



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 21, 2013

Liz Cheney Senate Candidacy Already Controversial

In announcing her bid to be the next U.S. senator from Wyoming, Liz Cheney (shown) sounded at times as if she was running for president against Barack Obama, who is, of course, constitutionally ineligible to run for a third term.



“President Obama has launched a war on our Second Amendment rights. He has launched a war on our religious freedom. He has used the IRS to launch a war on our freedom of speech. He has used the EPA to launch a war on Wyoming’s ranchers, farmers and energy industry,” Cheney said in the YouTube video she posted July 16 announcing the candidacy that will pit her next year against incumbent Mike Enzi in a GOP primary in what is generally regarded as the most Republican state in the nation.

It may be that Cheney, a lawyer, former State Department official and daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, wants to show she will be more aggressive in opposing the Obama administration than Enzi, a conservative, but more low-key Republican. And Cheney, 46, is not bashful in highlighting the age difference between herself and Enzi, who, at 69, is closer to her father’s age. As she described a need for change, it is, at least in part, a generational thing.

“I am running because I believe it is necessary for a new generation of leaders to step up to the plate,” she announced.

But the U.S. Senate has not often been disrupted by a youth movement, and Enzi says he is “the median age” for a member of that august body. And some voters — particularly elderly ones — might consider it a low blow that Cheney suggested Enzi was [“just confused”](#) when he said she had promised him she would not run if he decided to seek a fourth term.

“She’s been traveling around Wyoming for a long time, so I’m not surprised,” Enzi told [CNN’s Dana Bash](#) on July 17. “I’m only surprised in that she said if I ran, she wouldn’t. She announced 30 minutes after I more specifically stated my intention.” He is “absolutely not too old to be a senator,” Enzi said. “I’m in really good health. I’m on the committees that I want to be on. I have seniority.”

In offering herself as a “strong voice for Wyoming,” Cheney, without mentioning Enzi, seemed to suggest the senator is meek and not enough of a fighter for conservative principles. “I am running because I know as a mother and as a patriot, we can no longer afford simply to go along to get along,” Cheney said.

Enzi claims his ability to cooperate with both Democratic and Republican colleagues is a point in his favor. “I’ve developed trust on both sides of the aisle,” he told Bash. “People trust me that what I say I’m going to do, I do.”



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Cheney, who has been a Fox News commentator and chairman of an organization called Keep America Safe, is known for her hawkish stance on foreign policy and national security issues. She remains an unapologetic defender of the Iraq War, of which her father was a leading architect.

Enzi who also supported the war and, has a 93 percent rating from the American Conservative Union. Cheney faces a considerable challenge if she plans to portray the incumbent as something less than a solid Republican in a solidly red state.

She will also have to contend with the “carpetbagger” issue. Though her father was the state’s U.S. House member from 1979-1989, she is a native of Wisconsin and former Virginia resident who moved to Wyoming just last fall.

“She is running against an incumbent from her own party who has a solidly conservative voting record and is well-liked by voters,” Jennifer Duffy, senior editor of the non-partisan *Cook Political Report*, told CNN “Her theme seems to be Enzi’s age, but I don’t know that it will play that well.”

Unlike most first-time candidates running against a multi-term incumbent, Cheney will suffer no disadvantage in name recognition or fund-raising ability.

“She will out-raise him by factors of 10 or more, and he will still win because Wyoming is grassroots, retail, campaigning,” Republican Cynthia Lummis, Wyoming’s U.S. House member, [told](#) Politico. “A novice candidate with little direct experience in retail politics isn’t likely to adapt to Wyoming’s political environment.” Nor is Cheney, with her obvious Washington connections and the years she has spent in an around the nation’s capital, well positioned to portray herself as the outsider running against an “establishment” favorite.

“One of the most remarkable things about Cheney’s Wyoming adventure is there appear to be no significant ideological or policy differences between the two candidates,” observed *American Conservative* editor Daniel Larison. “It is an insurgency in the name of self-promotion and nothing more,” he [opined](#), “and presumably primary voters will reject it for that reason.”

Photo of Liz Cheney: AP Images



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