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Mark Binder



**Democrat
US Congress
RI District 1**

www.markbinder.com/candidate

Mark Binder for US House of Representatives, 2010 — Draft
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NOTE: This "speech" is not for media release. It is a draft that I wrote shortly after Representative Kennedy chose to announce his retirement.

The issues and ideas discussed in this piece are in process. They are not final by any means.

And I have not yet chosen whether to throw my hat into the ring.

I am releasing this speech now to inspire debate among the existing crop of candidates and to "test the water" for a possible run.

Please let me know what you think.

— Mark Binder, March 1, 2010

Running for Congress in 2010 seems to be a fundraising and popularity contest. Ideas, genuine and substantial ideas are secondary, replaced instead with postures, vague platforms, and of course requests for dollars.

In 2004, I ran for Patrick Kennedy's seat because the former Congressman voted for the war in Iraq. During that run, my view of the world shifted, and I began to see other challenges and problems on the horizon. I started speaking about peak oil and the coming energy shortage. But with gasoline at around \$1.50, nobody was listening.

With less than \$500 in funding, I received 26% of the primary votes. Many people I knew didn't even know I was running, and later said that they hadn't voted in the primary.

In 2006, I considered another run, but after Mr. Kennedy's brief encounter with a fire hydrant and his subsequent "rehabilitation", his popularity soared.

Now it is 2010. None of the issues that I ran for in 2004 have been solved, satisfied or even approached.

This country still is operating on the belief that gasoline is and will always be unlimited and affordable. We are paying lip service to global warming, while building new coal and gas power plants. We are posturing that no child will be left behind in education, yet huge swaths of our existing population are unprepared to make a living or even survive without government support today, let alone ten years from now.

I am not a politician. Anyone who knows me, knows I'd rather be speaking in front of people or writing on my own or spending time with my family than locked in a conference room or participating in a meeting.

Yet it is too important to leave our future to the existing crop of individuals who have built careers in public service. They know how to play the election game, and part

of that game is to avoid making bold promises or dramatic changes in exchange for collecting middle-ground votes and contributions.

I do not dismiss the middle ground, because that is where we hope to stand, but the issues that I see on the near and far horizon require us to begin acting ahead of dramatic change, not in response to it.

My platform may seem extreme, but these are the first modest steps that I see on the way to preserving our country and the people who comprise this amazing nation.

Will I be able to "get it done"? I don't know. Even our President, with bold initiatives, seems to have challenges in that area. The institution that is our government is not currently designed to make quick or nimble turns in direction or changes in policy. Unlike the professional politicians, I don't know how to negotiate and swap for votes. Except as a parent of three children, I am untutored in the art of compromise.

If a better option arises for any of my ideas, I will abandon the old one and adopt the new one. If someone asks me to trade global warming for health care, I will ask, how is that possible?

These are the issues I care about and these are the solutions that I see, that as your representative to the United States House of Congress, I would help craft, push, put forth, support and fight for. Some are simple. Others are complex. These are not in order, not yet, because all of them are of high priority.

I will put forward legislation for the following issues and challenges.

I will generate funding for renewable, green energy projects by implementing and gradually increasing a gasoline, and other energy tax. These taxes would start small but increase over time.

I will further encourage green and renewable energy projects by offering ongoing tax credits for energy produced through these means.

We will begin laying the groundwork for America in a post-oil, post global warming economy, considering the new landscapes and new living conditions that are likely to emerge.

These include, but are not limited to urban agriculture initiatives, green building incentives and non-green building disincentives, road and highway reclamation projects, and a national shift away from suburban sprawl toward a country that is dominated by cities and farmland.

I will legalize and tax Marijuana. Too long have our resources been spent fighting something that will not go away.

I will propose and push for an "Educating Communities Project", which will raise the standards for all people, not just children.

I will develop legislation for the creation of an American version of the BBC, so that in the Internet age, accurate and cutting edge national and local news will be available, unfettered by both the demands of the "free market" and the pressure of government desire.

I will apply a national sales tax to Internet purchases, not to discourage the use of the net, but to encourage support for local businesses, which are crucial to the social fabric of our communities.

I will push for an equitable, reasonable and humane national health insurance for all Americans.

I will write legislation to reverse the recent Supreme Court decision that permits corporate contributions to political candidates. Companies are not people; they have no business influencing votes in the United States of America.

I will support national legislation that once and for all legalizes gay marriage and legalizes a woman's right to equality.

And I will make Apple pie the official National dessert. Vanilla ice cream or whipped cream will be your choice. Although I personally favor chocolate cake, I believe that with a well-made apple pie available, we can have our cake and eat our pie too.

This is an ambitious platform. This is an outrageous and perhaps unrealistic platform. (Except for the pie and I expect challenges from the cake community)

And yet what choice do we have? We can vote for politicians based on popularity or fundraising, or we can vote for people dedicated to change.

My name is Mark Binder, and I ask for your vote. I also ask for you to give me ten minutes of your time and tell ten of your friends in the first congressional district to vote for me. Tell them to Mark their ballot for Mark Binder. The theme song may be hokey, but the issues are clear.