



## Reelect Mitch McConnell

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Given the current state of our country -- two wars, an economy in shambles, a broken healthcare system, joblessness on the rise -- it is easy to understand voters' sentiment to "throw the bums out."

We share that view, but we are also concerned enough about the future of our democracy to believe there are congressmen and senators who, by virtue of their experience, intellect and commitment, could be keys to unraveling the knot we have tied in our national posture.

Sen. Mitch McConnell is one of those senators.

Four terms in the U.S. Senate have given McConnell an enormous amount of influence. He presides as minority leader in a Senate that has swung from GOP to Democrat control since the Republican heydays of a decade ago. But even more important than McConnell's rank or tenure is his understanding and feel for how the Senate can and should work.

In two weeks, this country could very well elect a Democrat to the White House. Barack Obama has many wonderful traits, and we believe he would be a good president. At his side will be a veteran of the U.S. Senate, Joe Biden, and the two would make a formidable team. But that team will need the support and cooperation of both Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill if we are to salvage our economy, settle our differences with our allies and find victory in the global war on terrorism.

Should Sen. John McCain pull a come-from-behind victory, McConnell would be crucial to what will be a stormy relationship between the White House and a Democrat-controlled Congress.

Sen. McConnell has always been aware of and reactive to the needs of northeastern Kentucky. A regular visitor at this newspaper, he knows of the successes that we have had as a region, and he also knows the challenges we face moving forward. Federal grants obtained with McConnell's support have meant a great deal to those of us who live in the small towns of the Buffalo Trace, and McConnell's keen understanding of the farm economy has supported our efforts to move forward in an area once absolutely dependent on the tobacco crop.

A long phone conversation with Bruce Lunsford last week convinced us he is a passionate and informed businessman who believes McConnell and others who have served long terms in Washington are indeed the problem, not the solution. It is regrettable that the Kentucky Senate race has deteriorated into negative ads and character attacks, but such tactics -- on both sides -- do not provide the solid ground on which to base a key vote.

In the end, voters in the Commonwealth must judge candidates based on their records and on their ability to operate in both the best interest of their constituents and, at the same time, make critical decisions that affect our nation as a whole.

Sen. Mitch McConnell has shown he has that ability. He provides the kind of quiet but effective leadership that can support and encourage positive change in the way we govern ourselves and the actions we take as a nation.

The Ledger Independent endorses Sen. McConnell's candidacy for the U.S. Senate.

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