

Kirk Dillard

G O V E R N O R

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Dear Colleague:

As I sat on the floor of the State Senate during the waning hours of the spring session of the 96th General Assembly, I became more convinced that our state needs new leadership. The Democrats, led by Governor Pat Quinn, once again failed to adequately address our state's fiscal problems.

Therefore, you should know that I am seriously evaluating a run for governor in 2010. Many friends, colleagues and constituents have urged me to consider this option. This is not a decision to take lightly. I want to take the next few weeks to have talks with you and others about the opportunity to re-take the Governor's Office.

While I'm certain I will not be alone in this quest, I can assure you that I will mount an aggressive campaign that promotes tried-and-true GOP principles while holding Democrats fully accountable for their actions. I submit to you just a few of the reasons why I am asking for your consideration of my candidacy next fall:

- **Experience:** The governor of the great State of Illinois is not an entry-level position. It demands someone with seasoned and time-tested experience. I believe I am the only candidate to have that quality. I was a top aide to Gov. Jim Thompson and was Gov. Jim Edgar's Chief of Staff. Those jobs provided me with a profound appreciation for what it takes to have a truly successful administration. In addition, I have been a State Senator since 1994, and also served as a judge for the Court of Claims. Finally, I am a former Republican Chairman of DuPage County where I *increased* the number of GOP primary voters.
- **Ability to Raise Funds:** No matter how correct our GOP message may be, we will be doomed to the backbench without the wherewithal to communicate that message. My past work with business leaders promoting economic growth has helped build relationships with key supporters of pro-business candidates, and their encouragement has weighed heavily in my decision. Furthermore, I have been the State Chairman of the nation's conservative legislators' association and built up national fundraising capabilities through private-sector contacts.

- **Suburban base with downstate roots:** I grew up in the suburbs during the most dynamic growth period this nation has ever experienced, attended public schools, went to college at Western Illinois University in Macomb, lived more than a decade downstate, and went to law school in Chicago at America’s largest Catholic university. My wife Stephanie’s family is from Central Illinois. Her great-great grandfather, Richard Oglesby, was a three-time Illinois governor who nominated Abraham Lincoln for president, coined the term “the rail-splitter” and oversaw the construction of Lincoln’s tomb.
- **Right place on key issues:** I am a fiscal conservative, pro-life, and have a proven track record of working successfully with all Parties when common ground can be established. It was that ability that helped me pass Illinois’ first real ethics package in a quarter century. I strongly support our Second Amendment, and encourage the enforcement of laws penalizing the criminal use of firearms (some of which I’ve sponsored) rather than making gun ownership more difficult. I don’t like taxes—especially when they are misspent—and generally think that state government is out of control. I think the best way to improve our budget problems is to help employers and expand the tax base naturally. I’d like to see this state become a *destination economy* for manufacturers and other businesses looking to expand.

In addition, I was:

- Chief sponsor of the law returning the *Pledge of Allegiance* to Illinois High Schools after a 30-year absence.
- Chief sponsor for the creation of the *Illinois Century Network*, linking vast information sources to schools, libraries, museums, and federal research labs via high-speed networks.
- Chief sponsor of mandatory DNA testing for all Illinois felons.
- Chief sponsor of the Safe-to-Learn legislation to ensure our children’s safety when they are at school.
- Chief sponsor of *15-20-Life*, which automatically increases jail time for a criminal using a gun.
- Chief GOP sponsor for the *Illinois Accountability Portal*—legislation that will bring increased accountability to government by allowing taxpayers to examine government spending online.

- **Ability to attract independent voters in the General Election:** The people of this state have had enough of the bickering partisanship of the past. I believe they want to elect someone who will *stand by his principles* while finding ways to tone down the rhetoric for the common good. I have a history of being willing to reach across the aisle when a political opponent agrees with legislation that Republicans embrace.

Let me address an issue that you may have heard about. I appeared on camera praising the work Barack Obama did with me on ethics legislation. Although that bit of statesmanship was played often during the Iowa Caucus, let me make it clear: I was a strong and enthusiastic delegate for John McCain. I received the second-highest total number of votes to be a John McCain delegate, and worked hard to raise money for his campaign and to get him elected. I know you'll agree with me that we'd be much better off if he were president today.

I don't have to remind you that the stakes are high in 2010. Whoever leads the ticket will have an effect on the entire slate of candidates. I know that I can attract a broader range of interest than other candidates, and even pull in votes from more Independents and "Reagan-Democrats" in the fall.

You'll be hearing more about my candidacy soon. In the mean time, I'd like to hear more from YOU. My door is always open, and your ideas and suggestions are an absolute necessity for our success.

Throughout my career, I have had the pleasure to visit every single county in Illinois, and have lived, worked and worshipped in our largest City, in our suburban villages and in the heartland downstate. I consider all of these home, and look forward to aggressively bringing our unifying Republican message to the good people of this state. Together, we will once again earn the privilege of occupying the Governor's Office and finally begin turning this state around.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirk Dillard". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kirk W. Dillard

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