

**REPUBLICAN  
MAIN STREET  
PARTNERSHIP** *Political  
Action  
Committee* 

Volume two

Our PAC newsletter continues to provide you with an update on some of the candidates we will be backing in the coming elections. Thanks again for all of your support!

*Featured Races – Maryland’s 1<sup>st</sup> District – Primary Election, 2008  
New Hampshire’s 1<sup>st</sup> District – Primary Election, General Election, 2008  
Pennsylvania’s 15<sup>th</sup> District – General Election, 2008*

**Maryland**



**Rep. Wayne Gilchrest** represents a solidly Republican district in Maryland (MD-1), which went to President Bush with 62% of the vote in 2004. However, he faces a tough re-election battle next year, due to him being targeted by two candidates in the 2008 Republican primary, set for

February 12 (making it one of the earliest in the country).

One opponent, author and academic Joe Arminio, is unlikely to mount a credible challenge. However, the other, conservative Maryland State Sen. Andy Harris, likely will.

Harris has already been endorsed by the conservative Club for Growth. To boot, Harris has out raised Gilchrest by a sizeable margin, bringing in three times the amount in donations that Gilchrest did in the second quarter of 2007. Gilchrest retains a financial advantage because of a high level of cash-on-hand—but with Club for Growth money sure to flow into Harris’ coffers as the primary nears, Gilchrest will have to work hard to stay a step ahead as we approach 2008.

Gilchrest’s record on environmental issues, important to this district which surrounds the Chesapeake Bay, should help to stand him in good stead. So will his record on taxes and spending, which is more conservative than the Club for Growth and Harris pretend (Gilchrest earned an 86% rating from Americans for Tax Reform last year).

However, where the Republican primary is concerned, Gilchrest is likely to be vulnerable on the issue of the Iraq war, having previously voted in favor of bringing troops home beginning this fall. Many Maryland conservatives continue to back involvement in Iraq, and that could put Gilchrest at a disadvantage.

That being said, Gilchrest has a track record of beating primary challengers (including one supported by the Club for Growth in 2002)—and 2008 may well prove another year in which he does so.

### New Hampshire



**Ex-Rep. Jeb Bradley** is running again in 2008, in an effort to take his old House seat (NH-1) back from far-left wing Democrat, Rep. Carol Shea-Porter. Shea-Porter won with 51% to Bradley's 49% last year off the back of strong anti-war sentiment in the Granite State. However, since then, she has angered many voters in the district by virtue of poor constituent services, and allegations of her having been rude and unhelpful to families of men and women serving in Iraq.

In order to get to a re-match with Shea-Porter, however, Bradley will have to make it through a primary, where he will be challenged by John Stephen, the former commissioner of New Hampshire's Department of Health and Human Services. Bradley has run against Stephen before, back in the 2002 Republican primary, and he beat him then. That race was contested by a further six Republicans—making it comparatively easy for Bradley to win—but with the experience of having beaten Stephen once under his belt, Bradley will know how to do it again in a tighter race.

Stephen is running primarily on a platform of restoring fiscal responsibility to Washington—not exactly something that Bradley did not pursue in his time in Congress. In 2006, he earned a high 82% rating from Americans for Tax Reform, and even scored better than more than 50 other Republicans (and all but one Democrat) on the generally moderate-unfriendly Club for Growth 2006 scorecard.

Bradley's chances, post-primary, against Shea-Porter look good. Despite her claims that she will win by 20 points or more, and her consequent refusal to take part in the DCCC's "Frontline" program, designed to aid the party's most vulnerable incumbents, she looks like she'll lack the resources to run a winning campaign against Bradley.

Whereas other freshmen whose districts were won by President Bush in 2004 (as this one was) had raised an average of \$600,000 in the first half of the year, Shea-Porter had raised just \$262,541 in that period. That will be good news to Bradley, who will have to spend money on next year's primary, in addition to the general election. Expect Bradley to pull through both.

### Pennsylvania



**Rep. Charlie Dent** represents one of the most politically-contested districts in the country (PA-15). In 2004, despite his district going to John Kerry by literally a handful of votes, Dent won it with close to 59%. Last year, when Pennsylvania lost more congressional seats than any other state in the country, Dent hung on with 53% of the vote.

2008 promises to be closer still, with Iraq continuing to be a major issue in the Keystone State. Over the summer, Dent was targeted by the Americans Against Escalation in Iraq

“Iraq Summer” campaign, designed to pressure Republicans into opposing continued US involvement in Iraq. Dent has also been the target of ads by Freedom’s Watch, a group headed up by former White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer, which aims to block US withdrawal from Iraq.

Dent’s position on Iraq conforms to neither group’s view: he is the signatory of a letter calling for a bipartisan approach on Iraq that can lead to a swift handover of combat mission responsibility to the Iraqis, but which does not call for immediate withdrawal. That may represent good policy, but it puts him in uncomfortable middle ground heading into next year.

2008 will also be tough for Dent because Democrats have recruited a challenger for his seat very early: activist Sam Bennett. Last year, Dent’s opponent entered the race relatively late, yet still came within 10 points of him while spending considerably less than Dent. Democratic sentiment is that had a 2006 challenger been found earlier, that 10 point deficit might have been overcome.

Bennett’s early entry, combined with her garnering of \$63,000 in her first quarter and Pennsylvania’s anti-Republican, anti-war sentiment promise to make 2008 a tougher year for Dent—though his well-known bipartisanship and willingness to depart from the Republican majority should stand him in good stead. A Dent return to Congress is likely.