



Skoch2010

Issues Update

January 15, 2010

Haiti

President Obama did the right thing this week in extending U.S. aid to Haiti in the wake of the earthquake that struck our island-country neighbor. We pray the aid our military and other responders are bringing arrives soon enough to save lives and comfort the many thousands in distress.

In the middle of all of this, we couldn't help but notice the sharp contrast between the images of the tragedy unfolding there and what we see here when we—not immune from disasters ourselves—experience similar events.

A day after the disaster, I did not see even one construction crane on site lifting debris in Haiti, I didn't see a disaster response team with survivor-sniffing canines, and I didn't see a single rescue helicopter flying a victim to safety. No emergency aid tent villages had been set up, and no national guardsmen were on site offering medical aid, food, water, blankets, or tents. A day-after news broadcast I saw reported that ambulances couldn't get gas, and even if they could, no medical facilities were available to accept wounded. You can't help but wonder why; why are things so different here, when disaster hits, than they are in Haiti now?

The biggest reason is the same reason that every day we live better in America than most of the rest of the world does: Free enterprise.

When families, businesses, and enterprises operate in a truly free marketplace, economies grow, standards of living rise, and people live better. They live better in their day-to-day lives, and they are provided for better when bad things like earthquakes strike.

The Founding Fathers had it right: Government does best when it lets people live their lives freely, and when it lets businesses flourish (or fail) on their own merit. It does worst when it interferes, “stimulates,” and “bails out.”

We pray for the people in Haiti and for our brave soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and relief workers who are rushing to their aid.

And we offer prayers of thanks for the privilege of living in the U.S.A., where our Constitution established a framework of prosperity and growth sufficient to let us be prepared for our own disasters, and to let us help our brothers and sisters when they are in need.

More On the Bailout: We’re Going to Be Paying Again

The Obama administration announced this week it is now proposing to recover losses from the Wall Street Bank Bailout by establishing a “financial crisis responsibility fee” on banks. This tax would have banks pay the federal government about \$100 billion over the next ten years.

Let’s think about this. (1) Banks make bad investment decisions, loaning and investing money where they shouldn’t. (2) They lose hundreds of billions of dollars through reckless lending. (3) Financially irresponsible politicians (including some of the Republican Party, among them our John Boozman) decide we can’t allow those banks to fail, so they (4) Vote \$700 billion in bailouts for those banks. (5) The bailout isn’t being repaid as we were promised it would be (by those same politicians), so (6) The government proposes to impose a fee on banks to recoup the bailout money that isn’t being repaid.

It's not hard to guess who will ultimately pay the "financial crisis responsibility fee." We will. Banks will pass the tax on to us by charging more to loan money, more to use credit cards, and more to do business with them.

Is it any wonder Arkansas voters who called John Boozman told him nine to one to vote AGAINST the Wall Street Bailout? And how disappointing it is that he ignored us and voted FOR it instead.

Shouldn't elected representatives vote the will of the people who elect them? I think so.

How's That Again?

We couldn't help but be amused by an email we received this week from our opponent in the May 18th primary, Congressman John Boozman.

"I believe that Congress has a responsibility to protect taxpayers and promote the government's long-term financial solvency," he says.

Wow. This is the very same John Boozman who:

- Voted FOR the \$152 billion stimulus act of 2008
- Voted FOR the \$700 billion Wall Street Bailout
- Voted FOR subsidies and other insane federal government spending in the \$288 billion Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008
- Voted FOR increasing the national debt ceiling to over \$11 trillion
- Voted FOR funding the National Endowment for the Arts
- Voted FOR subsidizing AMTRAK
- In just the years 2008 and 2009 alone sponsored or co-sponsored 60 earmarks totaling over \$62 million in pork in behalf of special interests

And the list of financial irresponsibility goes on, and on, and on...

We absolutely agree with our representative that “Congress has a responsibility to protect taxpayers and promote the government’s long-term financial solvency.” But we apparently disagree strongly on what that means.

I would neither have voted for nor supported any of the irresponsible things listed above.

And as you can read in “My Promise” at skoch2010.com, I will:

- Introduce a Constitutional Amendment to require a balanced budget
- Introduce legislation to reduce the pay of Congressmen until the budget is balanced
- Support a flat tax or fair tax, subject to the preferences of you, the voters
- Vote against irresponsible spending
- Introduce a change to House rules eliminating earmarks and pork-barrel spending

Government spending is beyond out of control: It’s a crisis. And when elected officials of either party vote to spend money we don’t have for things we don’t need and for things government has no business doing, when they vote for millions of dollars in pork, or when they vote to INCREASE the national debt, they have violated their oath of office and should leave public office.

My opponent did all those things.

“Tell Me What You Think”

We found it equally amusing that John Boozman also said in a recent email “In order for me to represent your best interest [sic] I want to hear from you. I am interested in finding out what you think the priorities of Congress need to be in 2010. “

Our first thought was that we wish he had been so interested in what we thought in the past when he chose to ignore us, instead becoming the GOP’s

number three party-line voter of all 178 Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives.

And second, we feel pretty safe in suggesting to our congressman what *we the people* think the priorities of Congress need to be in 2010:

- Following the Constitution of the United States by protecting unborn life, protecting our freedoms including our right to bear arms, and getting government out of our lives as much as possible
- Enacting a balanced budget through lowered spending and the total elimination of pork-barrel, special interest spending (“earmarks”)
- Lowering taxes so businesses can grow and families can prosper
- Not destroying one of the best health care systems in the world
- Getting our government out of the bail-out business and allowing the free market to work
- Not pretending to “stimulate” the economy by dumping borrowed and printed money into more (and bigger) government programs
- Fixing illegal immigration
- Honoring our commitments to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen, and all our military retirees and veterans

None of this is difficult. It just takes leadership, courage, and focusing on what’s the right thing to do, instead of what is politically expedient.

Until next time...

Bernie Skoch