

Laurence, Sheila, delegates, friends; thank you. I am pleased to accept the Democratic Nomination for State Representative in the 114th Assembly District.

A little over nine years ago, my wife Kim and I went to a small restaurant on the lower east side of Manhattan. An, at the time, obscur Presidential candidate was meeting up with a bunch of supporters. We got there early to eat, and a good thing we did. By the time Howard Dean arrived, the place was full with a long line waiting outside. He was getting people excited about civic engagement, it was palpable, you could feel it in the air. I hope, in my own little way, to help get the people of Woodbridge, Derby and Orange excited about engagement in our communities.

My wife and I spent time, helping organize events across Connecticut, and even across the Country. At some point, I'll tell the story of the flashmob in Seattle. When Gov. Dean ended his campaign, he encouraged his supporters to run for office. At the time, it wasn't feasible for me to run, so I asked Kim if she wanted to. At the time, we lived in the 149th Assembly district which covers parts of Stamford and Greenwich. It is a district that

hasn't elected a Democrat in close to century, and at the time had not even had a Democratic candidate for a decade.

For our democracy to work, we must have competitive elections. Kim stood up and ran in Greenwich and Stamford, and today, I am pleased to accept the Democratic nomination, to stand up and make sure we have a competitive election here in Woodbridge, Derby and Orange.

After the 2004 elections, people would ask me if Kim had won. I would always answer, "Yes. She won. She didn't get elected, but she won." You see, she got more people involved in the communities of Stamford and Greenwich and it is a better place now because of that. I am going to win this contest too, hopefully, even getting people more involved in their state Government by becoming the State Representative for the 114th Assembly District.

Yet I'm not running against current Republican incumbent. I'm running against apathy. I'm running against people coming home and watching the latest reality television show to see how short the hemlines have become.

I'm running against the obstructionism that has become rampant in American politics. If you don't like something, don't just try to block everyone else, come up with better ideas. You like free markets? Let's have a free market of legislative ideas. I'm running against intellectual apathy, where we expect our leaders to have all the answers; answers they get from the talking heads on the cable news shows and from the talking points provided by party leaders. Don't vote for me because I'll regurgitate all the canned answers. Vote for me because I'll ask all the right questions.

One of the big issues people talk about these days is taxes and government. They have knee-jerk reactions to decrease government and decrease taxes. This is fundamentally flawed in several areas. First and foremost, all of us are the government. Seven score and nine years ago, President Lincoln called on the people to resolve "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth".

I stand here today, to remind all of us that our government should be of us, by us and for us. That when we criticize "the government", we are criticizing ourselves and our own lack of involvement.

Likewise, while we all want to see our tax bills as low as reasonable, we must be careful not to be penny wise and pound foolish. We need to make sure that our tax dollars are spent as wisely and efficiently as possible, and not simply reduce our tax burden to the point that we harm our communities. The Connecticut General Assembly has been nationally recognized for its leadership in results based accountability. This is what we need to focus on, making sure our tax dollars are spent as wisely and efficiently as possible.

There is a fundamental flaw in the efforts of so many who fight for lower taxes. What many of them seem ultimately to be fighting for is decreased social responsibility. They want people to be able to hoard their excess income, or spend it on frivolous amusements, instead of working together for the common good.

It is not bread and circuses that made our country strong, it is the commitment to help our neighbors that has made us great. That is what I am fighting to restore. We need to be wise in how we spend our money on

health care, on education, on housing, and on our infrastructure, as part of our effort to defend the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of all our people.

Now I recognize that taxes and government spending are not the only way to help strengthen our communities. I recognize the role of charitable organizations. I work for a non-profit health center. I serve on the communications committee of a housing organization. I helped establish an animal rescue organization. I hope to encourage my supporters not only to get more involved in the political side of civic engagement. I will use my campaign to encourage people to support many of these great causes. We are all in this together.

Of course, I cannot do this alone. I will need all of your support. I intend to participate in the Clean Elections Program. I will need to raise \$5000 in donations ranging in size from five dollars to a hundred. I will need to have 150 donors from the towns of Woodbridge, Derby and Orange.

I'm asking each one of you today, to make a contribution, as large as you

can, but at least five dollars to help me qualify. While you're at it, I hope you also support your local Democratic Town Committee.

But, I want more than just that. I want your help in getting to meet and talk to as many voters as possible. I want to have small house parties in as many homes in Woodbridge, Derby and Orange as I can. I hope every town committee member will invite me, and fifty of their closest friends to their homes for chips and dip and a chance to talk about my campaign and how we can all work together to strengthen our communities. When there are events in your communities, I want you to invite me and attend the events with me. I want you to introduce me to your friends so that we can all find ways to work better together.

Thank you again, for your support. Now, let's go out and get 'em.