

FROM AN ANONYMOUS: "NOLACARES"

All over the country, people have their eyes on the upcoming elections and their primaries. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) is no exception. In a press release on July 30, the DCCC took an interest in Louisiana's Democratic primary for U.S. Representative for the state's second congressional district, endorsing candidate Cedric Richmond for their "Red to Blue" program. According to Politico.com, the endorsement "reflects a consensus that it's in the party's best interests to avoid a bruising, late August primary." Which begs the question, if Richmond gets elected, who will be in charge: the national Democratic Party or the constituents?

A quick look at the DCCC's press release announcing Richmond's addition to the "Red to Blue" program answers this question. According to DCCC Chairman Chris Van Hollen, "Cedric Richmond has come out of the gate strong and built a lot of early excitement for his campaign to put this seat in the hands of someone who...supports President Obama." also adding that Richmond would "stand with President Obama on critical issues like health insurance reform." It seems like national Democrats like Van Hollen and James Clyburn would be calling the shots in New Orleans, not Richmond.

Even the involvement of the DCCC in a contested congressional primary raises red flags. According to Juan LaFonta, currently state representative for the 96th district, and also vying for the seat, said "I don't even know why they did that. They aren't supposed to endorse in a contested Democratic primary." This, along with all of the prominent Democrats endorsing Richmond, leads some to believe that Richmond has a little more on his mind than standing up for the best interests of his district. Representative Van Hollen believes that, "Red to Blue will give him the financial and structural edge he needs to remain on the road to victory in November" which might be true, but whose victory would it be: Richmond's, or Van Hollen's?

It's not like Richmond has a blemish free past, either. In a press release from the Supreme Court of Louisiana, dated December 2, 2008, Richmond had "made knowingly and materially false statements when he represented in his February 11, 2005 Notice of Candidacy", to which Richmond denied knowledge of. The Louisiana Supreme Court later ruled that, "The documentary evidence and testimony indicates that this false statement was made knowingly." "It is ordered that Cedric Richmond...is suspended from the practice of law for six months. Following completion...of his suspension, respondent shall be placed on unsupervised probation for six months." Not only was his law license banned for six months, but he has a history of bar fighting, too! In the words of Gary Johnson, also a candidate for the seat, "You know the law, you make the law, break the law, now you want to make the law?" Which leads one to wonder, with his past, why does the DCCC, along with several top democrats, want Richmond to win the election?

In the words of Representative LaFonta, "I guess the people of New Orleans are going to have to make their own decisions."