EBINDIV

May 20, 2008

Rep. Joe Knollenberg
2349 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Knollenberg,

Congressman, if you wish to know why the Republicans continue to lose special elections in what should be very "safe" districts and why Republicans will suffer a blow out in November, you need look no further than the housing bill just agreed to by Senate leaders yesterday. It is nothing short of a massive bailout for the undeserving at the expense of those that were prudent in managing their finances. Republicans stand for nothing other than political expediency. Why vote for a Democrat masquerading as a Republican when you can vote for a real Democrat. Republicans have failed miserably over the last eight years. Spending is out of control, the federal bureaucracy is exploding, waste, fraud and abuse reaches every level of the government. Hundreds of billions of dollars annually are wasted on subsidies and support programs for every conceivable constituency. Notorious earmarks for special constituencies or political patrons are outrageous. Entitlements are overwhelming the budget and nothing is done. There will be a fiscal train wreck over the next 15 years.

Republicans will become as scarce as snow in Florida over the next few election cycles. The party once stood for free markets, a growing economy, personal responsibility, low taxes, small, non intrusive government, squeaky clean ethics, a strong defense, a robust foreign policy. It has forsaken all of these fundamental precepts since 1994 in the name of political expediency. It is disgusting. It has become a party dedicated to the accumulation of power; it has lost sight of its beliefs and its principles. It has become detached from it supporters. I defy anyone to explain to me what the party stands for. Obviously, the party has been unable or unwilling to confront the real meaning of the 2006 debacle. Bush has been a disaster for the conservative movement and for Republicans. He has mismanaged the Iraq war, failed to issue even one veto in the first 6 years of his presidency and has colluded with the Democrats to expand the scope and power of the government (McCain-Feingold, No Child left Behind, to name two, both of which are resounding failures). For the first time in 40 years I am ashamed to be a Republican. I am angry, frustrated and appalled over the sheer incompetence of the party leadership and the lack of any discernible reason to vote for the party and its candidates. There was so much promise after 1994 and then the party managed to dissipate its governing mandate.

Why are Republicans no more than the tax collectors for the welfare state that the Democrats have put in place over the last 70 years? Why is it that when I vote Republican, I always seem to end up with a Democrat agenda passed with the help of cowering Republicans? Do you or any of your frightened colleagues honestly believe that the public will assign any credit to the party for toeing the Democrat line? (Housing bailout). What happened to the courage of convictions? What happened to the party of ideas? I would never vote for a Democrat; I will just stay home in November as will millions of others who feel the same way. The pundits and all of the other so-called experts notwithstanding, the party will lose at least 25 seats in the House and very likely 7 seats in the Senate. Republicans will be lucky to retain any modicum of relevancy in Washington. McCain is doomed. It already looks as though his campaign will mirror the 1996 Dole debacle. The party will return to the political wilderness that it so comfortably embraced for nearly 40 years prior to 1994. The party has lost its will to govern and its ability to generate new ideas to confront the problems and concerns facing the nation today.

Why is the party unable to come to grips with the looming catastrophe? Apparently, the party constituencies, leaders and congressional members are more interested in indulging in hand wringing and squabbling among themselves rather than face the real distinct possibility of electoral extinction in November. You are in real trouble in your district; your likely opponent

will be a very formidable foe. If you think that you can run a campaign based on the record of the last two years, you will enter retirement prematurely. There is a very palpable anger among the party faithful and the tragedy of it all is that no one in the party seems to be able to see the impending disaster much less do anything to prevent it. The party has been outspent, outmanned, outgunned, outsmarted and outmaneuvered. The Democrat programs and ideas are nothing more than a rehash of old liberal orthodoxy from the 60's and 70's repackaged to a public that has forgotten or ignored the lessons from that time. It is a guaranteed recipe for economic and political disaster. The Republicans need to look forward and not marginally tie themselves to a Democrat agenda. The Republicans will never be rewarded for being Democrat "lite".

The Republicans need to present a comprehensive, market based and affordable health insurance program that covers most individuals and one that does not create a new entitlement with a massive new bureaucracy and ever higher taxes and out of control spending. The federal government is the last entity on earth that should be placed in charge of anything let alone health care. Make the case. Hillary care was defeated in 1993; the public has not substantially changed its opinion on the merits of a single payer since then. Who in their right mind would want a nameless, faceless, inept and arrogant bureaucrat deciding health issues from Washington? People want control over their own health decisions. Just look at the fiscal fiasco that is Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

The party needs to address taxes. Contrary to the elite, it is a powerful issue and one that resonates with most people. The I.R.S. tax code is 67,000 pages. It is incomprehensible even to the experts. It distorts economic activity, it is scandalously unfair. Only a Congress that is in hock to special interests and a dysfunctional bureaucracy could create such an abomination. Promote an approach that stresses simplicity and fairness. Republicans have a knack for "reforming" the tax code that actually creates a bigger monstrosity. Cease and desist. Make the case why the 2003 tax cuts should be made permanent and perhaps the party can erase the stain of not doing so when it most mattered.

Republicans must forcefully present original, workable and realistic policies concerning immigration, the environment, terrorism, the Iraq war, energy independence. Much of what Washington has done thus far on these topics has been nothing short of abysmal. Where are the Republican ideas, proposals and programs grounded in what used to be fundamental and core Republican beliefs? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REPUBLICAN WINNING PHILOSOPHY?

Sincerely,

David Karl