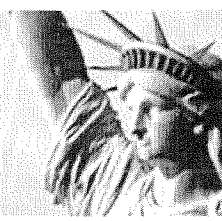




# Right Principles

- Unapologetically American -



## Rocking the Town Halls – Best Practices

### A Political Action Memo

We here in Fairfield County Connecticut conducted an action at Congressman Jim Himes's Town Hall meeting in May 2009. We believe there are some best practices which emerged from the event and our experience, which could be useful to activists in just about any district where their Congressperson has supported the socialist agenda of the Democrat leadership in Washington.

Our objective was to “pack the hall” with as many of our people ready to challenge the Congressman, put him on the defensive, and give him a reality check from we-the-people. We were successful in organizing about 30 people and we spread out among the crowd of about 150 people in the hall. We used some techniques early on which immediately made Himes uncomfortable, and several of us got our chance at the microphone to ask questions. Himes clearly left the hall staggered, as the meeting, billed as a progress report for his economic solutions, clearly did not go as he had planned.

We humbly submit the following as a potential playbook to conduct similar events to achieve similar outcomes in most any targeted district.

### Organize for Success

- Alert people in the district to watch for the first announcement of a Town Hall – there may be as little as a week's notice. Have a central person advised so that the alert can be distributed to as many potential supporters as possible.
- The organizer should go to [www.projectvotesmart.org](http://www.projectvotesmart.org) and obtain the Rep's voting record. It can be copied, pasted into Word, cleaned up, highlighted and readied for distribution.
- Questions should be prepared. Most pols are pros at deflecting off-the-cuff questions. The questions should contain facts and numbers (which are embarrassing and damning to the Rep and his voting record). They can run up to five sentences or so – you will not be cut off at that length. The questions should put the Rep on the defensive and demand a specific answer. Also, anticipate the evasive, deflective answer and be prepared with a quick follow-up. The questions should personalize the Rep e.g. why did YOU vote for a budget that immediately carried with it a \$1.7 trillion deficit? Use the Alinsky playbook of which the Left is so fond: freeze it, attack it, personalize it, and polarize it. You only need to distribute five or six well constructed questions. There are some questions attached here which apply to most any Democrat that is supporting the Socialist agenda.

- The voting record and questions and any relevant articles which would place the Congressperson on the defensive should be distributed to all indicating a willingness to attend. People should be asked to meet in the parking lot of the hall a half hour before the scheduled start.
- Should you seek visibility for your group voicing opposition to the Rep's voting record and agenda, you could schedule a press conference 20 minutes before the Town Hall is scheduled to begin. Write and distribute a press release to local newspapers and TV. Have someone available to read a prepared statement and answer questions. We actually issued the press release and were prepared for the conference. However, the media were following Himes and did not show up until the Town Hall started. We distributed the statement to some of the people arriving at the hall. Copies of both the press release and our statement are attached here.

### **Meet and Deploy**

- The team should meet outside the hall with voting record and questions distributed. Everyone should be asked to use one of the questions or a similar one that boxes in the Rep. The team should also be advised to spread out inside the hall but should try to get seats in the front half. The Rep will inevitably start picking people toward the front.
- The use of protest signs outside is an option if people bring them. However, those without signs should go in the hall early enough to get good seats. Those wanting the Rep to see the signs will end up entering the hall at the last minute and will likely end up in the back with less chance to be picked for a question. Do not bring the signs into the hall if you want any chance to be picked for a question.

### **Inside the Hall**

- Spread out in the hall and try to be in the front half. The objective is to put the Rep on the defensive with your questions and follow-up. The Rep should be made to feel that a majority, and if not, a significant portion of at least the audience, opposes the socialist agenda of Washington. They need to leave the hall with some doubts about their agenda. The other objective is to illustrate for the balance of the audience that the national leadership is acting against our founders' principles which are on the other side of the debate - and show them that there are a lot of solid citizens in the district who oppose the socialist approach to the nation's challenges. We want the independent thinkers to leave the hall with doubts about the Democrat solutions continually proposed by the national leadership.
- You need to rock-the-boat early in the Rep's presentation. Watch for an opportunity to yell out and challenge the Rep's statements early. If he blames Bush for something or offers other excuses – call him on it, yell back and have someone else follow-up with a shout-out. Don't carry on and make a scene – just short intermittent shout outs. The purpose is to make him uneasy early on and set the tone for the hall as clearly informal, and free-wheeling. It will also embolden others who agree with us to call out and challenge with tough questions. The goal

is to rattle him, get him off his prepared script and agenda. If he says something outrageous, stand up and shout out and sit right down. Look for these opportunities before he even takes questions.

- When the formal Q&A session begins get all your hands up and keep them up – be persistent throughout the entire session. Keep body language neutral and look positive to improve chances of being selected. When called on, ask a specific prepared question that puts the onus on him to answer. It can be a long question including lots of statistics/facts. You will not be interrupted from reading a solid question. If you ramble on too long without a focus, you will be stopped. After the Rep answers, or more likely diverts or dodges, be prepared with a follow-up – take the initiative and you will be able to follow-up. The balance of the group should applaud when the question is asked, further putting the Rep on the defensive. If the Rep tries a particularly odious diversion, someone from the group should yell out to answer the question. These tactics will clearly rattle the Rep and illustrate some degree of his ineptness to the balance of the audience.

### **In Summary**

When the session ends, those who asked effective questions should seek out any press remaining at the hall, providing their names for attribution – you may be quoted in the press article. If the gameplan above is implemented the resulting impact will likely be:

- A Rep and his staff set back on their heels, recognizing that people in their district can see past the charade and are angry about the socialist agenda, infringement of our liberties, and profligate spending. After a couple of these sessions one of the weaker ones may consider swaying from the party voting line.
- Audience members expecting business-as-usual go home recognizing that many of their neighbors oppose the agenda, see the dire financial impact, and see a Rep exposed to some degree as a charlatan, and put on the defensive.
- Articles appearing in the local press will amplify the above points to the local community, rather than being puff pieces for the local Representative. Two local newspaper articles about the Himes Town Hall are also attached.

We believe we achieved the desired impact with a modest amount of planning and the dedication of only a few hours to attend the event. We will be travelling the state to provide a similar reality-check for all five of the Reps, and of course Chris Dodd. Just imagine what we can achieve if we see to it that every Representative in the nation who has supported the socialist agenda has a similar experience!

In liberty,



Bob MacGuffie

[bobmac@rightprinciples.com](mailto:bobmac@rightprinciples.com)

[www.RightPrinciples.com](http://www.RightPrinciples.com)

06/04/2009

## Himes faces tough crowd at library

By Dan Quinlan , Contributing Writer

On a wet Thursday evening last week Jim Himes journeyed to Southport by rail, and walked through a misty dusk to meet approximately sixty of his constituents at the Pequot Library. The topic of the Town Hall Meeting was Himes' "Smart Progress for Connecticut" plan. However, Himes prefaced his remarks with the comment, "I am going to do a lot of listening tonight." True to his word, **Himes listened to a fervent, engaged, and at times irreverent crowd.** The Congressman's plan focused on transportation, healthcare, education, and clean energy. In the first area specific initiatives included the Telecommunications Tax Fairness Act. The bill would prevent states such as New York from taxing citizens of Connecticut who work remotely for New York firms. Himes also expressed support for the construction of a railroad tunnel under New York harbor in order to take freight off of the highways and thus alleviate traffic. According to the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project website plans for such a tunnel have been considered at various intervals since 1893.

In terms of healthcare Himes warned that the economy would be "crushed, unless we create a [healthcare] system that covers all Americans." He specifically rejected socialized medicine or a system styled after the National Health Service of the United Kingdom. Instead Himes alluded to the creation of a government insurance plan to cover citizens who could not afford their own medical costs, but only as a supplement to the existing private insurance market. On the issue of education, Himes endorsed charter schools and the Total Learning Act for competitive federal pedagogical grants. "Our long term competitive advantage is our ability to innovate and that capacity is a function of education," he said.

Himes concluded his opening remarks by stressing the need to buy less foreign oil, to manufacture electric-gasoline hybrid automobiles, and for communities to be more energy efficient. He has co-sponsored a bill entitled the, "Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance Program Act," which will provide funding for, "retrofitting houses with energy-efficient lighting, heating, and insulation." After exploring each initiative Himes provided the refrain, "We could ignore it [transportation, education, health care, or energy]...it would save money..." which was immediately followed by a call for amelioration.

Less than thirty minutes after his outline of "Smart Progress" Himes opened the floor to questions. Attendees did not seem to be tremendously concerned with "Smart Progress" and

many were content to ignore the aforementioned problems in the interest of curbing exorbitant federal spending. **When Himes attempted to attribute the expansion of the national debt and deficit to the Administration of George W. Bush he was shouted down with boos and catcalls. One woman yelled out, "The Obama administration is just as irresponsible."**

**Kelsey Biggers, Chairman of the Pequot Library and First Selectman Ken Flatto, on separate occasions, attempted to restore decorum during the sometimes raucous public forum. Constituents pressed Himes on his rejection of government school tuition vouchers, his views on climate change (Al Gore haters and skeptics were in surprisingly high attendance), and even whether or not he had read the public law that implements the federal stimulus package.** Himes did claim to have read the entirety of the 407 page American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a feat which must have occurred in the two days between the proposal and passage of the bill in House of Representatives. The fact that Himes was questioned on the matter so soon after a legislative session was illustrative of the discontent harbored by some members of the audience.

Undeterred by raised voices and inquiries that often slipped into polemic speeches, Himes fielded questions for over an hour. **As many queries dealt with matters of spending and bailouts Himes responded, "If the Treasury Secretary comes back and asks for more [money], he won't get it...We can't be perpetually bailing out companies."**

The Pequot Library held both supporters and critics of the representative from Connecticut's fourth Congressional district. In the moments of vituperation, Himes remained calm and professional. **He responded to inquires politely and endured what was easily construed to be a tough crowd.**

## **Himes takes message directly to rail commuters**

By Martin B. Cassidy  
Staff Writer

Posted: 05/28/2009 10:39:15 PM EDT

Updated: 05/29/2009 07:00:53 AM EDT

The lack of a rail transit system providing more frequent service and built-in incentives against telecommuting are two barriers that could prevent Connecticut's economy from recovering, U.S. Rep. Jim Himes, D-Greenwich, told commuters aboard a Metro-North Railroad train to Southport on Thursday night.

Connecticut's rail system is not equipped to serve like a subway but will need to provide better intrastate service because a greater proportion of commuters now travel within the state to work, rather than to Manhattan.

"Particularly on Metro-North, the equipment is old, and all of the systems are designed for the old-fashioned commute people used to take to Manhattan," Himes said. "Unfortunately, that isn't the reality today, when you have more people living and working within the state."

Himes laid out his ideas about transportation to commuters while en route to a town hall meeting at the Pequot Library in Southport. There he unveiled his Smart Progress for Connecticut initiative, a set of goals to boost Connecticut's economic climate by addressing health care and education shortcomings, and pursuing green energy and transportation initiatives that save energy and provide greater mobility.

"We've got some fundamental economic problems," Himes said about the state. "We can do nothing, which is what we've done for the past 20, 30, 40 years and continued to see things get worse."

Aboard the 5:26 p.m. train out of Stamford, Cathy Migolello told Himes that legislators needed to provide better parking at Metro-North stations if they hoped to remove traffic from Interstate 95 and the Merritt Parkway.

"As much as all the local governments talk mass transit, they haven't provided us the ability to park and get on the train," Migolello said.

Himes told commuters he is sponsoring the Telecommuter Tax Fairness Act, new legislation that would bar states from taxing nonresidents for work done while they are working in a different state -- which results in some Connecticut residents working for New York companies being taxed by both states.

"There is no reason we can't get rid of this double taxation, which discourages telecommuting and all the environmental and other benefits it provides," Himes said.

At the library, Himes told residents that he hoped government legislation could help improve Connecticut's economic fortunes with legislation to provide more affordable health care, improve mass transit between cities and establish better early childhood education programs.

**Many in the audience were concerned or angry about the long-term economic effect of President Barack Obama's \$3 trillion economic recovery plan.**

Himes said Connecticut and other states need to invest heavily in early childhood education to guarantee economic competitiveness. He also touted his Total Learning Act, a bill that would establish a competitive grant award program for early childhood education.

"We can do nothing about our problems which is what we've done for the last 20, 30, 40 years and we can continue to have a health care system which crushes our corporations and small business owners," Himes said. "We can continue to have 50 percent of the kids in Bridgeport not graduate from high school and everything that implies."

**Sam Brown, of Southport, drew applause when he said the economic stimulus and recovery spending already committed might have improved the short-term employment and economic outlook but will lead to high inflation and take decades to pay off.**

**"We're talking about our grandchildren and their children here," Brown said. "We'll be paying this off for 150 years, and everybody in this room knows that."**

Himes said Congress has spent 90 percent of its energy since the November election trying to tailor the economic stimulus to prevent a catastrophic breakdown in the economy.

"The economic fire we are facing is grim," Himes said. "We had economists from all across the economic spectrum who all agreed that you needed to get the stimulus out there to help stop the massive job losses."

Himes said he hoped that federal energy legislation, including laws that would offer tax breaks and other incentives to those who develop new buildings that are more energy efficient, would help reduce the country's reliance on foreign oil.

Though ambitious, efforts to improve energy efficiency, develop mass transit, and tackle deficiencies in the nation's educational system have been neglected for too long, he said.

"Failure is not an option," Himes said before the meeting. "Talk to any business group in Connecticut, and they will say the two reasons businesses won't come here are a lack of transportation and health care costs. We need to improve the economic climate."

## Focused Questions for Congressional Representatives

1. The current national debt is 11 trillion, or \$147,700 per taxpaying household. The \$3.6 trillion budget you just approved creates another \$1.7 trillion deficit – another \$22,600 per household. The \$800 billion so-called stimulus bill created another \$10,700 per household. And the Congressional Budget Office estimates the current budget will produce a total of \$124,500 of debt per household. That's \$300,000 of debt per household. You have broken the back of the American taxpayer. Just how much household debt do YOU think is enough?
2. Today, federal and state government spending is some 40% of GDP. If everything being proposed by the Obama administration gets enacted in the next 4 years that number will be trending toward 50% of the economy. That troubles freedom-loving Americans. Does that trouble you? Just how much of the GDP should the government control before YOU think it's detrimental?
3. Do you feel it is in keeping with our democratic principles that 60% of the national population supports 100% of government spending?
4. Combined federal, state, property, sales, capital gains, and misc. taxes confiscate over 50%, and in some cases, 60% of household income. Team Obama intends to implement ADDITIONAL taxes in the form of health care, cap and trade, punitive café standards, increased marginal rate on the 'top' earners, (while giving expanded tax 'credits' to those who do not pay taxes, i.e. transferring income from one household to another) and a myriad of insidious taxes on things like sugar, golf (in CT), gas, etc. How much do you believe a household should be able to keep of their income?
5. We all understand that National Health Care means rationing health care. What aspects of health care would you propose rationing? And to whom, or to what groups of people would you ration care?
6. Why do you believe that government is more qualified to manage health care than private industry? Point to an area where government has successfully managed health care and exercised fiduciary responsibility. Medicare and Medicaid have been financial failures. Point to a country where national health care has not been rationed?
7. YOU have voted for a socialist agenda. Please explain why you believe a socialist approach to governing, as opposed to a free market approach is optimum? Do you believe that people would prefer their government to control their income, their health care, their retirement, their investments, their children's education, their choice of cars, what they eat and drink, etc.?



## **State Tea Party Group to Speak Out at Himes Event**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 27, 2009

**SOUTHPORT** – Connecticut Tea Party Patriots and Right Principles will hold a joint press conference Thursday, May 28, prior to a Town Hall Meeting to be held by U.S. Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn. The purpose of the press conference will be to highlight Himes's unwavering record of voting to expand the size and scope of the federal government.

Himes will meet with area residents at 6 p.m. at the Pequot Library, 720 Pequot Ave. The joint press conference will start at 5 p.m. outside the library. Both Connecticut Tea Party Patriots and Right Principles are independent organizations not affiliated with either the Republican Party or the Democratic Party.

Last November, Himes defeated long-time Republican Rep. Chris Shays amid the Obama landslide, sweeping New England's only remaining Republican congressman out of office. Since taking office in January, Himes has compiled one of the most liberal voting records in the House of Representatives, voting with the Democratic majority 95.4 percent of the time in more than 200 votes, according to the U.S. Congress Votes Database maintained by the Washington Post.

At the joint press conference, Connecticut Tea Party Patriots and Right Principles will shine a spotlight on Himes's party-line voting record. Himes voted to approve the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 in February, which committed taxpayers to spending more than \$1 trillion on bloated government programs. He also voted to hit employees of companies that received government bailout money with a 90 percent tax on their bonuses, and to increase taxes on the most productive Americans.

Connecticut Tea Party Patriots is a statewide organization that supports entrepreneurship, promotes individual responsibility, respects Constitutional integrity, and favors American ingenuity over expansive governmental growth and spending. The group is a member of the American Tea Party Movement. Right Principles is a grassroots organization focused on returning American government to the principles of individual freedom, liberty and limited government on which it was founded.

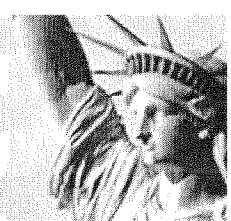
For more information, contact Pamela Fowler, state coordinator of Connecticut Tea Party Patriots, at 203-444-1980 or [ctteaparty@gmail.com](mailto:ctteaparty@gmail.com), or Robert MacGuffie at 203-727-7798 or [bobmac@rightprinciples.com](mailto:bobmac@rightprinciples.com).

###



# Right Principles

- Unapologetically American -



## Press Statement at Congressman Himes Town Hall Meeting 5-28-09

Congressman Himes has now been in office for five months. In that time he has voted to support an \$800 billion spending bill, a \$1 trillion Omnibus Appropriations Act, and a \$3.6 trillion Federal Budget. These three spending bills alone produce deficits adding to the national debt an additional \$3.5 trillion. This equates to some \$46,700 per taxpaying household in new debt.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the Budget alone will produce \$9.3 trillion of deficits over the next 10 years, or some \$124,500 per taxpaying household. All this on top of an existing \$11 trillion national debt, representing \$147,700 per taxpaying household.

The Congressman's professional background indicates that he is well versed in finance. By his profligate actions you'd never know it. He knows where this is leading the country. Yet he continues to support legislation which will break the financial back of our country, while mailing out misleading statements about his fiscal responsibility. We are here to call him on his deceptive, Orwellian "progress" reports.

This socialist agenda hasn't worked anywhere else on the globe. On the contrary, the two greatest powers that employed this political philosophy in the twentieth century have abandoned it and have now adopted capitalist approaches to drive their economies.

There are tens of thousands of solid citizens in the fourth district who agree with us who can't be with us right now because they're working, managing their families and otherwise making this community happen. Many have told us they're with us and have e-mailed questions for the Congressman.

So, we are here to ask the Congressman to put down his spending pen and do not pick it up again. We seek no Cap & Trade tax, no single-payer healthcare legislation, no excise taxes, no value-added tax, no beer tax, no soft drink taxes or any of the others currently under consideration.

Congressman Himes, we implore you to take the well-grounded advice of your constituents, oppose your party leadership's irresponsible spending priorities, and be a real patriot by voting against every spending agenda item for the balance of your term.

Robert MacGuffie  
May 28, 2009