At the top of my list of heroes these days is Debbie Wasserman Schultz. She is the 42-year-old 3-term human dynamo of a Congresswoman from south Florida. A rising star in the Democratic party and mother of three, she discovered a lump in her breast in December of 2007 and has since undergone 7 major surgeries. She kept all this secret for over a year, as she stumped and appeared on TV for Presidential candidates, did her job as a Congresswoman and privately became an expert on the genetically-determined form of breast cancer that befell her.

After learning she was at greater risk for the cancer to spread because of her Ashkenazi Jewish descent, she elected to have a double mastectomy, as well as the removal of her ovaries. On March 24th, just days after she came out of the cancer closet, she held a press conference to announce legislation for a national campaign to educate the public, particularly young women and their doctors, about the need for a much earlier approach to breast cancer detection. Her legislation, which seeks $9 million annually, is known as the EARLY (Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young) Act. It would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to begin educational campaigns in high schools and universities, with a particular focus on young African-American and Jewish women, who are at higher genetic risk.

We applaud Rep. Wasserman Schultz for her courage and tenacity and we’ll keep you informed about this legislation. She will get all the support she needs from JAC to ensure passage.

On my mind this month...

On June 9, the House unanimously passed a watered down version which condemned the murder of Tiller and included a half-dozen other murders that occurred in places of worship. It did not mention Tiller’s profession, the reason he was murdered or the terms “abortion” or “reproductive rights.” The Senate version has 43 cosponsors. (The Minnesota Independent 6/22/09)

The Arizona Senate voted June 23 to require a 24-hour waiting period for abortions and to increase penalties for performing “partial-birth” abortions. The bill would also give physicians and other medical professionals the right to refuse to participate in an abortion or to prescribe emergency contraception. Minors seeking an abortion would have to receive written, notarized consent from a parent or guardian. Passing further restrictions on abortion has been a priority of the Arizona Republican leadership. Former Governor Janet Napolitano vetoed every bill that came across her desk.

CHOICE

In the wake of the murder of Dr. George Tiller, the physician-of-last-resort for thousands of women, the U.S. Senate is debating a resolution condemning violence against abortion providers. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) is the lead sponsor, along with Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). The bill says that “acts of violence should never be used to prevent women from receiving reproductive health care.” The final three words have brought opposition from anti-abortion senators and a “secret hold” has been put on the resolution preventing it from coming to a vote. Senators Klobuchar, Boxer and Shaheen have said they will not compromise on the wording “condemning violence against women’s health care providers and agreeing not to use violence as a means of resolving differences are not objectionable viewpoints.”

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(Israel, continued on page two)
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Florida - GOP Sen. Mel Martinez is retiring. Three Republicans have de-
cclared: Gov. Charlie Crist, former state
House Speaker Marco Rubio, and for-
mer New Hampshire Sen. Bob Smith, now a Florida resident. There are also
three declared Democrats:  Rep. Kend-

The state of Kentucky passed a law in
2008 mandating that schools develop materials that can be used to teach
about the Holocaust. The “Facing History” curriculum, renowned for its
excellence and widely used throughout the country, is receiving opposition
from religious right groups. The Louis-
ville Courier-Journal reported, “The class begins with a study of individu-
ality and social responsibility, in which
students complete activities to assist
them in defining their own role in society. They discuss the historical de-
velopment of the Holocaust and other
instances of collective violence and
learn how to be an active, informed
participant in society.”  Superintendent
Sheldon Berman called it, “the single
best piece of curriculum that I know of because of its impact on students and
its level of sophistication.”

The Family Foundation of Kentucky, the state affiliate of James Dobson’s
Focus on the Family, has charged “that schools are replacing civics educa-
tion with ‘tolerance’ and moans that
‘questions remain about who gets to
define what ‘tolerance’ is for the stu-
dents.’” In 1996, Dobson attacked the
concept of tolerance and told his radio audience that “tolerance is a kind of
desensitization to evil of all varieties...
everything has become acceptable to
those who are tolerant.”

middle East, continued from page one
people. Not just nuclear technology, extremist ayatollahs, Holocaust-
denying Ahmadinejad, and an axis of evil...There is the Iran that once
screamed ‘Death to America and to Israel’ and there is the Iran that now
screams ‘Down with the dictator!’”

The Obama administration will return
an ambassador to Syria. The post
has been vacant for four years, and
this move at diplomatic engagement
signals Pres. Obama’s determination
to improve relations with the Arab world.
Middle East envoy George Mitchell was in
Syria two weeks go, where he said he
had “serious and productive discus-
sions” with Syrian President Bashar
al-Assad. “We intend to pursue this as
vigorously as possible,” Mitchell said.
An official announcement is expected
later this week.(CNN.com 6/24) The

Tensions between Washington and Da-
mascus may be thawing, but relations
between Israel and Syria are “as cool
as ever,” reports the Jerusalem Post
(6/24). President Bashar Assad, speak-
ning at a press conference in Greece on
June 23rd, said, “Peace demands an
Israeli partner and a commitment to
international law, UN resolutions, and
the principle of land for peace. An Is-
raeli partner currently does not exist.”

Research & Races

2010 RACES
Senate-Open Seats
Eighteen Democratic and nineteen Re-
publican seats will be decided in 2010. It
is always easier to pick up an Open
Seat than it is to defeat an incumbent.
At this date, Democrats have only one
open seat and one potentially open
seat. Republicans have five open seats
with two more possible retirements.
The rundown is as follows:

Delaware - Democrat Ted Kaufman
was appointed to fill the unexpired
term of Vice President Joe Biden.
Kaufman always said he would not
seek a full term. Delaware is tradition-
ally a Democratic state, but their sole
member of the House, Republican
Mike Castle, would give any Democrat
a tough race. Castle has not declared
his intentions to seek reelection to the
House or to run for the Senate. Beau
Biden, VP Biden’s son and the state
Attorney General, is expected to seek
the Democratic nomination when he
returns from his Iraq deployment.

Florida - GOP Sen. Mel Martinez is retiring. Three Republicans have de-
cclared: Gov. Charlie Crist, former state
House Speaker Marco Rubio, and for-
mer New Hampshire Sen. Bob Smith, now a Florida resident. There are also
three declared Democrats:  Rep. Kend-

Right Wing Watch

The Family Foundation of Kentucky,
the only de-
clared Republican candidate; he is not
likely to have primary opposition.

There are three more potential Senate
retirements.

Illinois - Democratic Sen. Roland Bur-
ris, appointed to fill President Barack
Obama’s unexpired term, has raised
little money and is being urged to step
down. There is a long list of members
of Congress and state officeholders on
both sides of the aisle who are waiting
for Burris’ decision.

Kentucky - GOP Sen. Jim Bunning
says he is still running, despite anemic
poll numbers and fundraising. National
GOP leaders are trying to convince
him to retire. Two top-tier Democratic
candidates – Lt. Gov. and ‘04 Senate
nominee Dan Mongiardo and Attorney
General Jack Conway – have already
declared. Republicans can’t do a good
recruiting job until Bunning steps out
of the way.

Texas - Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison
is running for Governor in 2012. She
may, or may not, resign before the
2010 election. If the seat is open,
several Republicans are waiting in
the wings. Two Democrats have an-
nounced - former Comptroller John
Sharp and Houston mayor Bill White.