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Mayor, Bethlehem Pennsylvania

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June 17, 2010

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I'm John Callahan.

In an environment that seems challenging for Democrats, I have some good news.

The political currents in the Lehigh Valley are moving in the opposite direction from the rest of the nation. Here we stand an excellent chance of picking up a seat long held by Republicans and finally providing progressive leadership in Congress for the citizens of this district.

Why does that matter to you?

If you believe the political pundits, a handful of races like this one are going to decide who controls the House of Representatives.

That's right. Whether or not President Obama's agenda is sidetracked by right wing forces led by Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck may well come down to what happens here in Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District.

I wish I were exaggerating, but I'm not.

While it's troubling that we find ourselves in this environment we must focus on moving forward. Now is the time to act; to seize the moment and ensure that the right-wing forces in our nation do not capture control of the House of Representatives.

We can start by picking up a seat that is ripe for the taking. We can start right here in the Lehigh Valley; PA 15.

The numbers are pretty compelling.

Since I announced my candidacy I have actually outraised my opponent, Charlie Dent. Seldom does that happen. And, more importantly, we have virtually the same amount of cash-on-hand.

This district has gone from one that Al Gore and John Kerry both carried by one percent to a district that Barack Obama won by *thirteen* percent. Party registration numbers favor us as well, with the Democrats having a forty-eight to thirty-six percent advantage.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) has made this campaign part of its Red-to-Blue program; one of only twelve campaigns in the nation to receive this designation.

Even the political pundits have our campaign on their watch list. And well they should.

A recent poll by the Morning Call newspaper shows my opponent well below fifty percent—the danger sign for any incumbent. In fact, we have yet to launch our paid media campaign and the race currently stands at 38% to 27%.

You don't have to take my word for it...or the word of the DCCC. Take it from the National Republican Campaign Committee. They have put Charlie Dent on their endangered candidate list. They know he is in real trouble

Those are the numbers. That's the political argument.

But what is this race all about? Why contribute your hard-earned dollars to help me, the mayor of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania get elected to Congress?

Let me answer that question by talking about my record, my priorities, and how they differ from my opponent.

When I became mayor our city was faced with a lot of challenges. Bethlehem Steel had shut down, leaving a huge hole in our economy and our tax base. Jobs were lost, crime and debt were up and our spirit was bent (but not broken).

We've turned that around.

We came together as a city and retooled our local economy to create 5,000 new good paying jobs. We hired more police and reduced crime. We also reduced our debt, improved our financial standing and balanced six straight budgets.

We implemented new environmental practices that have reduced our carbon imprint by twelve percent with a goal of twenty percent by the end of 2012. We've improved our roads, parks and basic infrastructure.

We've made Bethlehem a great place to raise a family, grow a business, or spend your retirement. Indeed, *Money Magazine* rated Bethlehem one of the 100 best places to live and *Fortune Small Business* rated us as one of the top 100 cities in America to live and launch a business.

So why run for Congress?

First, I think our city is in a good shape with a bright future. I wouldn't stop serving as Mayor if I didn't feel certain that the programs and policies we've implemented, along with our strong financial outlook, bode well for our future. We've accomplished a lot and our best days are still ahead.

Second, we face real challenges in our nation, and I would like to be part of the solution. It's that simple. There is a "disconnect" between Washington and the rest of the country that I think I can help address.

Third, and most important, our current Congressman is working for the wrong people and has the wrong priorities. He is part of the problem in Washington and is a prime example of why the American people hold Congress in such low esteem.

Charlie's constituents are the Wall Street barons, the lobbyists on K Street, and the fat cats who bankroll his campaigns. He serves them well.

When PPL Electric Utilities increased rates by thirty percent he defended it. When Wall Street needed a bailout he voted for it. And when a donor to his campaign needs an earmark he gets it.

Charlie does a good job for Wall Street and K Street. But he has forgotten about Main Street and your street.

He is quick to vote against lowering healthcare costs, quick to vote against equal pay for woman, quick to vote to privatize social security, and quick to vote against tax cuts for working people.

But if Wall Street sneezes or catches a little cold, or K Street is complaining about banking reforms that help consumers, Charlie is Johnny-on-the-spot saying, "What can I do to help?"

That's why Charlie opposes the financial regulation reforms to hold the big banks accountable. That's why Charlie opposed credit card reform that would protect consumers and reel in outlandish interest fees. That's why Charlie wants to gamble social security on Wall Street.

Under Charlie's watch the national debt has grown by \$5 trillion... but that hasn't stopped him from asking for more than \$200 million in earmarks for his friends. Unemployment has skyrocketed under Charlie's watch—in part because of his support for the Bush economic policies—but that hasn't stopped him from voting against the Jobs for Main Street Act last December.

My vision as a member of Congress is quite different.

Creating jobs will be priority number one. Addressing the deficit is number two. Keeping us safe and investing in our future are three and four.

We're as different as night and day. Charlie votes for the fat cats; I'll work day and night for the middle class. Charlie works for Wall Street, the K street lobbyists, and those who fill his campaign coffers. I am going to fight for the hard working citizens of my district; people who play by the rules, pay their taxes and want nothing more than a brighter future for their children and our country.

But I need your help if this is going to happen.

Campaigns are expensive. It takes the helping hands of thousands of people like you in order to wage a competitive campaign against the likes of Charlie Dent and the powerful special interests that support him. Can you help?

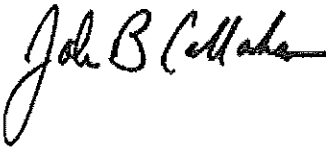
Can you send a check for \$50, \$100, \$250, or whatever you can afford, to my campaign? Can you do so today?

We can win this election and help prevent the likes of Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, and the rest of the right wing leadership from controlling Congress and turning back the clock. But only if you help!

It will literally come down to a handful of campaigns like the one I am waging that will determine who controls the House of Representatives. Please do not sit on the sidelines during this time of need.

Please send your check today. It is critically important to the future of our country that you stay involved and committed to electing progressive voices.

Sincerely,



John B. Callahan

PS Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck want you to ignore this letter. Why? Because whether or not the Republicans and their right wing leadership gain control of Congress may well come down to this race. This is one of the few opportunities we have to pick up a Republican held seat. So please help us today.

You contribution of \$50, \$100, \$250, or whatever you can afford, will make a huge difference in determining the outcome of this election and the future of our nation.

Thank you.

