



# eNAPUS Legislative & Political Bulletin

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## Vote – Then Join NAPUS On Election Night 2006

The 1974 post-Watergate and the 1994 Elections were watershed events, transforming Congress and redefining national politics. On Tuesday, for the 110<sup>th</sup> time in our nation's history, American voters will take part in a federal election. Voters may trigger a seismic change on Capitol Hill and, concurrently, alter Congressional relations with the White House. Or, the results will signal that the Democrats squandered a rare opportunity to recast the political landscape of Washington. It is reported that 20-25% of this year's votes are being cast early, and the speculation is that these votes favor GOP candidates. So, some of the races may not be decided until every vote is tallied.

The sage advice of past political standard-bearers is being turned on its head. Republicans are parroting venerated Democratic Speaker Tip O'Neill's adage that "all politics is local," asking voters to minimize their concern about Iraq and corruption. On the other hand, Democrats are citing their old nemesis, revolutionary GOP Speaker Newt Gingrich's battle cry that "we've had enough," asking voters to cast out Members of Congress who kowtow to the White House.

Postmasters are invited to join the *NAPUS Government Relations Department*, on Election Evening, beginning at 5:30 PM EST, to participate in political punditry as the 2006 returns come into NAPUS' brick-enclosed election-night nerve center. You may log on to our specially-created NAPUS Election Night Headquarters: <http://napus-election-night-2006.blogspot.com/>.

Postmasters will keenly monitor 7 highly contested Senate races and 55 competitive House races. The Democrats need a net gain of 6 seats to take control of the Senate, and pick up 15 seats to win the House. Garnering a majority – even a slim one – enables the party in power to select Committee Chairmen and grants it majority membership on all Committees (except the Ethics Committee). In addition, the House Speaker is selected by the majority party, as is the Senate Majority Leader. For all intents and purposes, the majority party will define the legislative agenda for the next two years.

On election evening, NAPUS will watch bellwether battles that may forecast a national trend for one party or the other. These key races include members of the House and Senate Committees that have jurisdiction over postal issues. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) is in a fight for political survival with former RI Attorney General Sheldon Whitehouse (D). Chafee is trailing in the latest polls. Committee Ranking Democrat Joseph Lieberman (CT-I) is being forced to run as an Independent, by virtue of losing the Democratic primary to anti-Iraq War multimillionaire Ned Lamont (D). Senior Committee Member and NAPUS 2004 Champion Daniel Akaka (D-HI) survived a bruising Democratic primary and will face Aloha voters



Dan G. Blair  
PRC Nominee

President Bush announced that he intends to nominate OPM Deputy Director Dan Blair to the Postal Rate Commission, and upon confirmation designate him Chair. (Blair would succeed George Omas.)

Dan served as counsel to the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, and the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. Dan also served as Rep. John McHugh's first staff director of the Postal Subcommittee.



Sen. John Kerry  
GOP's October Surprise

On Halloween, 2004 Presidential candidate Sen. Kerry (D-MA) told a joke that has been interpreted as disrespectful to US troops stationed in Iraq. Political pundits believe that Kerry's ill-timed and ill-advised quip may boost GOP turnout in certain congressional and states.

on Tuesday. In addition, Committee member Mark Dayton (D-MN) is vacating his Senate seat, resulting in contest pitting Hennepin County Attorney Amy Klobuchar (D) against Rep. Mark Kennedy (R). The outcome of these and other contested races will determine the Senate majority party:

- MD – Rep. Ben Cardin vs. Lt. Gov. Michael Steele (Democratic Open)**
- MO – Claire McCaskill vs. Rep. Jim Talent (Republican)**
- MN – Amy Klobuchar vs. Rep. Mark Kennedy (Democratic Open)**
- MT – John Tester vs. Sen. Conrad Burns (Republican)**
- NJ – Sen. Bob Menendez vs. Thomas Kean, Jr. (Democratic)**
- OH – Rep. Sherrod Brown vs. Sen. Mike DeWine (Republican)**
- PA – Atty. Gen. Bob Casey vs. Sen. Rick Santorum (Republican)**
- RI – Sheldon Whitehouse vs. Sen. Lincoln Chafee (Republican)**
- TN – Rep. Harold Ford, Jr. vs. Mayor Bob Corker (Republican Open)**
- VA – Jim Webb vs. Sen. George Allen (Republican)**

Polls in MO, MT, TN, and VA indicate that the races are either "toss-ups." Surveys in MD, MN, NJ, OH, PA and RI show the Democratic candidates leading, some by narrowing margins. If the polls accurately reflect how the electorate will vote on Tuesday – *admittedly a big if* – then the Democrats must win three of the four toss-up races to gain control of the Senate. VA polls close at 7:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST); and TN and MO polls close at 8:00 PM EST. We will be eagerly awaiting these returns.

Last week's *eNAPUS Legislative & Political Bulletin* reported that we will probably detect a national trend, if any, fairly early in the evening. IN, KY and FL boast highly competitive House races, and the polls in these states close soon after sundown – IN and KY at 6:00 PM EST, and FL at 7:00 PM EST. These contests feature embattled GOP incumbents who may have been seared by the Foley intern or Abramoff bribery scandals. Consequently, we will be carefully monitoring voter turnout and results from the following early returns:

- IN – Rep. Chris Chocola vs. Joe Donnelly**
- IN – Rep. John Hostettler vs. Brad Ellsworth**
- IN – Rep. Mike Sodrel vs. former Rep. Baron Hill**
- KY – Rep. Ron Lewis vs. Mike Weaver**
- KY – Rep. Ann Northup vs. John Yarmuth**
- KY – Rep. Geoff Davis vs. former Rep. Ken Lucas**
- FL – Gus Bilirakis vs. Phyllis Busansky (Open Republican)**
- FL – Vern Buchanan vs. Christine Jennings (Open Republican)**
- FL – Joe Negron vs. Tim Mahoney (Open Republican)**
- FL – Rep. Clay Shaw vs. Ron Klein**

National Association of Postmasters of the U.S.  
8 Hebert Street  
Alexandria, VA 22305  
Tel. 703-683-9027  
Fax. 703-683-0923  
We are on the Web!  
[www.napus.org](http://www.napus.org)

Presently, only two Democratically held seats are at risk; they are both in GA – **Rep. Jim Marshall (D) vs. former Rep. Mac Collins (R), and Rep. John Barrow vs. former Rep. Max Burns (R)**. GA polls close at 7:00 PM EST. So, logon with NAPUS on Tuesday at 5:30 PM EST.