

# Certain Kansas Republicans analyze their party status

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voters proves it is more in step with Kansans, he said.  
 "You're just watching a political show and Kathleen Sebelius is always entertaining," Shallenburger said.  
 Revamping the Democratic Party would bolster Sebelius' stature nationally, demonstrating that she has the charisma and talent to reach across party lines and woo Republicans to the fold.  
 Such success would give Democrats a model for change across the Midwest where "red" states are numerous as wheat fields and cattle, as well as increase Sebelius' stock

for a bid for Congress or other prominent position.  
 Bob Beatty, a Washburn University political scientist, agreed that Democrats are testing the waters for change after the election cycle.  
 If Sebelius wins, if new Democrat Paul Morrison beats GOP Attorney General Phill Kline and Democrat Cindy Neighbor beats Republican Rep. Mary Pilcher Cook of Shawnee, the iron may hot for Democrats to strike a new alliance with moderates and relaunch the party.  
 "It seems like there is potential for some interesting things in Kansas politics. But they have to win," Beatty said.

But Beatty said it may take more than election victories to get moderate Republicans to switch. There is a lot of baggage that goes along with party labels. Becoming a Democrat means you are from the same cloth of Kerry and Ted Kennedy, two East Coast liberals often used as the poster boys for why to vote Republican.  
 "You have to think dramatic, such as launching with a new name," Beatty said. Minnesota saw it's Democratic Party reinvent itself in 1948 when the Democratic Party merged with the Farm-Labor Party, and Beatty thinks such an alliance could happen in Kansas.  
 Andy Wollen, chairman of the

Kansas Traditional Republican Majority, doesn't rule out moderates switching parties.  
 He understands Parkinson's desire to be where he can make a difference in the Kansas landscape. Wollen just isn't sure others are ready.  
 "I think he moved too early. I don't think there is a realignment yet," Wollen said.  
 "Pebbles fall off the cliff, but the rest of the avalanche is way behind it."  
 House Speaker Doug Mays said to be a Republican in Kansas is to be part of a dominant party that been fraught with infighting since statehood.  
 Mays himself rode the upswing of conservative power to reach his leadership post in the House, which ends this year.  
 "When you have a dominant

party, there are always struggles within.  
 "I've been on the inside, I've been on the outside, the winning side, the losing side, but never once did I have any doubt that the Republican Party was the party that is best suited to govern the state of Kansas," said Mays, R-Topeka. "Never once have I or thousands of others because they didn't get their way or didn't like the leadership of the party ever thought about running on another ticket."  
 "I don't think there is a large number of people who have Kathleen Sebelius on speed dial. There's a reason we're Republicans," Wollen said.  
 Instead of running from the Republican Party, Wollen said moderates need to make their commitment to politics more than a weekend hobby.

That means voting each election, running for public office and supporting like-minded candidates. It shouldn't take the latest crisis over evolution on the State Board of Education to get people motivated, he added.  
 "I see this as a real wake up call for traditional Republicans to get involved, or it will continue to happen," Wollen said.  
 True, they may not be making the call just yet, but victories in November could get some of them at least asking for the phone number.

## Senate tackles gay marriage ban

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush and congressional Republicans are aiming the political spotlight this week on efforts to ban gay marriage, with events at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue — all for a constitutional amendment with scant chance of passage but wide appeal among social conservatives.  
 "Ages of experience have taught us that the commitment of a husband and wife to love and to serve one another promotes the welfare of children and the stability of society," Bush said in his Saturday radio address. "Government, by recognizing and protecting marriage, serves the interests of all."  
 The president was to make further remarks Monday in favor of the amendment as the Senate opened

three days of debate.  
 All but one of the Senate Democrats — the exception is Ben Nelson of Nebraska — oppose the measure and, with moderate Republicans, are expected to block an up-or-down vote, killing the measure for the year.  
 Democrats say the amendment is a divisive bow to religious conservatives, and point out that it conflicts with the GOP's opposition to big government interference.  
 "A vote for this amendment is a vote for bigotry pure and simple," said Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, where the state Supreme Court legalized gay marriages in 2003.  
 The House also is expected to take up the measure this year.  
 Fueled by election-year politics,

the gay marriage issue is the most volatile Congress will consider as it returns from a weeklong Memorial Day recess.  
 Other legislation has better chances for success, particularly a record-size emergency spending bill to continue U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and provide hurricane relief along the Gulf Coast.  
 The Pentagon says it needs its money — about \$66 billion — right away or delays could begin to affect the conduct of the war in Iraq. The Senate added new relief for farmers and other aid to the package, swelling its cost to more than \$100 billion. Bush is demanding that the price tag stick within his \$92.2 billion request, plus \$2.3 billion to combat avian flu.

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