



## Minnesota Election Update November 18, 2008

### **House Republicans Maintain Leadership Despite Efforts to Change:**

House Republicans met over the weekend to vote on caucus leadership. Choosing a leader for the caucus took five ballots, with current majority leader Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) coming out as the winner. Seifert ran to keep his post, running against him for the position was former Deputy Minority Leader Tom Emmer (R-Delano).

House Democrats elected to keep their leadership team unanimously days after the Nov 4 elections. Senate Republicans also maintained status quo. There is not an anticipated change in leadership for the Senate Democrats.

### **U.S. Senate Race, the Recount:**

**The U.S. Senate race continues to be in the news with fiery attacks by both campaigns and new lawsuits following the November 4 elections. With just 206 votes separating Senator Norm Coleman and DFL challenger Al Franken, a state-wide automatic recount will take place. The campaigns continue to spar over disqualified ballots, recount process and spillover from lawsuits filed before the elections.**

#### *The Recount:*

**Following Election Day, county officials began verifying vote counts and making necessary corrections to vote totals. The State Canvassing Board will certify the election results on November 18, making the election results official and trigger the state-wide automatic recount, to begin Thursday, November 19.**

**Each Ballot will be hand counted by an election official with a representative from both the Franken and Coleman campaign present. The candidate's representative may challenge the decision of the election official on the voter's intent. If there remains objection over the voter's intent, the ballot becomes "challenged" and that ballot will to the State Canvassing Board for review and decision.**

**Local election officials have until December 5 to finish their recount and pass along totals and challenged ballots to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consolidate the reports and present total ballot counts and challenged ballots to the State Canvassing Board on December 16. It may be late December before the State Canvassing Board has**

finished their process of making decisions on challenged ballots and deciding voter's intent. The State Canvassing Board includes the DFL Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, two Supreme Court justices appointed by a Republican governor and two district judges.

**An Update of Post-Election Activities in Washington  
From the LGN Washington D.C. Office**

**Congressional Time-line:**

- November 16th, 2008 - Begin orientation for incoming House freshmen.
- November 17th, 2008 - Senate returns for a week long "lame-duck" session and hold leadership elections
- November 19th, 2008 - House Republicans hold leadership elections (House Democrats have not scheduled elections yet)
- January 3rd, 2009 - Terms of members of the 111th Congress commence (as written in the Constitution)
- January 6th, 2009 - 111th Congress convenes and new Members are sworn in.
- January 20th, 2009 - Inauguration Day.
- February 2nd, 2009 - President submits his budget to Congress (by law it is required by the first Monday of February each year).

**President-Elect Obama Transition:**

President-Elect Obama is already busy putting together his transition team and office, which will be located near Judiciary Square in downtown Washington, D.C. The new official transition website, [MailScanner has detected a possible fraud attempt from "webmail.locklaw.com" claiming to be www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov), is already up and running, with information regarding jobs and the Presidential agenda. There has been much speculation regarding appointments within the new administration, with Minnesota's own Congressman Peterson, Congressman Oberstar, and Congresswoman McCollum among the many names being floated for top Department posts. For more information regarding the approximately 3,000 political positions in the new Administration, the Government Printing Office has just released the 2008 Plum Book in print and PDF which can be accessed at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plumbook/2008/index.html>.

**Stimulus Speculation:**

Speculation on a new economic stimulus package has varied widely since Congress last adjourned in October. Since the election of Senator Barack Obama to the Presidency, most discussions have revolved around whether Congress could wait for his inauguration or an acceptable deal could be made with President Bush and passed during a lame duck session. The Senate has been scheduled to reconvene on November 17<sup>th</sup>, with House leadership only recently announcing it would return on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Both House and Senate leadership have called for Congress to pass a new economic stimulus package and on Tuesday added plans for billion of dollars in new aid for the auto industry. Democrats have proposed taking \$25 billion for automakers from the \$700 billion financial industry bailout cleared last month, though it has considerable resistance from officials within the departing White House. Sources indicate that House leadership has

made clear that progress on a new stimulus and aid to the auto industry will have to come from the Senate, where Republican members still have the ability to block legislation. The White House has signaled it is open to a discussion of the extension of unemployment benefits, but continued its opposition to help for the auto makers through the larger financial bailout program.

If compromise on a stimulus cannot be made, President-Elect Obama has made clear it will be the first legislation supported by his Administration, but if a stimulus does get enacted in the lame-duck session, even more legislation is expected once Obama takes office. Democrats have talked about raising the size of their \$61 billion September House-passed package to about \$100 billion, and then coming back in the new Congress for another package of about \$200 billion, including plans for tax cuts targeting middle-income Americans.

As the lame-duck session begins this week, the Washington D.C. office of Lockridge Grindal Nauen will quickly hear more about the likelihood of developing stimulus proposals. It is unclear how long either chamber will stay in session once they return.

#### **Inauguration:**

The Washington D.C. office of Lockridge Grindal Nauen has been flooded with inquiries regarding the upcoming Inauguration and accompanying events. General information on Inauguration Day events can be obtained from the website for the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies at <http://www.inauguration.gov> **MailScanner has detected a possible fraud attempt from "webmail.locklaw.com" claiming to be http://inaugural.senate.gov/index.cfm.** Tickets to the Inaugural Swearing-In Ceremony are free to the public but only available from your Members of Congress. To request tickets, call your Representative's office (numbers listed below) and provide your name, home address and telephone number, and the number of tickets you would like. Due to limited quantities, it is advised to put in your request as soon as possible.

1st CD – Congressman Tim Walz (202) 225-2472

2nd CD – Congressman John Kline (202) 225-2271

3rd CD – Congressman-elect Eric Paulsen (952) 934-8999

4th CD – Congresswoman Betty McCollum (202) 225-6631

5th CD – Congressman Keith Ellison (202) 225-4755

6th CD – Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann (202) 225-2331

7th CD – Congressman Collin Peterson (202) 225-2165

8th CD – Congressman Jim Oberstar (202) 225-6211

Senator Amy Klobuchar (202) 224-3244