

Dear Republican Colleague,

Ten years ago, we took control of the House of Representatives for the first time in half a century. It was a historic achievement, and it was possible because we stood for the principles the American people believe in: a smaller federal government, returning power to the states, lower taxes, greater individual freedom, and – above all – reform.

I am running for Majority Leader, and I ask for your support. In addition, in order to make clear my commitment to this race and my goal of leading a reinvigorated Republican majority, I am resigning my position as Policy Chairman. I personally believe it is not appropriate to try to retain one position in our elected leadership while running for another. My campaign is based on reform, and reform should begin with an open process

In the past decade, particularly recently, we seem to have lost sight of our ideals. I believe that in order to reconnect with the American people, and retain and grow our Republican Majority in the House, we need to recommit ourselves to our principles.

We need to reform the earmark process and end secret backroom deals. We must also reform our antiquated budget process, and take a clear stand for open and honest government. No elected official, including a Member of Congress, who takes a bribe should get a taxpayer-funded pension.

I grew up watching the example of Barry Goldwater, who worked closely with my father. He taught me that, “a government that is big enough to give you all you want is big enough to take it all away.” That is the philosophy that guided me when I ran for Congress in 1994. I was thrilled to be part of the Revolutionary Class of '94, and the sense of hope and mission of the early days after Republicans took back the House is still with me. We believed then that we could take back our government, and I believe it today.

When I ran for Policy Chairman last year, I told Members that I wanted to help our Leadership, and our entire Conference, achieve our agenda for the American people. I was able to reach out to all corners of our Conference, and was honored to be elected without opposition. As Policy Chairman, I continued to try to bring the Conference together by hosting a

series of Unity Dinners to find consensus on the difficult issue of immigration reform.

Members of our Republican Conference disagree about policy and tactics, but we stand together in our respect for this institution, our hatred of corruption, and our support for the basic principles of our party. The American people overwhelmingly support the principles we stand for. We cannot allow the current scandals to distract their attention from our substantive agenda.

I do not need a poll or questionnaire to tell me what Republicans stand for. The party of Reagan exists not to expand government, but to protect the American people from government's excesses. Reagan once said, "If you're afraid of the future, then get out of the way, stand aside. The people of this country are ready to move again." I think this Conference is ready to move again, and move toward the reforms the American people deserve.

Sincerely,

John Shadegg