

Joint Action Update

October, 2008

The Election of a Lifetime



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The future depends on how you vote on November 4th – and not just for President. If you believe it doesn't matter who controls the Congress or how solid that control is, JAC's history should be evidence to the contrary. JAC was founded as a result of the 1980 election which swept 20 new senators and 77 new repre-

sentatives into office. The landslide was brought about by the intervention of a new political force, the Radical Right, into the political process. They opposed foreign aid, especially aid to Israel, and caused the electoral defeat of many staunch friends of Israel.

JAC has been monitoring the ebb and flow of Radical Right organizations for 3 decades. Now support for Israel is part of their agenda, but on the domestic side, matters have gotten worse. Anti-choice pharmacists refuse to fill prescriptions for certain kinds of birth control. Those who favor prayer in school are now advocating the teaching of creationism. The Supreme Court has moved to the right. Where John Paul Stevens used to be the Court's center, he is now the most liberal; where Anthony Kennedy used to be part of the right wing block, he is now the center. Eighteen states are poised to enact total bans on abortion should the Court strike down Roe v. Wade. Government has been discredited and many of its protections dismantled.

That's the bad news, but there is much that is good. This has been a ground-breaking election. Hillary Clinton was the first major party female

candidate for President. She now soldiers on in support of Barack Obama, the first major party black candidate. Obama's candidacy is a healthy sign that our democracy can survive the challenges ahead. He has attracted a new generation of voters using the power of the Internet; he makes us believe in the political process once again; he demonstrates that he can wage a campaign without mud wrestling; he has shown that intellect and educational attainment deserve respect and praise; he gives us hope that the racial divide can be bridged. Barack Obama personifies the American dream.

In addition to promoting the top of the ticket, (1) JAC is working to help elect candidates who are pro-Israel (and support US involvement in facilitating peace efforts), pro-choice and pro-separation of religion and state. These victories are important if we want to see our agenda enacted. (2) We are providing information to counteract the campaign of rumors and untruths aimed at the Jewish community. Talking points and information pieces are available upon request. (3) JAC members are volunteering in record numbers to get out the vote in contested states. Our phones have been ringing off the hook.

This newsletter is largely devoted to coverage of key House and Senate races. Also included is a scorecard that lists every candidate, indicating which ones are JAC-supported. We are hoping for huge voter turnout that will signal a new era of optimism and respect for government. We thank you, JAC members, for your interest and participation. Because of you we dare to hope there will be something to celebrate on election night. ■



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Senate Races

JAC Supports the following Senate Incumbents

Senator Max Baucus (D-MT)



is now serving his fifth term. He chairs the Finance Committee. Baucus is also on the Environment and Public Works and Agriculture Committees, as well as the Joint Committee on Taxation. Montana has a popular Democratic Governor, Brian Schweitzer, and elected a Democratic Senator, Jon Tester, in 2006. Opponent Bob Kelleher is not a serious threat.

Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE)



was on the path to an easy re-election when Barack Obama tapped him to be his running mate. Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, he is a popular Senator who won re-election in 2002 with 58% of the vote. Now serving his sixth term, Biden also serves on the Judiciary Committee. He is fortunate in that he can run for both offices at once. If he wins the vice presidency and resigns as Senator, the governor, a Democrat, appoints a successor.

Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)



is a top target of the Democrats. In the 2006 election, some Northeast Republican moderates were defeated by strong Democratic challengers. Collins faces Rep. Tom Allen whose record on JAC's issues is also good, but we stick with our friends and we need relationships on both sides of the aisle. Collins is Ranking Member on the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. She serves on the Armed Services Committee and the Special Committee on Aging.

Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL)



is very popular and considered safe for reelection. Durbin is the majority whip, the 2nd leadership position in the Senate, and is often the voice for articulating difficult issues. His opponent, physician Steve Sauerberg, does not pose much of a threat. JAC has supported Senator Durbin since his first election to the House in 1984.

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)



faces Republican businessman Steve Rathje who is not much competition for the four-term incumbent. Harkin is a formidable force in Iowa politics, beating five members of Congress in his career and carrying a large base of supporters in the state. JAC has been a staunch supporter during all four Senate campaigns. Harkin is perhaps best known as an advocate for people with disabilities. In 1990, he wrote and was the chief sponsor of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the nation's first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities. He is Chairman of the Agricultural Committee.

Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD)



underwent brain surgery for a cerebral hemorrhage in December 2006. Johnson, whom JAC has supported in the House and the Senate, returned to the Senate in September, following a long recovery and rehabilitation, which is still continuing. Republicans had hoped to recruit Gov. Mike Rounds. Without Rounds in the race, Johnson is the easy frontrunner. He serves on the following committees: Appropriations, Banking, Budget, Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Indian Affairs, Select Committee on Ethics.

Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA)



has never had an easy race. She is a top GOP target as she seeks her 3rd term. State Treasurer and '04 Senate candidate John Kennedy switched parties to challenge Landrieu. Many Landrieu voters no longer live in Louisiana as a result of hurricane Katrina. The recent Governor's race brought out an increased number of Republican voters and put GOP Rep. Bobby Jindal in the Governor's mansion. Landrieu serves on the Appropriations, Energy and Natural Resources, and Small Business Committees.

Senate Races, continued

Senate Incumbents and Open Seats

Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)



is running for his fifth term. He beat back a primary challenge by Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ-1). Lautenberg has been active in Jewish community affairs all his adult life. In the Senate, he is a fighter for Israel and for the social safety net. He has taken the

lead on gun control, smoking on airplanes, the environment and other issues. He retired from the Senate in 2000, to return two years later to win New Jersey's other Senate seat. He serves on the following committees: Appropriations; Budget; Commerce, Science and Transportation; Environment and Public Works. His opponent is former Rep. Dick Zimmer.

Senator Carl Levin (D-MI),



now serving his fifth term, is the senior Jewish member of the Senate. Levin chairs the important Armed Services committee. There are no declared opponents as of this date, and Levin is considered "safe." In nam-

ing Carl Levin one of the ten best senators, Time Magazine wrote in April 2006 that he has "gained respect from both parties..." and that "his carefully researched, thoughtful remarks carry great weight with his colleagues."

Senator Jack Reed (D-RI),



a leader on defense, education, and health care issues, is a senior member of the Armed Services Committee and a former Army Ranger. He also serves on the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, Appropriations, and Health,

Education, Labor and Pensions committees. In 2006, Time magazine noted: "Reed is a serious, intellectually honest veteran and an expert on defense issues in the Senate." Senator Reed is considered safe for re-election. His opponent, Robert Tingle, was defeated handily by Reed in '02.

Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV),



running for his fifth term, faces '02 opponent Jay Wolfe whom he defeated 63%-37%. Republicans have never fielded a strong challenger to Rockefeller, who is very popular. Democrats expect another victory in West Virginia. He is chairman of the Select Intelligence Committee.

Mark Warner (D-VA-Open)



former Governor and keynoter at the Democratic National Convention, considered running for president but opted for the open Senate seat. Warner faces former governor Jim Gilmore. Warner's popularity plus any name confusion with the retiring incumbent, John Warner (R), gives him the edge.

Rep. Tom Udall (D-NM-Open)



has received JAC support during his five terms in the House. When Senator Pete Domenici (R) announced his retirement, all of NM's representatives entered the primary. Udall faces fellow Congressman Steve Pearce in a race that is currently leaning in Udall's favor. Udall is the son of Stewart Udall, who was Secretary of the Interior from 1961 to 1969, nephew of Congressman Morris Udall, and cousin of Colorado Rep. Mark Udall and Oregon Senator Gordon Smith. He serves on the Appropriations, Resources and Small Business Committees.

Rep. Mark Udall (D-CO-Open)



faces former Rep. Bob Schaffer (R) for the seat of Wayne Allard (R), retiring. Udall is a liberal from Boulder, Schaffer a conservative from Ft. Collins. JAC has supported Udall during his five terms in the House. Schaffer had a 100 rating from the American Conservative Union. Mark Udall is a cousin of Congressman Tom Udall of New Mexico and of Senator Gordon Smith of Oregon, and nephew of former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall.

(Senate races continued at bottom of page four)

House Races

Newcomers to JAC: open seats and challengers

The Political Junkie's Scorecard in this newsletter lists all candidates and indicates who is JAC-supported or JAC-endorsed. The following races feature newcomers to JAC.



AK-at-large - Ethan Berkowitz came to Alaska in 1991, worked as a law clerk and a state prosecutor. He was elected to the Alaska legislature in 1996, served for 10 years, and was the '06 Democratic nominee for Lt. Governor. He is running against 18-term GOP Rep. Don Young, who is currently under investigation for ethics violations.

AZ-1-Open -Former state Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D) vs. Sydney Hay ('02 candidate). This district

was drawn to favor a Democrat after the 2000 census, but the Democrat was a flawed candidate and Rick Renzi was elected. Renzi has been indicted for money laundering and fraud. He is retiring. Kirkpatrick should win.



Colorado 04 - Betsy Markey, an aide to Colorado's Senator Ken Salazar, is challenging GOP Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, one of the most conservative women in the House and the primary sponsor of a Constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage. Colorado is a battleground state and the Senate race has tightened, making this an uphill battle. If Colorado moves into the Obama column, the move will take Markey with it.

(House races continued at top of next page)

Senate Races, continued from page 3

Mark Begich (AK),



Democratic Mayor of Anchorage, gets high marks as a popular top tier candidate. He faces Senate fixture and pork-getter-in-chief GOP Senator Ted Stevens, who was indicted and faces trial in Washington. Stevens seniority and clout have kept him in office for almost 50 years, but in the political atmosphere of 2008 his tenure could be over.

Al Franken (MN),



radio host, Saturday Night Live star and author, is challenging GOP Senator Norm Coleman. Coleman is close to the Bush administration, has a good record on Israel, but is anti-choice and weak on the separation of religion and state. Franken has proven himself to be a serious candidate with favorable positions on JAC's issues. It is not the first time a Minnesota senate race featured two Jewish candidates. Paul Wellstone defeated Rudy Boschwitz in 1990 and 1996.

Kay Hagan (NC)

has served for 10 years as a Democratic state Senator and has been named one of the ten "most effective senators." She learned about public service as a child when she put bumper stickers on cars for her uncle, Lawton Chiles, who became the Governor of Florida. Hagan is challenging GOP Senator Elizabeth Dole, who is not with JAC on domestic issues. Hagan might pull an upset here.



Jeanne Shaheen (NH)

is challenging 2-term Senator John Sununu (R). In 2006 New Hampshire voters ousted their two GOP representatives. Shaheen hopes to follow that example. She was governor of NH, the only woman ever to hold that office, and a small business owner who believes small businesses are the backbone of the economy. This race is rated a toss-up.



Please support these members of the US House and Senate by making an additional donation to JAC (using the form on the back page). Your donation will be allocated to the campaigns that most need it. For a complete listing of all members of Congress, see the JAC 2008 Political Junkie's Scorecard insert.



Illinois 11 Open - State Senate Majority Leader Debbie Halvorson has served 4 terms in the Illinois Senate and is the first woman elected to Majority Leader in Illinois history. Her experience includes 14 years as a small businesswoman and three years as township clerk. In February, the Republican nominee withdrew from the race, citing other obligations. He was replaced by Marty Ozinga. This was a GOP-held seat, but Halvorson's chances are good.



Maine 01 Open - Chellie Pingree was a small business owner until she ran for the state Senate in 1991. She served four terms and was elected Majority Leader in 1996. She ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate in 2002.

Pingree was the sponsor of one of the nation's first prescription drug pricing bills, MeRx, a bill which has become an example for many states trying to reduce the cost of prescription drugs.



Michigan 07 - State Senator Mark Schauer (D) is challenging Rep. Tim Walberg (R). This district had been held by a moderate Republican, Joe Schwartz, before Walberg defeated him in the GOP primary in 2006. Walberg

is right wing and was supported by the Club for Growth. Schauer is strong on JAC's issues. Poll numbers show the race as a "toss-up."



Michigan 09 - Michigan Lottery Commissioner Gary Peters is challenging 8-term GOP Rep. Joe Knollenberg. JAC has a meeting in this district on October 20 and Peters has been invited. Knollenberg won with

only 52% in '06 against a much less aggressive candidate than Peters. This will be a tight race, but it still leans in Knollenberg's favor.

Nevada 02 - Jill Derby is challenging Rep. Dean Heller (R). She served from 1988 to 2006 as an elected Regent for the Nevada System of Higher Education, serving three terms as Board Chair. She ran in 2006 when this was an open seat, gaining national attention by making this heavily Republican district competitive for the first time.



Nevada 03 - State Senator Dina Titus is challenging Rep. Jon Porter (R). Titus has been involved in education and public service her entire adult life. She has taught American Government and Nevada Government at UNLV for 30 years. Elected to the state Senate in 1998, she has served as minority leader since 2003, working on environmental and energy issues. The race is a toss-up.



New Jersey 03 Open - State Senator John Adler (D) was bracing for rematch with incumbent Jim Saxton when Saxton announced his retirement. Now Adler faces Medford Mayor Chris Myers (R) in this GOP majority district. Adler has the fundraising advantage, but the geographical disadvantage. His hometown of Cherry Hill is the only municipality that is both in the Congressional district and his state Senate district. Adler was an early endorser of Barack Obama.



New Jersey 05 - Dennis Shulman is an author, educator, rabbi and clinical psychologist. He has been blind from early childhood. In 1972, the same year he graduated from Brandeis, Shulman's volunteer activities earned him a Special White House Commendation for Outstanding Humanitarian Service. He is the author of *The Genius of Genesis - A Psychoanalyst and Rabbi Examines the First Book of the Bible*. Shulman is running against GOP Rep. Scott Garrett, the most right wing member of the NJ delegation.

(House Races continued at bottom of page seven)

JAC Around the Country

Community Events

Highland Park -- Cari Sacks and Sheila Gutman chaired the 2008 Fall Election Series, three sessions devoted to election issues at the Highland Park Community Center. The first session on September 16th featured Rabbi David Saperstein. The topic was The Supreme Court: What's at Stake in this Election. The second session on October 23rd is entitled the Presidential Candidates, featuring Ami Eden, Editor-in-Chief of the JTA. On November 12th Political Pollster Mark Mellman will do a post-election analysis.

Milwaukee -- On October 23rd Jody Kaufman Loewenstein hosted a membership event at her home, with special guest Rep. Jan Schakowsky).

Detroit-area -- Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz was the special guest at a membership event October 20th at the home of Marcia Orley.

New York -- On October 19th, Janet Davis hosted a discussion of the Presidential candidates at her home, featuring: Floyd Abrams and Kenneth Bialkin.

Louisville -- Co-hosts Marie Abrams and Anne Oppenheimer hosted a membership event at Marie's home October 12th, featuring Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY). JAC Founder Linda Rae Sher gave a JAC update.

Providence -- On September 7th, Cheryl Teverow hosted a membership meeting at her home. It featured Senator Jack Reed (D-RI). Senator Reed is an advisor to the Obama campaign and recently returned from the Middle East.

Martha's Vineyard -- On July 18th Andi and Mike Dubroff hosted a membership event at their Edgartown home, featuring Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Dick Durbin (D-IL). They were joined by numerous other senators, candidates and celebs.

Denver -- JAC hosted a reception at the Democratic National Convention in August.



Scott Canel, Lynda Canel, Rep. Tom Udall, US Senate candidate from New Mexico, Marilyn Cohen, Ray Cohen



Gary Gurvey, Rep. Melissa Bean (D-IL), Susan Gurvey



JAC Executive Director Marcia Balonick, Al Franken, US Senate candidate from Minnesota, JAC Special Projects Director Linda Rae Sher

JAC Around the Country, continued



Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Loretta Durbin, Andrea Dubroff, and Carole Cohen at JAC reception in Martha's Vineyard



Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL) with Coloradoans Peter Glick, and Jodye Glick at the Democratic National Convention in Denver



(l. to r rear) Marcia Balonick, Linda Rae Sher, Amy Dean; (l. to r. front) Laura Lauder, Susan Hyatt at JAC reception at the Democratic National Convention



Bonnie Schoenberg, Rep. Ron Klein (D-FL), Steve Schoenberg

Key House Races, continued from page five



New Mexico 01 Open - Martin Heinrich served as 2006 Albuquerque City Council President and is a current councilor. He is also Natural Resources Trustee for the state of New Mexico. On the City Council,

he has spearheaded numerous measures aimed at crime reduction, raising the minimum wage, economic development, and energy efficiency. This seat was held by Rep. Heather Wilson (R).

Washington 08 - Darcy Burner is ready for a rematch with Congressman Dave Reichert, who defeated her in '06. This district has never been won by a Democrat, but the political atmosphere is different this time. She worked for a dozen years in high technology including five years at Microsoft. She left Microsoft to attend law school in 2004. She left her law studies to run against Reichert.



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Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. According to law, JAC cannot accept corporate contributions. Membership, gifts, or other payments to JAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.



Betsy R. Sheerr,
Senator Dick
Durbin (D-IL),
Richard Sheerr at
JAC reception in
Martha's Vineyard



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Election Night Scorecard Enclosed