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Dear Friends,

Congratulations to those of you who have won, and best wishes to those of you who chose not to run. I regret that so many of my friends and colleagues were not re-elected, and am counting the months until the next election when you return.

On November 19, just over a week from now, newly elected Democrats will meet to nominate the next Speaker/Democratic leader.

I have served with Steve Shurtleff for many years, and while we did not agree on everything, I hold him in the highest regard. I am sorry that he chose to remove his name from consideration for Speaker/Democratic leader. But I regret more that he chose to name a successor rather than leave that important task to the newly constituted Democratic Caucus.

With the exception of one term when I chose to take a sabbatical, I have served in the House since 1996, most of those years in the minority. There are things we can accomplish as a minority. If the caucus holds together, and if everyone shows up to vote, we need only 14 Republican votes to prevail. That certainly is not possible on all bills, or even on most bills, but it is still possible.

But for the caucus to hold together, I believe that there are certain components that must be in place. We need a leader who will listen to the disparate views of the members with respect and a commitment to thread the needle – to find the best way forward to get us to yes. We need a leader who has gravitas and familiarity not only with the rules, but also the personalities of members on our side of the aisle, and across the aisle. We need someone committed to building a bench, to helping other members achieve their potential, and to sharing information rather than keeping decisions close to one's vest. We need a leader who will be respected by majority and minority members in both houses. We need a member who recognizes the importance of messaging – so that the voters of the state understand our goals and are involved in helping us achieve those goals. We need a leader who will create opportunities for training and education for everyone in the caucus. We need a leader who will encourage caucus members to develop leadership skills.

I believe that I can fulfill these roles and ask you to support me for Speaker/Democratic leader.

As a minority, if we want to convince others of the rightness of our cause, if we want to widen our circle, we must speak truth to power.

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I have no problem standing up to forcefully and directly challenge an action that the caucus does not consider acceptable. But there are more ways than one to achieve our goals. On more than one occasion, When Justice Ginsburg was in the minority, she found a way to change the law. When we are in the right, we shall not be moved. But thinking of others as the enemy and attacking then serves only to strengthen the animosity that keeps us apart.

We have no idea how the business of the next term will be conducted, but it won't be easy. I would be honored if you choose me to help lead us through the morass.

I am attaching a very brief biography and a photo for those of you who do not know me.

I hope you will support my candidacy. For those who are not returning, I would be honored if you would talk with members of the newly elected caucus in support of my candidacy. I look forward to hearing from you by telephone or email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Margie