



## **CAPITOL REPORT**

October 30, 2008

### **ELECTION EVE SPECIAL ISSUE**

The 2008 election is shaping up to be a real disaster for Michigan Republicans. As we head into the last weekend before voting, **John McCain** appears certain to lose the state – perhaps by a very large margin – and the GOP may very well lose two U.S. Congressional seats they've held for years. We see the entire State Republican ticket going down to defeat – with one possible exception. And, worse for them, the State House of Representatives may well have its biggest Democratic majority in nearly 30 years. Only Republican-nominated Chief Justice **Cliff Taylor**, running on a non-partisan ballot, is likely to escape the debacle and even that is not entirely a sure thing.

The details: there is no doubt that Senator McCain's withdrawal from Michigan competition, clumsily executed, has hurt an already wounded state GOP. U. S. Senator **Carl Levin** has virtually no contest in his re-election bid against State Representative Jack Hoogendyk. Incumbent U.S. Congressman **Joe Knollenberg** and **Tim Walberg** both trail their opponents in the polls and in money left to finish out the campaign. **One more upset** of a sitting Michigan Republican congressman is not out of the question. The rest of the State Republican ticket made up of candidates for various state education posts is totally dependent on how the top of the ticket does. For them, that's bad news. We see only MSU Trustee **Scott Romney**, buoyed by strong name recognition, having a chance to win and even he is an underdog.

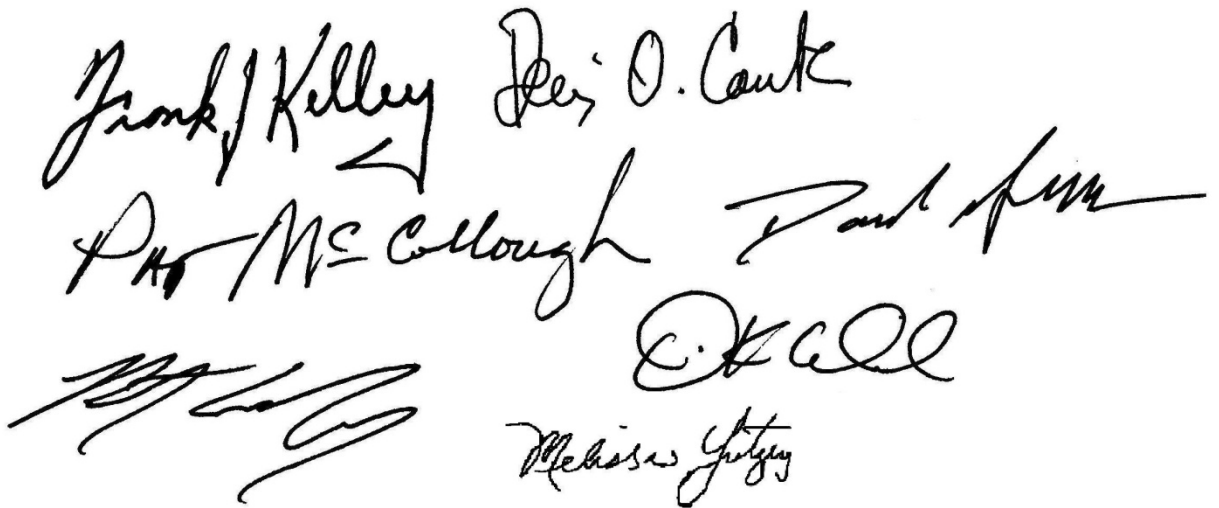
The worst news for the GOP is in the **State House races**. (No state senators are up for election this year). Republicans are being outspent and dragged down by the top of the ticket, to the point that we think there will be at least 63 and possibly as many as 70 Dems elected (an increase of up to 12 seats). Even normally safe Republican seats are teetering. Biggest GOP fear is that these wins will give Dems strong contenders in 2010 **State Senate races**, giving the latter hope of winning a majority in the upper chamber for the first time in nearly 30 years.

For **Supreme Court**, incumbent Chief Justice Cliff Taylor has so far weathered a super aggressive attack by his Dem-nominated opponent, Diane Hathaway. Traditionally, incumbency has been a huge advantage in Michigan's state-wide judicial races, but is it possible that this year it could be a negative? Taylor is favored and could even win big, but we're not ready to yet place this one in the "sure thing" column.

If **Obama** wins nationally, whither **Gov. Granholm**? Despite a lot of media chatter that she might head for Washington, we think the odds are high that she will remain committed to Michigan through 2010. The one exception might be a highly-coveted spot on the U.S. Supreme Court, but the chances of that being available – or offered – in the next two years may be slim.

So, **coming out of next Tuesday**, we see a hold-over Democratic governor, a hold-over Republican Senate, a juiced-up Democratic House, and, likely, a status quo "non-partisan" State Supreme Court.

Next **Wednesday, November 5**, we'll send you a new Capitol Report...containing not our informed speculation...but actual outcomes.



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