

Springfield Press – June 11, 2008

### **Encourages Competition in Politics**

To the Press:

This year's Democratic Presidential Primary has created an unprecedented amount of interest. Many voters in Springfield and throughout Delaware County decided to switch their registrations from Republican and Independent to Democratic in order to take part in the primary April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Recently a letter was sent out by the Springfield Republican Party encouraging those who had left the Republican Party to come back now that the primary had passed. This was a smart maneuver and reflects the well organized nature of our local Republican Party, but also betrays something else. In the text of the letter it read that a voter who has left the Republican Party to join the Democratic Party would "lose your voice in Springfield on who represents you on a local level." In local political circles and in the very culture of Springfield we are often referred to as a one party town, but perception does not make reality and in politics nothing is set in stone. If a voter makes a choice to change their party as that party best reflects their own beliefs then how is it that a Democrat in Springfield does not have a voice in who represents us?

For many years now to be a Democrat in Springfield was a lonely thing. I have met many people who have apologized for being Democrats in Springfield and heard numerous jokes about how few of us there are. Well, those numbers are changing and the Republican Party recognizes this and they are doing what they should to protect their base of power in Springfield, but I am curious as to what they are afraid of. Each of our Commissioners is a Republican as are our County Commissioners and Judges along with our State Rep and State Senator. Why are they so concerned about a growth in Democratic Registration?

Perhaps it is for the first time they sense real competition. For the first time the changing nature of Springfield will allow for real debate about issues and provide voters with real choice. Perhaps the people of Springfield can stop thinking about registering a certain way so their trash can be collected and instead register based on their principles and their beliefs on the role of government and what government policy should be. Perhaps Republicans are sensitive to this issue as many of our current Republican Leaders were at one time Democrats until changing parties for the purpose of political advantage.

To those of you who recently joined the Democratic Party I say welcome. To those of you registered as Republicans for the sake of your trash collection or because you believe you must be a Republican to live in Springfield I say come on over to the Democratic Party if that is where your beliefs tell you to be. To those of you who believe in the ideals of the Republican Party I say good for you as each and every one of us should always register and vote our conscience and there is more than enough room in our Democracy for different points of view and debate.

Voting is a deeply personal thing. Most of us are neither 100% Ds or 100% Rs, but we should be comfortable and free to register any way we want. If the result of that is that we have more competitive elections in Springfield then good. Competition in politics makes all of us better as when voters have choices they can ask tough questions of their leaders and engage in a free exchange of ideas as our Founding Fathers wanted. Here is to everyone having a voice in Springfield regardless of their Political Party.

Tom Quinn

Democratic Committee Person Springfield - 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct

Democratic Nominee for State Representative 165<sup>th</sup> District