



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on October 12, 2010

Democratic House Contenders on Shaky Ground

While Fox News reports that the “GOP Sees Senate Chances Improve,” the New York Times writes that Democrats in allegedly “safe” House seats still stand on shaky ground, particularly in Ohio.

The *NYT* reports: “Republicans are expanding the battle for the House into districts that Democrats had once considered relatively safe, while Democrats began a strategy of triage on [October 11] to fortify candidates who they believe stand the best chance of survival.”

In other words, as Republicans are continuing to invest money into at 10 races across the country, which include two Democrat seats in eastern Ohio, Democrats have “pulled out of some races entirely or significantly cut their financial commitments in several districts that the party won in the last two election cycles.”



According to the *New York Times*, “Representatives Steve Driehaus of Ohio, Suzanne M. Kosmas of Florida, and Kathy Dahlkemper of Pennsylvania were among the Democrats who learned that they would no longer receive the same infusion of television advertising that party leaders had promised. Party strategists conceded that these races and several others were slipping out of reach.”

On the other hand, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has increased its financial investment in two New York races, as well as races in Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, and Massachusetts.

Two Ohio districts in particular are up for grabs, the 6th District and 10th District. In the 6th District, recent polls showed the Republican candidate Bill Johnson with a 3-point lead over Democrat Charlie Wilson. Similarly, a poll by SurveyUSA at the end of September shows Republican Steve Chabot with a double-digit lead over Steve Driehaus in the 10th District. In response to the polls, the GOP increased its spending in those districts by \$350,000 for television commercials.

Fox News reports that Driehaus and Chabot “have been locked in a nasty exchange in campaign ads.” Chabot’s advertisements claim, “Driehaus betrayed us, voting for the Washington health care power grab. Driehaus votes with Pelosi’s Washington agenda 94 percent of the time.”

In response, Driehaus’s ads contend, “Steve Chabot never did anything. He’s failed the people of Cincinnati for 14 years, and they’re not gonna have him back.”

As reported by the *NYT*: “the new investments by Republican groups [in Ohio] have become apparent in recent days. Television and radio advertisements are aimed at Representatives Charlie Wilson and Zack



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Space, both Democrats who were elected in 2006, while new pieces of literature tying the men to President Obama and the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, are arriving in the mail.”

In response to the ads, Charlie Wilson claimed that he has in fact stood up to the Democratic Party on climate legislation. In Wilson’s television advertisements, he purports to be disgruntled with the Democratic Party, asserting, “I’m Charlie Wilson, and I’m fed up.”

In Ohio’s 18th District, Democrat Zack Space has found himself in a defensive position against Bob Gibbs, with whom he is tied in recent polls.

Noting the close races in these key districts, Ed Good, Chairman of Ohio’s Belmont County Democratic Party, contends that angry voters are anxious to “shoot the messenger, if you will.”

“They are going to try to pick off what they think is low-hanging fruit. But the only way Charlie or Zack can lose is if our party does not get out and vote.”

Sensing danger in the Ohio House races, President Obama visited the battleground state 10 times in order to promote the Democratic agenda and attack Republican opposition. However, the visits did little to comfort Ohio residents, who are currently struggling with a double-digit unemployment rate. As it stands, President Obama’s approval rating hovers at around 40 percent in Ohio, making him perhaps not the best mascot for the Democratic candidates there.

Photo: Representative Steve Driehaus of Ohio: AP Images



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