

Other Viewpoints

Ugly politics mark Senate primary race

If the polls are accurate in the Moran-Tiahrt Senate primary race, they might prove that negative campaigning doesn't work. A solid Jerry Moran victory, if nothing else, would be welcome vindication of that supposition.

These two House Republican colleagues have waged a negative race as you will find. Todd Tiahrt apparently was counseled by consultants to attack Moran relentlessly and to position himself on the extreme right of the political spectrum. Moran has veered well right along with Tiahrt and been forced to do some counter-attacking, no doubt also at the recommendation of political consultants. But while both seem comfortably positioned on the conservative extreme, on the score of negative campaigning Tiahrt seems the aggressor. Moran seems rather sucked into the dirty campaigning.

Both sides have put out misleading information about the other candidate, most commonly taking votes out of context — a familiar-but-no-less-acceptable tactic. The rhetoric out of the Tiahrt campaign, however, is sometimes outright bizarre.

This was the case late last month with one Tiahrt news release in response to Moran's campaign theme stressing how Moran never moved his family to Washington but chooses rather to come home every weekend. Tiahrt's camp managed to twist that into some kind of low-blow attack on Tiahrt and his family that never was. Moran's TV ad never even mentioned Tiahrt's family or his decision to move to Washington, but Tiahrt's campaign called it an attack that was "insensitive and frankly un-Kansan."

A news release said: "Todd and Vicki should never apologize for keeping their family together, especially given the loss of their 16-year-old son, Luke, in 2004. Attacking a personal family decision is the ugliest of Washington politics and has no place in our great state. Congressman Moran's attacks are inexcusable and he should apologize immediately."

Watching this from the sidelines, one could only say, "Huh?"

No reasonable person could interpret from Moran — who always has taken pride in his district residency — that he in any way was attacking Tiahrt's decision from a family standpoint. No, Moran was positioning himself as the Washington outsider and Tiahrt the insider, as many other politicians are seeking to do this election year.

What is "ugly" and "inexcusable" is the Tiahrt campaign creating an attack where there wasn't one and leveraging his son's death to do it.

At about the same time, a SurveyUSA poll of 721 likely Republican voters, commissioned by KWCH-TV, found that Moran had a commanding 53- to 33-percent lead over Tiahrt.

Political consultants probably tell candidates to go negative when they are down in the race, because they have nothing to lose. Sinking worse and losing the race seems like plenty to lose, and if that happens to Tiahrt it might reinforce the message that Americans are turned off by dirty politics.

— The Hutchinson News, via The Associated Press

Write us

The Colby Free Press encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of general interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

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Uphold the rule of law for immigration

Prosecutors serve on the front lines of ensuring that our laws are enforced and Kansans are protected. Having served as a prosecutor, I know firsthand the importance of the rule of law so criminals cannot threaten the innocent and vulnerable in our communities. During my long and productive relationship with Kansas' law enforcement community, I've heard the same question time and again: Moran, do you know just how much of our crime problem is tied to our drug problem, and just how much our drug problem is tied to our border problem?

Too often, I hear from Kansas law enforcement about the failure of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain illegal immigrants. For those charged with the responsibility of enforcing the law, few things are as discouraging as witnessing laws not being enforced.

Our nation is a nation of laws and we must enforce them. Failure to do so weakens the order of our society and puts citizens at risk. This failure is part of the reason the state of Arizona rightly and justifiably has taken matters into her own hands, cracking down on illegal immigration.

To fix this problem and restore the rule of law, the federal government must uphold its responsibilities to secure the border and dissuade illegal behavior. Without a secure border, drug smugglers, illegals and even terror-



U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran
● Capitol Notes

ists have an easy path into our country with potentially devastating consequences.

As a sponsor of the leading border security bill in Congress, the Secure America through Verification and Enforcement Act, we are working to force Washington to do something about our border problem. We need to have additional Border Patrol agents, utilize technology to protect the border, and expand detention facilities so when illegals are caught, they are actually detained.

That is only the first step. Equally important, we must also ensure that America is not rewarding illegals' activity. That means no amnesty or benefits for illegals. Policies like that only encourage more illegal behavior, fueling an already out-of-control problem. Current ideas and proposals to give illegals amnesty and privileges like providing them with lower in-state tuition benefits or even the ability to have driver's licenses would take our country in exactly the wrong direction, hurting law enforcement and the public at large. I'm proud to

have consistently stood strong against amnesty and benefits for illegals, though regrettably, I am the only candidate in this race that has consistently opposed these controversial ideas.

As we work to keep our community safe, ostensibly Kansas law enforcement faces other serious challenges as well. I'm proud to have worked on a range of them, including stopping the production, trafficking and use of meth — a dangerous drug that has devastated too many Kansas families while hurting local governments that address it.

By championing historic anti-meth legislation, we made our towns and cities safer by providing resources for law enforcement and prosecutorial training, while also restricting the sale of over-the-counter meth precursor ingredients.

Kansas' law enforcement community is on the front lines of some of our nation's most difficult battles. From upholding the rule of law to cracking down on our illegal immigration problem to making Kansas towns meth-free, Kansas law enforcement deserves our support and help. I'm proud to have always supported them and will continue to stand with them in the future.

Congressman Jerry Moran is the U.S. Representative for Kansas' First District, and is a candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Gift from senior class helps Red Cross

To the Editor:

I would like the opportunity to thank the Colby High School Senior Class of 2010 for the generous \$1,000 gift they recently donated to the Northwest Kansas American Red Cross.

This will enable us to continue to fulfill our mission of providing relief to disaster victims, and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. We also provide service to service families and conduct health and safety classes, including first aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, lifeguard, learn to swim, Scrubby Bear hand washing, babysitter training and family caregiving.

Of course, one of our most well-known activities that we perform are the blood drives. The donated blood saves many, many lives every day.

The Northwest Kansas American Red Cross truly appreciates the work ethic and heart these high school seniors must have in order to not only raise this money, but then to also choose a worthy recipient for the surplus as they graduated.

We also want to thank their sponsor and any parents and mentors who have supported the efforts of these young adults. As our community should be proud of this group and its accomplishments, so should the group itself be proud that this donation will add a positive impact to the community they grew up in. Kudos to all of you!

We wish much success and happiness to the Colby High School Senior Class of 2010.

Sherry White, Colby director,
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Free Press Letter Drop

● Our readers sound off

Prolife work noted

To the Editor:

The Kansans for Life Political Action Committee has endorsed Jim Morrison for re-election in District 121 of the Kansas House of Representatives.

The committee endorses a candidate based on the strength of character that candidate has shown in work with prolife issues, both in and out of political office. Today, many candidates claim to be prolife. The committee interviews and surveys each candidate to determine an endorsement. The board then extensively discusses and must come to an agreement on a specific candidate. No endorsement is made lightly.

This candidate has demonstrated to the committee that he is strongly convicted to respect life at all stages and fully support of the goals and ideals of Kansans for Life, which represent the values many Kansans hold. He has indicated he would support a Health Care Rights of Conscience law that would prevent all health care providers, not just physicians, from being forced to violate their moral conscience in the performance of their duties. He would

also support state licensing and inspection of abortion clinics (currently required of all other single-day surgery centers), and a ban on abortion after 20 weeks, similar to a law recently enacted in Nebraska.

The candidate's respect for life does not stop at the abortion issue. Kansans for also evaluated their position on embryonic stem cell research, abstinence education and protecting the disabled and elderly from the denial of lifesaving medical treatment.

For more information on this candidate and others who have been endorsed by Kansans for Life, go to www.voteprolife.net.

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● Bruce Tinsley

