There is only one defense against these goblins and gremlins, and that is to vote. Casting a ballot for the good guys may not elect a senator from Alaska or North Carolina, but at least it will help to keep Dick Durbin, Pat Quinn, and Brad Schneider in office. It will reward Scott Drury for not being a rubber-stamp "Chicago Democrat," as his opponent's ads falsely charge. It will put a lie to the idea that there's an enthusiasm gap, or that all the millions of dollars the Koch Brothers, Karl Rove, and John Boehner are dumping into Illinois can convince you that Republicans have the answers to our problems.

If you care about the minimum wage, Social Security, Medicare, women's reproductive rights, and a host of other issues, don't be afraid. Just get over to your polling place on November 4th and vote smart. Vote Democratic! **TD**



Gloria Steinem, standing with Gov. Quinn, explained that when a Republican like Bruce Rauner talks about "reasonable restrictions" on abortion, that's code for "clinics will close."

- Illinois businesses are advertising nearly 212,000 job openings online, and 85 percent of open jobs are full time. (Illinois Dept. of Employment Security, The Conference Board and Wanted Analytics, September 2014)
- Venture capital funding for technology startups shot up 171 percent in 2013, to \$1.06 billion, from \$391 million in 2012. (*Built in Chicago*)
- Workers compensation reform enacted under Governor Quinn has already saved businesses more than \$450 million, and unemployment insurance reform will save \$400 million over eight years. (National Council on Compensation Insurance)

Former Gov. Mike Huckabee – One of the Last Dinosaurs Alive

by Steven Gan

As I was paging through the October issue of *National Geographic* the other day, I was having a discussion with my 88-year-old mother about dinosaurs. The cover story was all about a dinosaur called Spinosaurus which, at over 50 feet long, 20 feet high, and weighing in at six tons, is the largest predatory dinosaur ever to roam the Earth—even bigger than T. Rex.

My mom asked me how the dinosaurs became extinct, and I told her about one of the most widely-accepted theories in which a large meteor hit the Earth, caused a massive explosion, blocked out the sun, caused the earth's temperature to plunge, and thereby killed off most of these gargantuan, cold-blooded reptiles very quickly.

She retorted, "So then why is Huckabee still around?"

I happened to be drinking some coffee, and that facetious question really made me snork.

Before we got started on dinosaurs, my mom and I had been talking about how the Supreme Court had rejected appeals from five states seeking to preserve their bans on same-sex marriage and how this inaction effectively made such marriages legal in 30 states and the District of Columbia. As a gay American, I have watched and read about the thousands of gay couples around the country who immediately obtained marriage licenses and married. I am overwhelmed by this momentous period in our history.

So what does same-sex marriage have to do with dinosaurs? Read on.

Even as our country continues to move forward in an atmosphere of enlightenment, fairness, and equality, there are, and I suppose always will be, some who hang on to the prehistoric notion that permitting same-sex marriage somehow will take our nation into a dark place from which we shall never escape. One of those people is former Governor of Arkansas, Mike Huckabee.

After the Supreme Court announced its refusal to hear the appeals, Gov. Huckabee said that he would leave the GOP if Republicans abandon their unrelenting opposition to same-sex marriage and abortion. Appearing on the American Family Association's radio show, Huckabee said: "If the Republicans want to lose guys like me—and a whole bunch of still God-fearing Bible-believing

people—go ahead and just abdicate on this issue [of same-sex marriage], and while you're at it, go ahead and say abortion doesn't matter, either. Because at that point you lose me. I'm gone. I'll become an independent. I'll start finding people that have guts to stand up. I'm tired of this."

Unfortunately I can't take Huckabee at his word when he says he would leave the GOP. It's not that he's so loved and adored that Republicans would kiss his toes and beg him to stay. On the



contrary, most of them probably couldn't care less and wouldn't mind if the door hit him and his cronies on the way out. Rather, Huckabee's departure from the Republican Party along with a large cadre of other right-wing social conservatives would exacerbate the divisions within the GOP, especially in the south and west.

The more important issue at hand is why Huckabee persists in so vehemently opposing marriage equality. Who is it harming? Certainly not him, his family, or his community. Why express such disdain for the millions of LGBT Americans who are constructive, productive, tax-paying citizens, including those who also may serve bravely in the military (defending his and everyone's rights) and in Congress?

Nevertheless, former Gov. Huckabee remains committed to promoting bigotry and discrimination towards LGBT Americans, invoking God and the Bible, but in fact acting out of ignorance and intolerance. For my part, I take comfort in knowing that he and his cold-hearted reptilian kind eventually will go the way of the dinosaurs. **TD**

Tenth Dems Supports the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism



by Barbara Altman

On October 8, Tenth Dems leaders Hon. Lauren Beth Gash, Barbara Altman, Carolyn Rivers, and Joe Dubaniewicz gathered at Milan Banquets in Waukegan for the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism's annual luncheon. Among the guests at the Tenth Dems table were Glenn Ryback, candidate for Lake County Treasurer; Janet Kilkelly, candidate for Lake County Clerk; and Jason Patt, candidate for Lake County Sheriff.

Congressman Danny Davis was a featured speaker, and our own Congressman Brad Schneider, one of the honored guests on the dais, spoke in support of the Coalition's activities. Tenth Dems' contributions to reducing recidivism were recognized by Waukegan Township Supervisor Patricia Jones.

This is now the fifth year that, through Community Connection, Tenth Dems has facilitated a monthly workshop in support of

Waukegan Township's anti-recidivism efforts. The interactive workshop helps Waukegan Township clients prepare for job interviews. Among the topics covered is anticipating questions and formulating some answers, especially with respect to spotty employment history or a past conviction. This year, at the township's request, Tenth Dems has expanded the scope of the workshop to also address the ways in which a new hire can maximize his or her chances of retaining that hard-won job. **TD**



Terry Link: A Good Neighbor with a Storied Legacy

by Lindy Mika

If you've lived in Lake County long, it's probably a safe bet you know the name Terry Link. It's likely you've actually met Terry, who's been a resident of the district his entire life. Perhaps he was knocking on doors in your neighborhood or stopped by a community event in your area. Or maybe you just saw him talking to locals at Gojo's, his favorite hometown Waukegan restaurant. You may even know that he is currently your state senator.

What might be less well known, however, is Terry Link's longstanding record as a representative of your community. That's because, as Terry puts it, "I'm just not a show-off." While he may be a modest man, his list of achievements is expansive. It's important during this election season that we be reminded of what exactly Terry has done for the community over his tenure.

Throughout his productive career, Terry Link has fought diligently for the middle class, women's rights, seniors' financial security, and environmental reforms.

Terry supported a healthy middle class by voting to establish a standard individual tax deduction of \$2,050 that rises with inflation. He also sponsored the last minimum-wage increase in Illinois, giving working families a chance to get ahead.

Terry has a proven record as a strong advocate of women's rights. He is proudly pro-choice. In 2003, Terry cosponsored legislation that required insurance companies to offer coverage of contraceptives and family planning services to women. He was also a chief cosponsor of the Equal Pay Act, a measure prohibiting wage discrimination based on sex.

During Terry's time in office, he has been a strong proponent for ensuring that seniors can keep the earnings they've spent their lives saving. In 2004, he championed the first homestead exemption to local property taxes for senior citizens in 20 years. He also worked to pass a prescription drug discount program for the disabled and elderly.

Terry even received a 100 percent environmental scorecard from the Illinois Environmental Council this year, after supporting 11 different bills designed to improve our environment. This year he spearheaded a supplement to the 2008 Smoke Free Illinois legislation, an initiative that is guaranteed to improve Illinois's public health for generations.

If there's one reason Terry is your sitting senator coming into this election, it's because he has been an exemplary representative for the area and puts the interests of his district first. **TD**

“Standing The Perimeter”

Tammy Duckworth Keynotes Tenth Dems Eleventh Annual Awards Dinner

by Eleonora di Liscia

When 8th District Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth was shot down in Iraq, a young soldier from her unit who was injured and bleeding badly took his rifle and stood the perimeter against the enemy.

“I asked him later,” Rep. Duckworth recalled. “Kirk, why didn’t you jump in the rescue berth and get in the aircraft? Why were you the last guy?” He said, “You know, I just decided other soldiers had stood the perimeter before me on other battlefields, and there will be other soldiers that stand other perimeters in future battles, but on this day, on that field, they were not going to get through me.”

Rep. Duckworth gave the keynote speech to a packed banquet room of more than 200 at the Tenth Dems Eleventh Annual Fall Awards Dinner and Fundraiser on October 23rd at the Hyatt Deerfield. Tenth Dems honored two outstanding volunteers at the event, recognized Democratic Central Committeeman and North Shore Sanitary District Board Member Dan Pierce’s 50 years of public service, and presented Congressman Brad Schneider with the Abner Mikva Leadership Award.

In her keynote speech, Rep. Duckworth explained that setting up the perimeter was the first thing a military unit does when it moves in to occupy an area.

“You set it up to protect what is most valuable to you. It’s more than just one person; everyone takes a turn to guard what’s important. And that’s what you are doing in the 10th—you are standing the perimeter to guard what’s important,” she said.

Rep. Duckworth said we have to stand the perimeter to protect such big “D” Democratic values as food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, and the promise of Social Security.

“If it hadn’t been for school lunch and breakfast programs, I would have gone hungry. This demonization of people who are just trying to get by, to say they are lazy and dependent on hand-outs, is simply sickening. It’s not the

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American way," she said. "And the people in this room remember that," she added.

Rep. Duckworth also spoke about being a freshman in the extremist-controlled House, which she likened to a "steel cage death match." She talked about working closely with fellow freshman Rep. Brad Schneider, who keeps doing his job despite the extremist opposition, the half-truths, and the lies. "That is the mark of a good representative, one who is by the people, for the people." And she praised Rep. Schneider for leading the Democratic Party in bringing a discharge petition to force a vote on unemployment insurance.

Rep. Duckworth also shared a personal story about Rep. Schneider. She recalled how she caught the last flight out of Washington after a long day of voting. At 3:00 a.m., her cellphone rang. It was Brad Schneider calling to ask whether she was all right. "Brad asked, 'Do I need to come up and carry you down?'" Duckworth said.

It turns out that there had been a fire in the apartment building that she, Schneider, and several other members of Congress occupied while in D.C. "Of all those members of Congress, Brad was the only one who thought about me, thinking I was trapped in my apartment on the 5th floor. He was ready to walk back up and come and get me," Duckworth said.

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Earlier in the evening, State Senator Daniel Biss presented Rep. Schneider with the Abner Mikva Leadership Award. Biss praised Rep. Schneider as someone who wants to solve problems and who tries to bring diverse constituencies together to move the country forward. Sen. Biss reminded Tenth Dems members to, in effect, stand the perimeter.

“(Brad) has this bizarre ideologue on the other side of the ticket, but he needs our help tonight,” said Sen. Biss. “We are here to thank him, but much more importantly, we are here to commit ourselves to doing everything in our power to insure that Brad Schneider is not just our current Congressman, but also our future.”

Accepting the award, Rep. Schneider said he drew inspiration from the privilege of serving the 10th Congressional District and from the legacy of Abner Mikva. Schneider spoke about “stepping forward and standing up to fight for the things we believe in. We wouldn’t be here talking about the re-election of a Democrat in the 10th District if it weren’t for the vision of Tenth Dems 11 years ago who come year after year to fight together. We’re fighting every day for Big D Democratic values, because we believe we have to keep the promise to the next generation that their future is going to be better than the future that was given to us.” Consistent with his emphasis on the next generation, Brad specifically commended the work of Tenth Dems interns, whom he asked to step forward for all to recognize.

Terry Jones, who created the logo for Tenth Dems University, received the Founders Award. Terry has designed the Tenth Dems newsletter for many years, as well as most of the original political buttons available through Tenth Dems. In Terry’s honor, the TDU logo was affixed to the front of the podium, even though the dinner was not a Tenth Dems University event. Terry said that

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Awards Dinner

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her work with Tenth Dems was animated by “Big D Democratic values: social justice, fairness, equality, the right to human dignity....”

Joseph S. Adler, Tenth Dems Events Chair, received the Rosenblit Volunteer Award. For several years, Joe has assumed primary responsibility for coordinating Tenth Dems events, including this awards dinner. A “living wage, equal pay for equal work, immigration reform, tax reform, the ‘American dream’ attainable for everyone, proper education and healthcare for all, climate change...” make up Joe’s “personal and political agenda.” He said, “Tenth Dems is the nation’s premier grassroots organization, and it is my home.”

Two statewide candidates were called to the podium. Sheila Simon, running for Comptroller, said that her race boiled down to the issue of ethics, putting forward her late father, U.S. Senator Paul Simon as her role model. State Sen. Mike Frerichs, candidate for Treasurer, spoke literally and figuratively about standing tall for Illinois. It “means standing up for those who need someone looking after them,” the 6’ 8” tall candidate said.

Tenth Dems leader Dulce Ortiz helped close with a bilingual plea to get out the vote. She urged each person in the room to reach out to 50 people, which could add up to more than 7,500 more Democratic votes. “There are still people who don’t know who they are going to vote for. It only takes that one connection,” she said, in Spanish and then in English. **TD**



Photos continue on next page





Congress Watch: VOTE! *continued from page 2*

water pollution standards; to halt efforts to address climate change; to undermine science; and to defund programs that protect air, water, wildlife, and delicate ecosystems. These efforts earned Dold a 34 percent rating from the League of Conservation Voters in 2011.

Equal Pay and the Minimum Wage

Congressman Schneider has taken a strong stand against workplace discrimination. He was a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would expand protections and close loopholes for women under the Equal Pay Act, which itself requires equal pay for equal work. The bill passed the Senate, but Republican leadership has refused to bring it up for a vote in the House.

Rep. Schneider also cosponsored the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2014, which raises the federal minimum wage from \$7.15 to \$10.10 per hour. The bill also indexes future annual increases to inflation and gradually increases the minimum wage for tipped employees to 70 percent of the minimum wage for all other workers. When Speaker Boehner refused to bring this bill to the floor, Rep. Schneider signed a discharge petition to compel the House to consider it.

In contrast, Dold said in a 2010 interview that he favored lowering the minimum wage. More recently, while running to regain his seat in Congress, the ex-Congressman attempted to walk back his hostility to government intervention to guarantee that workers be paid a living wage, saying that setting a minimum wage should be left to the individual states rather than the federal government. These positions earned Dold the endorsement of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a group that strongly opposes any increase in the minimum wage.

Endorsements

Endorsements tell voters a great deal about the candidates' respective agendas. In addition to the U.S. Chamber of Congress, ex-Congressman Dold has been endorsed by newspapers that

endorsed Mitt Romney in 2012 and are now backing Bruce Rauner for governor. In contrast, Congressman Schneider is endorsed by organizations that support women's rights (NARAL Pro-Choice America, JACPAC, Planned Parenthood), the environment (Sierra Club and League of Conservation Voters), marriage equality (Human Rights Campaign), and gun control (Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence), among other issues important to 10th District voters.

The Upshot

Ex-Congressman Robert Dold claims to be an independent, reach-across-the-aisle politician. His record belies this claim. Robert Dold is your garden-variety Republican who can be relied upon by his party's leadership to support every effort at unraveling the social safety net and to favor corporate interests over the interests of the people he represents. Dold has shown only scorn for President Obama, and the ex-Congressman can cite no record of bipartisanship.

Happily, the 10th District now has in Brad Schneider a hardworking, thoughtful Congressman who shares his constituents' values and represents them in the House. In his first term, he showed his commitment to fighting for the values we hold dear: human rights, civil rights, and the environment. He sits on the all-important House Foreign Affairs Committee. He reaches across the aisle when he can: he could cite specific instances of cross-party cooperation during the recent League of Women Voters/WLS TV debate. And if you've ever had occasion to contact Congressman Schneider's office, you know that his constituent services have been exceptional.

We need to keep Brad Schneider as the 10th District's representative in Congress. If you haven't voted yet, make sure you exercise that precious right. And if you have the time, consider volunteering to help Brad and the rest of the Democratic ticket before the polls close.

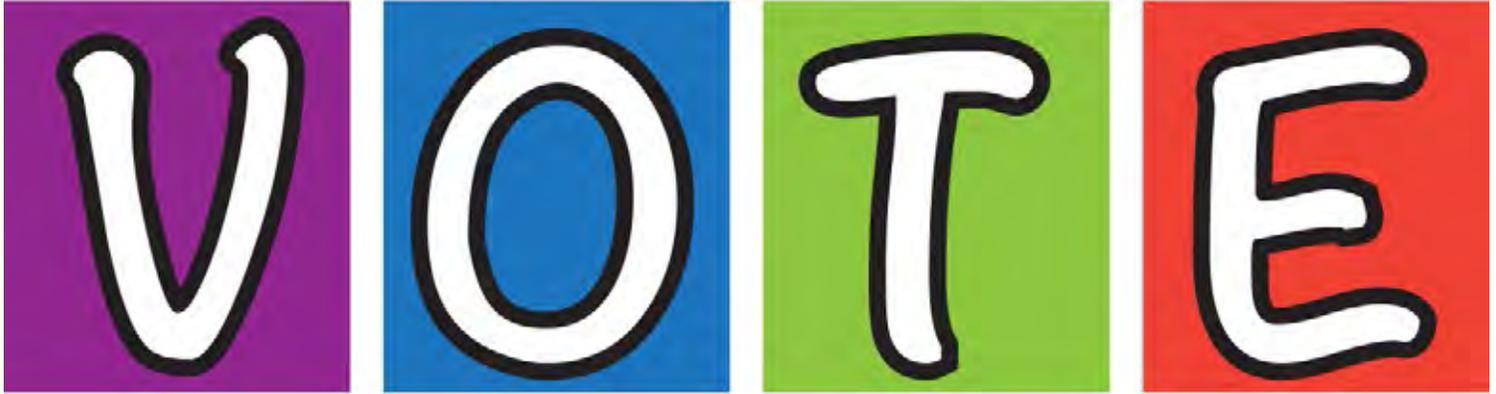
There are only a few days left. Make them count. **TD**

A Time to Stand continued from page 1

when they took Florida away. That December day when the Supreme Court stopped the Florida recount. Going to bed in 2004 with a stomachache on election night; my husband came to bed and said, "I'm sorry, honey."

It's those moments that make me remember how far we have come and how much is at stake.

After Barack Obama was elected in 2008, then-*Countdown* host Keith Olbermann threw his script in the air, shouting "Rush Limbaugh, you don't matter anymore! Sean Hannity, you don't matter anymore!" We were overjoyed. Alas, it wasn't really true.



Euphoria gave way to reality. Republicans viciously fought the progressive agenda every step of the way. They made thwarting the Democratic president their first priority. The battle had been won but the war wasn't over. We became tired and disappointed. Obama and the Democrats had enacted many, many great laws, but somehow we didn't see.

Then in 2010, too many voters stayed home, allowing the Tea Party to take over the House and lay siege to the progressive agenda.

Now in 2014, Democrats are poised for nuclear disaster—losing the Senate as well. If they win, Republicans have vowed to impeach President Obama over nothing more than naked partisanship.

It is a time to stand.

Yes, the battle is endless and we are weary. But we cannot let that stop us from answering the call, from stepping up the fight. So much that we value is on the line: A woman's right to make decisions about her own body, affordable healthcare accessible to everyone, protecting our environment, marriage equality, Social Security, Medicare as we know it, and so much more.

And all you really have to do is one simple thing: Vote. Vote so that every one of our voices is heard.

Because of Republicans' often successful attempts at voter suppression, it is going to take more of us to be heard. Continuing their steal-the-election trend, set in 2000 when they stopped the Florida recount, the U.S. Supreme Court went on to strip key provisions of the Voting Rights Act and to allow corporations to buy unlimited "speech." Now, they've halted early voting in Ohio. The Court refused to stay Texas' restrictive voter identification law. More states are on the line.

So what's it going to be? Are we going to roll over and let Republicans dictate our agenda for decades to come? Are we going to surrender our democracy to the Tea Party and the plutocrats?

No! A thousand times no!

We are going to vote. We are going to vote for Democrats. We will show Republicans that the people's voices will not be silenced. That bullies and cheaters will not be rewarded. That all the repressive laws they can enact will not keep us down.

Voting is our most sacred right. It's what makes us a free country. It underlies every other right we have. Why else are Republicans so anxious to block it?

Change may come too slowly. Democrats may disappoint. But they are still our best hope for our future. Democrats stand between us and a Tea Party plutocracy.

But only if we vote. **TD**