

Oberstar Democracy Project



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February 28, 2007

Volume 2, Issue 1

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Jim's Schedule:

- *Saturday March 17th,*
Finland, MN
St. Urhos Day Parade

Oberstar Talks Infrastructure Investment at State Capitol

"Do the right thing" invest in Minnesota's roads. That was Congressman Oberstar's message to a joint session of the Senate and House Transportation Committees last week. As chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Oberstar is in a good position to bring federal highway aid to the state, but only if Minnesota lawmakers can come up with required state matching funds.



In order to receive the state's allotment of money from the federal government it must match 20% of the funds. Currently, Minnesota is slated to receive \$4.3 billion in federal highway aid over the next six years, a 43% increase over the past federal highway funding bill. Now that he has the chairmanship of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Oberstar says he is primed to bring even more federal funding back to Min-

nesota.

With the recent budget crunch in the state, however, it has become tough to match the money from the federal highway trust fund. During the Ventura administration the state of Minnesota sent \$175 million dollars back to the federal government, "People all across the nation were happy to use that money elsewhere," Oberstar said.



Oberstar also pointed to the economics of the situation. A five-cent gas tax increase will raise \$161 million in a year in revenue specifically for transportation needs. "Minnesota has not increased its gas tax since 1989," Oberstar said, "and since that time the value of the road construction dollar has declined by 47 percent." Oberstar was optimistic that Minnesotans would accept the increase if the funds are used solely for trans-

portation purposes, "It is a user-fee," Oberstar stated, "the more you drive and use the roads, the more you pay for their repair."

The Congressman also alluded to the fact that our state economy has tripled, as well as the number of miles traveled on our roads. "Moving 10 percent of all car trips to mass transit systems would save the same amount of oil we import



from Saudi Arabia," Oberstar said.

Oberstar said we must bring our transportation infrastructure up to date. "It is important for us to make sure our roads are safe for our families, to connect our economic centers, and to decrease our dependence of fossil fuels," he said, "We can make Minnesota a transportation friendly state."



Oberstar Named Candidate of the Year

Congressman James L. Oberstar is having a good year. He recently was reelected to his 17th term by a 2-to-1 margin, he has been named as Chairman of the House Committee



on Transportation and Infrastructure, and now the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Laborer party has named him one of their candidates of the year.

Don Bye, chair of the 8th Congressional District, nominated Oberstar in a letter, "In addition to reelecting himself at the usual two-to-one margin, he really joined the effort to elect new legislators and preserve those in office." Bye added, "So much of this is typical of what Oberstar does, and has done, on a continuing basis for 30 plus years."

Oberstar says he is proud to be recognized by DFL party activists. Oberstar and the party did well in the last year because they listened to the needs of Minnesotans. "The people sent a clear message in 2006, they elected a new DFL

majority, and now it is time to address the people's agenda." He added, "Minnesotans want to see funding for education, investment in infrastructure, and affordable Health Care."



"This year he was extraordinary, and the results showed it," Bye said.



Friends of Jim Oberstar Welcome New Campaign Manager

"Now it is time to address the people's agenda."

Jim Oberstar

The Oberstar team welcomed new campaign manager Blake Chaffee in early January. After his predecessor Don Ness announced, after nine years with Oberstar, that he would take a new position as the Policy Director for the AH Zeppa Foundation in Duluth.

"It is an honor to work for Congressman Oberstar, and I look forward to the opportunities it brings," said Chaffee, "With a new Democratic majority and Congressman

Oberstar's new chairmanship, it will prove to be an exciting year."

Blake grew up in the 8th Congressional District in Hinckley, Minnesota where he attended Hinckley-Finlayson High School, he then graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with a degree in Political Science, and Communications Studies. He is an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting, camping, and still plays amateur baseball for

his hometown Hinckley Knights.



Contact the Campaign

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8th CD:
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President Bush Failing our Troops and Veterans

President Bush's failed war in Iraq has cost American's over 400 billion dollars and 3,159 young lives. And now, four years after "Mission Accomplished" we continue to pay a steep price for failed foreign policy.

The Bush administration has taken us down the wrong track, and now they have failed our wounded Veterans at home.

- Number of service members wounded in action in Iraq since March 2003: **23,677** [DoD, 2/26/07]
- Number of wounded service members not returned to duty: **10,509** [DoD, 2/26/07]
- Case backlog at the Veterans Administration on new benefit claims in FY 2006: **400,000 case backup** [[Army Times](#), 2/20/07]
- Average length of time

veterans wait before receiving monthly benefits: **six months to 2 years** [[Los Angeles Times](#), 1/5/07]

- Average length of time it takes for Army soldiers to convalesce and go through the military medical and physical evaluations: **9-15 ½ months** [[Army Times](#), 2/20/07]

- Projected cost of health care for global war on terror veterans over the course of their lifetimes: **as much as \$600 billion**

[[Newsweek](#), 3/5/07]

- Percent of Iraq veterans seeking psychological counseling within 1 year of returning home: **35 percent** [[Philadelphia Inquirer](#), 2/19/07]

- Number of local VA clinics that provide virtually no mental health care in 2005: **nearly 100** [[McClatchy](#)

[Newspapers](#), 2/11/07]

- Number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans treated by the VA since 2002 tentatively diagnosed with PTSD: **39,331**

[[Fox News](#), 2/13/07]

- Average number of general psychiatry visits for veterans in the mental health system in 1995: **11.7 per year**
- Average number of general psychiatry visits for veterans in the mental health system in 2006: **8.1 per year**

[[McClatchy Newspapers](#), 2/11/07]

- Amount the VA spent for mental health care per veteran in 1995: **\$3,560**

- Amount the VA spent for mental health care per veteran in 2004: **\$2,581**

[[McClatchy Newspapers](#), 2/11/07]



"Bring our troops home with honor"
Jim Oberstar



Help Support Jim!

The Friends of Jim Oberstar are always looking for folks willing to help out! You can volunteer for the campaign in a number of ways; write a letter to the editor, door knock or make phone calls, or help plan an event! Contact us to find out more.



Jim Oberstar

WORKING for you 
for minnesota

E-mail _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please contact me about—

- The Oberstar Democracy Project
- Volunteering
- Traveling around MN to support Democrats
- Placing a lawn sign in my yard

- Writing a letter to the editor
- Using my name and testimonial

Oberstar
Democracy Project

Please sign me up for—

- The Oberstar Democracy Project
- E-mail updates from Jim

Please share your story about Jim:
