



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on September 6, 2010

Constitutionalist Pastor Stephen Broden's Political Star Rising

Few seasoned political observers gave Stephen Broden a chance to unseat entrenched leftist Democrat Eddie Bernice Johnson from Congress even a few weeks ago. But the national media is now putting a much stronger spotlight on Broden after the Dallas Morning News revealed last week that Representative Johnson had improperly secured Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) scholarships for her relatives and relatives of her staff. Broden may now have a realistic shot at winning this race.



The overwhelmingly Democratic and urban district in Dallas, Texas, has been represented by Johnson since 1993, but Broden who decisively won a March 2 three-way Republican [primary](#) to replace the Democratic incumbent in November has been featured on numerous national media outlets since the Johnson scandal broke: [CNN's Anderson-Cooper](#), Fox Newss Glenn Beck, and the Mike Gallagher radio show. More importantly for the race, the scandal has been a fixture of *Dallas Morning News* and local television station coverage of the race for more than a week.

The *Dallas Morning News* [reported](#) of the Congressional Black Caucus scholarships that 23 of the scholarships Johnson awarded since 2005 more than a third went to two grandsons from Austin, two great-nephews from Plano, and two children of her top aide in Dallas, who lived in Mesquite. Johnson had broken two of the three rules for the scholarships averaging \$1,000: that recipients not be related to either the congressman or a staff member, and that recipients live in the congressional district.

Johnson's response to the scandal has been to pooh-pooh the significance of denying scholarships to students in her impoverished district, metastasizing the scandal. "It's a minor part of what we do," she [told](#) the *Dallas Morning News* September 3, adding that she is too busy to review scholarship applications personally. "They go right to my chief of staff. I have not dwelled on figuring out how to give my grandchildren \$1,000 a year."

Moreover, Johnson even told local television stations that she had no moral qualms about using her congressional office to enrich her relatives. If I had known this was against the law I wouldn't have done it, the Johnson [told](#) local television station WFAA-TV (Channel 8). I did not have an ethical alarm



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go off. Johnson even went so far as to say that she had never heard of the CBC scholarship rules, even though she once chaired the CBC and current CBC officials have characterized the rules as straightforward and unequivocal. I never heard the rules even discussed, Johnson [told](#) local radio station KRLD-AM.

Stephen Broden agrees with *Dallas Morning News* columnist Mark Davis, who [wrote](#): If voters return her to private life, it won't be because they recoiled at small-scale corruption. It will be because they liked Broden's vision better than her record. Broden told *The New American* that I believe that's true, though the scandal will have some influence as to who she is. That Broden is also senior pastor of the Dallas-based Fair Park Bible Fellowship Church may help to accentuate the moral contrast in the race.

Broden's campaign (previously profiled by *The New American* as a longshot candidacy [here](#)) has focused on upholding the U.S. Constitution, including getting the federal government to end funding programs not authorized by the Constitution and fulfilling its responsibilities under the document.

Broden has made repeal of ObamaCare a centerpiece of his campaign, though that fact alone doesn't distinguish him from many establishment Republicans. That establishment Republicans would also oppose Obama's healthcare legislation should be no surprise, as polling data and Washington, D.C. talking points from the Republican National Committee have created a chorus that emulates the Tea Party grass roots. But Broden goes much deeper than the superficial Republican Party talking points, frequenting Nullify Now events at campaign stops and declaring categorically in an interview with *The New American* that government has no constitutional right to be involved in healthcare.

Broden told *The New American* that I believe the Constitution is the means by which we can direct this country away from a socialist paradigm. Part of what the government should be doing under the U.S. Constitution is enforcing Article IV, Section IV of the U.S. Constitution by protecting states from invasion and securing the borders from illegal immigration. Broden says that I believe in less government, but adds that securing the borders is not more government; it's [the government] fulfilling its duty under the Constitution.

Broden is also distinct from establishment Republicans who have pushed unbalanced budgets in the past and are currently circulating the [Paul Ryan alternative budget](#) (that would never balance the budget). Asked by *The New American* if he would ever vote for an unbalanced budget under any circumstance, Broden replied, Absolutely not. We need a balanced budget.

Though *The New American* has previously profiled Broden as a longshot candidate, the imploding candidacy of Eddie Bernice Johnson and the current political climate means Broden now has a legitimate shot. Steven Thomma of McClatchy Newspapers [wrote](#) on September 6: By every reckoning, it appears likely that voters will punish the Democrats. In fact, a tidal wave of anger and anxiety may be building that could sweep the Democrats out of power in both houses of Congress and send a defiant new Republican majority to Capitol Hill to battle the president for the final two years of his term. Broden may still be an underdog, but voter anger on a national level has reached a fury never before seen, and Broden's now an underdog of an entirely different magnitude.

The current spate of national exposure may help Broden narrow the fundraising gap in the campaign. [Eddie Bernice Johnson outraised Broden by a two-to-one margin through June](#), even though more than half of Johnson's donations have come from Political Action Committees (PACs). Measuring donations for individual donors alone, and excluding the Washington, D.C.-linked special interest PAC donations, Broden has already outraised Johnson. But Broden will need more funds to get his message out. And to



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prevail in the November race, Broden will need to keep receiving the political winds that appear to be blowing in his favor right now.

Photo: Pastor Stephen Broden



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