



HOPKINS COUNTY, KY - Just days away, the general election represents a clear choice between the candidates in the State Senate race before Sixth District voters. The central question is who best stands for the values most voters in our county and district share. I am not talking about a candidate's character, but rather about public policy positions.

Both candidates are men of integrity, with good reputations. The most relevant distinction between these candidates is their view of the role of government in our lives, especially at the critical juncture where we find ourselves currently, with a stagnant economy and high unemployment, and looking for direction about how to overcome these things.

Whatever else they may say, the Democratic candidate is tied to a party that sees the role of government as directing and controlling economic and community activity, and redistributing wealth. The public policy values of the Democratic Party have been dramatically demonstrated at the national level under the current administration and Congress, with its massive bailouts and economic stimulus spending that has not solved the problem, only adding unbelievably to our public debt. That Party perspective carries down to our state government as well, under Democratic control virtually without interruption for over three decades.

The Republican candidate Jack Whitfield, Jr. represents values in public policy fundamentally different from the Democratic Party. Those values are a commitment to a limited role of government, which is to keep order while facilitating private initiative and individual creativity in building community, expanding economic activity, and increasing employment opportunities.

The incumbent State Senator has pointed to his record of accomplishment in building state educational and government institutions in our community, and state funding of infrastructure projects. These works for the most part do have a regional benefit beyond our own community. Any newcomer to the office, of course, has no opportunity to have any such credits to his name.

But the most pressing issues right now are jobs and the economy, and government spending – not "bringing home the bacon" (government projects) funded by tax dollars (bacon)

Letter to the Editor - Candidates and Their Values

Written by Franklin Stevenson
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collected from other citizens in the commonwealth. The Republican candidate for State Senate is committed to reducing government indebtedness, and refocusing the role of government to that of a free market private sector facilitator, rather than that of directing and controlling our lives. Whitfield is committed not to "bringing home the bacon", but rather to helping the citizens be able to make some bacon of their own, and to keep more of that bacon for themselves and their own families and communities.

It is the private sector – mostly new small businesses – that creates jobs, notably without government funding. What impedes that economic activity is the complexity and multiplicity of government regulations and tax structure – not to mention the tax burden. We find ourselves crippled currently by the government regulatory and economic state of affairs that has been established and maintained by the long-standing Democratic-controlled administration and legislature.

The choice before us, then, is to continue with the same party and approach by electing Jerry Rhoads, but somehow expecting a different result, OR to elect someone who stands for the values of a limited government which facilitates rather than obstructs private business growth.

In addition to the chief concerns of economic growth and job creation, there are other important value distinctions attached to these candidates and their political parties. In the General Assembly and the Executive Branch, the Democratic Party has continually blocked legislation that expressed values Kentucky voters share. They have blocked bills that better protect the unborn (the "Ultrasound Bill", informed consent laws). They have blocked laws to empower creative solutions to our public schools performance problems (permitting the establishment of charter schools, reforming student assessment testing, recognizing alternative schooling pathways). They continue to push for the expansion of gambling in our state. They killed legislation that would have prohibited the public universities from granting benefits to "domestic partners" in violation of the 2004 amendment to the Kentucky Constitution defining marriage in our state, an amendment the citizens of this state ratified by a 3-1 margin.

These are the value distinctions that the Republican candidate Jack Whitfield makes, as he stands for values that have not been represented or advanced by Jerry Rhoads and the Democratic Party in this state. May the voters decide indeed who best represents the things they value on November 2.

Letter to the editor provided to iSurf News by Franklin Stevenson.
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