



©2005 Internet News Agency, LLC; Matt A. Towery, Chairman and CEO;
Charles "Chuck" Clay, President; Pierre D. Howard, Vice-Chairman

Number 719, February 28, 2008

Incumbents Rule in Senate Money Chase

Incumbent US Senators in the South ended up the year 2007 in good financial shape, according to the Federal Election Commission's (FEC) year end reports. All ten senators seeking re-election to a full term are flush with cash, and their challengers have so far not amassed the kind of war chest it takes to unseat an incumbent.

The biggest Dixie money-raiser was US Sen. **John Cornyn** (R), who had some \$7.5 million cash on hand on Dec. 31. Mildly surprising, however, was the tepid fundraising record -- some \$688,000 on hand -- of **Rick Noriega** (D), the highly touted candidate of the state's computer-savvy liberals.

In Kentucky, Senate Minority Leader **Mitch McConnell** (R) ended the year with the second largest war chest, some \$7.3 million. His major foe, **Bruce Lunsford** (D), hasn't been in the race long enough to file an FEC report, but other Democrats are trailing badly.

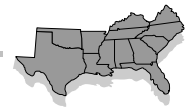
And in South Carolina, **Lindsey Graham** (R) may be the target of conservative sniping, but he had Dixie's third largest cash pot, with \$4.7 million on hand. His primary foe, GOP National Committeeman **Buddy Witherspoon**, had a paltry \$9,000.

In Georgia, **Saxby Chambliss** (R) is sitting on nearly \$4.5 million, far more than his nearest Democratic rival, **Vernon Jones**, with \$269,000. Jones, however, is way ahead of his two primary opponents.

Other Southern Republican incumbents are also in good financial shape. Oklahoma's **James Inhofe** had nearly \$1.9 million on hand, to \$361,000 for state Sen. **Andrew Rice** (D). Alabama's **Jeff Sessions** (R) had nearly \$4 million to a very low \$18,000 for state Sen. **Vivian Figures** (D). And Tennessee's **Lamar Alexander**, who so far has no opponent, had almost \$2.1 million on hand.

Dixie's two Democrats facing the voters this year also have large war chests. Arkansas's **Mark Pryor**, who has no GOP foe as yet, had \$3.6 million on hand. And in Louisiana, **Mary Landrieu** had \$4.1 million on hand, to state Treasurer **John Kennedy**'s (R) \$472,000.

The Democrats are also smiling big time in Virginia, where former Gov. **Mark Warner** (D) is looking more and more like a safe bet to fill the seat of retiring Republican **John Warner**. Mark Warner had nearly \$2.9 million on hand, to a mere \$183,000 for the GOP's **Jim Gilmore**, also a former governor.



Democrats are beginning to raise significant funds in North Carolina, where the GOP's US Sen. **Elizabeth Dole** had just under \$2.7 million on hand. In the Democratic contest to oppose Dole, state Sen. **Kay Hagan** has much more cash on hand than investment banker **Jim Neal**, \$516,000 to \$139,000.

**Federal Election Commission (FEC)
US Senate 4th Quarter Reports, 2007
Oct. 1 to Dec. 31
Incumbents in bold**

	4 th Qtr	On Hand
Alabama		
Jeff Sessions/R	\$632,000	3,953,000
Vivien Figures/D	51,000	18,000
Arkansas		
Mark Pryor/D	522,000	3,621,000
R. Kennedy/Green	8,000	5,000
Georgia		
S. Chambliss/R	944,000	4,460,000
Vernon Jones/D	36,000	269,000
Rand Knight/D	25,000	19,000
Dale Cardwell/D	18,000	8,000
J. J. Banks/Lib.	5,000	3,000
Kentucky		
M. McConnell/R	1,631,000	7,318,000
Andrew Horne/D*	53,000	52,000
Mike Cassaro/D	20,000	15,000
Louisiana		
Mary Landrieu/D	1,103,000	4,110,000
John Kennedy/R	501,000	472,000
Mississippi		
Thad Cochran/R	57,000	1,107,000
Mississippi/4 year term		
Roger Wicker/R	61,000	551,000**

North Carolina		
Elizabeth Dole/R	1,095,000	2,664,000
Kay Hagen/D	563,000	516,000
Jim Neal/D	215,000	139,000

Oklahoma		
James Inhofe/R	473,000	1,860,000
Andrew Rice/D	227,000	351,000

South Carolina		
L. Graham/R	562,000	4,745,000
W. Witherspoon/R	14,000	9,000

Tennessee		
L. Alexander/R	1,034,000	2,073,000

Texas		
John Cornyn/R	1,434,000	7,502,000
Larry Kilgore/R	7,000	500
Rick Noriega/D	405,000	688,000
Ray McMurrey/D	4,000	800

*Horne has since withdrawn.

**Wicker's congressional funds, which he can use in his US Senate race.

Florida: Three Cuban Representatives Face Challenges

A discernible, though not massive, trend toward the Democratic Party among South Florida voters has also been evident among the state's Hispanic voters and has led the Democrats to mount significant challenges to the state's three Republican Cuban-American members of Congress, **Lincoln Diaz-Balart**, **Mario Diaz-Balart** and **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen**. All three challengers, like the incumbents, are Latino. **Alejandro Miyar**, a spokesman for the Florida Democratic Party, says South Florida "is becoming more Democratic by the seconds. The voting record shows that, even in the Hispanic precincts." He adds that 2008 "might be a year where, from the turn-out perspective, the Democratic challengers have to be taken seriously." But **Al Cardenas**, a former chair of the state GOP, says "These are three



entrenched incumbents in districts that have historically voted Republican strongly for president, governor and senator as well as congress... It would be difficult to place any of them in the vulnerable category.” And a Republican consultant long active in the state says, “I’d be shocked to see any of them lose.”

In all three districts, Republican registration has declined somewhat in the past two years. Democratic gains, however, have been slight, with independents increasing more. All three incumbents have generally moderate voting records. On Cuba-specific issues, the incumbents and the challengers support the continuation of the US embargo on Cuba in the face of **Fidel Castro**’s handing over power to his brother **Raul Castro**. Unlike the incumbents, however, the challengers favor a relaxation of current rules on Americans visiting their family members in Cuba.

21st District (Broward County, Miami/Dade)

The most competitive contest is expected to be **Raul Martinez**’s (D) spirited challenge to **Lincoln Diaz-Balart** (R), currently serving his eighth term in the US House. Diaz-Balart won re-election in 2006 with 59% of the vote, down from his 73% in 2004. He has not, however, faced an opponent as popular and flamboyant as Martinez, who served as the mayor of heavily Republican Hialeah for some 30 years. Hialeah, which accounts for about 40% of the district, is 80% Republican, indicating that Martinez may be able to attract support from some Republican voters; indeed, several local Republican officeholders were present when he announced his candidacy for Congress. “It’s a battle of the titans,” says Miyar, “and some people think that Raul is more of a titan than Lincoln.”

Martinez, 58, does have some baggage, however. In the 1980s, he was convicted of

federal corruption charges, but won his case on appeal and subsequent trials ended in mistrials. Of interest: The prosecuting attorney against Martinez was **Dexter Lehtinen**, husband of US Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R).

A Cuban-American, Diaz-Balart, 53, is the scion of a prominent pre-Castro family; his father, grandfather and uncle served in the Cuban Congress. Diaz-Balart and his brother, US Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R), “are like political royalty,” says one GOP source. In addition to his well-known name and the powers of incumbency, Diaz-Balart has done a good job of amassing a hefty war chest. At the end of 2007, he had \$904,000 on hand. Martinez will not file a financial report until the end of the current quarter, “but he’s doing rather well,” says Miyar. Indeed even some Republicans, noting that Martinez is not only well-known but can also raise money, concede that the feisty Democrat will give Diaz-Balart a good fight. **Leans Republican.**

25th District (Naples, Miami/Dade)

Third-term **Mario Diaz-Balart** (R), 46, Lincoln’s younger brother, also faces a Democratic opponent with significant credentials. **Joe Garcia** is chairman of the Miami/Dade Democratic Party (he will resign for this campaign) and is known for his political acumen. “He’s a brilliant strategist and all pumped up” for the race, says Miyar. Perhaps more importantly, Garcia is the former director of the Cuban American National Foundation, an influential group of Cuban-Americans concerned about Havana’s Communist regime. In 1993, Garcia lost a race for Miami-Dade Commissioner. While he is expected to mount a substantial campaign, he does not have the name identification nor experience holding elective office that help make Martinez a strong challenger against Lincoln. However, Garcia is pushing some



major issues, including the war in Iraq, the economy, and high homeowner insurance rates in hurricane-prone Florida. On the down side, Garcia will have to move into the district from Miami Beach.

In 2004, Mario was unopposed, but in 2006, his relatively unknown opponent held him to a 58%-42% victory. Prior to his election to Congress, he served 14 years in the Florida legislature. He had \$466,000 cash on hand at the end of 2007. **Likely Republican.**

18th District (Miami, etc.)

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R), 55, now in her ninth term in Congress, was re-elected in 2004 with 65%, in 2006 with 62%. She was in the state senate prior to her election to Congress.

Ros-Lehtinen is the ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and has been aggressive in her opposition to the Castro regime and to leftist movements in Latin America. She recently urged the US Justice Department to charge Fidel Castro with murder for the deaths of four Americans looking for Cuban refugees in the waters between Florida and Cuba, and has urged an investigation into the oil agreement between Iran and the anti-American **Hugo Chavez** regime in Venezuela. At the end of last year, she had a whopping \$1,778,000 on hand.

The Democratic challenger is **Annette Taddeo**, 40, a Colombia-born business executive. While she is a respectable contender, she has not sought nor held public office before and is not sufficiently well-known to mount as significant a challenge as Democrats are expected to wage against the two Diaz-Balart brothers. Taddeo is stressing criticism of the Bush Administration policies, especially in Iraq. **Safe Republican.**

North Carolina: Jones Has Primary Foe

US Rep. **Walter Jones** (R) was re-elected with 69% of the vote in 2006 and with 71% in 2004. This year, however, the 14-year congressman is facing a serious challenge in his own party's primary. **Joe McLaughlin**, a military veteran and a local public official, is running against Jones, attacking his deviations from the Republican agenda on the war in Iraq and other issues. According to a long-time Tar Heel political writer, Jones has "a tough re-election battle." Although he is likely to survive, mainly on the strength of his incumbency and his well-known name (his father was a congressman before him), "it would not be a shocker if he lost," says the journalist. "If the vote were held among party activists, he'd probably lose." The primaries are May 6, a runoff if needed on June 24.

Jones and the District

The 3rd District (Greenville, etc.) includes mainly rural areas -- once dominated by tobacco farms -- and small towns, including resorts on the Outer Banks. The district also has a substantial military presence (Camp Lejeune, Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station). The district is 76% white and 17% black, and Bush got 68% here in 2004. Before Jones was elected to Congress in 1994 as a Republican, he had served in the legislature. He is the son of the late Congressman **Walter Jones, Sr.** (D), who served as a congressman from the same eastern part of the state.

Veering from the Right

For a Republican from the most conservative part of his state, Jones ended up with a surprisingly moderate voting record. In its 2006 ratings, the *National Journal* gives Jones an average 53% liberal record to 46% conservative. A decade ago, his *National*



Journal rating for 1996 was 3% liberal, 82% conservative. Recently, for example, he supported the Democratic proposal to increase the minimum wage.

The biggest problem Jones has with his constituents is his vehement opposition to the war in Iraq. Once a supporter of the Bush policy, he has since authored several measures to curb the president's war powers. He has also praised his fellow Republican war opponent, Congressman **Ron Paul**. Published reports at one point suggested he might even support impeachment of Bush and there have been other reports that Jones was contacted by some Democrats about switching parties. Nothing has come of either story, however.

Despite some departures from conservative orthodoxy, Jones' campaign website stresses his legislative record in support of the US military, including a number of bills that provide increased benefits for service members and their families, and for veterans. He also notes his support for a number of conservative positions, such as a taking hard line on illegal immigration, support for the use of the English language in places of employment, and his receipt of an award from the Family Research Council and Focus on the Family. National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) **Tom Cole** (OK) appeared at a Washington, DC, fundraiser on Jones' behalf; before this, at year's end, Jones had \$191,000 on hand. And former House Speaker **Newt Gingrich** (R-GA) will be campaigning in the district for Jones.

McLaughlin

Joe McLaughlin, an Air Force Academy graduate who had a successful career in the military, is now a financial advisor and is serving his second term on the Onslow County Board of Commissioners. He is running in the Republican Primary as a staunch conservative,

pledging to return conservative values to Washington. In addition to strong support for the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism, McLaughlin is pro-life, against same-sex marriage, strongly opposed to illegal immigrants' presence in this country and has pledged to vote against any tax increases. National anti-tax leader **Grover Norquist** of the Americans for Tax reform has been in the district campaigning for him.

In a recent appearance before a Republican audience, McLaughlin "really, really, really talked dirty about Jones," says a local observer who was in the audience. "He said everything but that Jones was a Democrat." Some of the audience responded warmly to McLaughlin's remarks, others were silent. At the end of 2007, McLaughlin had only \$30,000 cash on hand. But he recently released a poll, taken for him by Pulse Opinion Research, showing him leading Jones 43% to 41%.

The Democrats

Some observers believe that if the split in the Republican Party continues, and especially if Jones loses the primary, the Democrats have an opportunity to win the seat. However, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) has not targeted this race and, given the district's demographics and its voting history, is not likely to do so.

Nevertheless, two Democrats have filed for their party's nomination. **Marshall Adame** is an ex-Marine who served in a civilian capacity in Iraq. He has one son in Iraq and another son who was wounded while serving there. This background gives Adame good credentials for his opposition to the war. In his year-end FEC report, Adame had \$4,500 on hand. Nevertheless, "He will probably make a serious effort," says the Tar Heel journalist.



The other Democratic candidate is **Craig Weber**, who has had an extensive career in radio and television (meteorologist) and done considerable work assisting with charitable events for such groups as the Heart Fund and the March of Dimes. He is concerned about port security, lobbying reform, the war in Iraq (he opposes it) and the loss of jobs to overseas out-sourcing. He is a former Marine. Weber reported no cash-on-hand at the end of the 4th Quarter. **Republican Primary: Leans Jones. General Election: Likely Republican.**

Grits

? Virginia: Democrats Win Special Legislative Election. A Democrat was elected to fill the vacancy in the House of Delegates left by **Robert Wittman's** (R) winning a special election to Congress late last year. **Albert Pollard Jr.**, (D) a former state senator from the area, defeated **Lee Ann Washington** (R) by a vote of 6,908 votes (58%) to 5,086 (42%). The victory gives the Democrats 45 seats in the 100-member chamber, to 53 for the Republicans and two independents.

? Kentucky: GOP Wins State Senate Seat; Democrats Gain State House Seat. In recent special elections in the Bluegrass State, Republican state Rep. **Brandon Smith** won a hotly contested race to fill the vacancy left by state Sen. **Daniel Mongiardo's** (D) election as lieutenant governor. Smith defeated Democratic former state Rep. **Scott Alexander** by 10,409 votes (51%) to 10,008 (49%). The major issue was newly-inaugurated Gov. **Steve Beshear's** (D) casino gambling proposal, which the GOP opposes. Smith's victory gives the Republicans a 22-15 majority in Kentucky's state senate. The election in mountainous Eastern Kentucky did not go off without a hitch, however. According to a state policeman quoted in the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, "There was an allegation that either someone was

buying votes or trading beer for votes in Perry County." As a consolation prize, however, Democrats won two open state House seats, one previously held by a Republican.

? Georgia: Another Democrat Runs for Senate. **Josh Lanier**, a former staff member for the late US Sen. **Herman Talmadge** (D), announced that he is joining three other contenders in this year's Democratic Primary to choose a challenger to incumbent US Sen. **Saxby Chambliss** (R). In press reports, Lanier cited the role of money in Washington as a major issue and has pledged to abide by the strict rules proposed in a campaign finance reform bill, the "Fair Elections Now Act" which has yet to pass Congress. The other Democrats already in the race are DeKalb County chief executive **Vernon Jones**, the early favorite; former TV newscaster **Dale Cardwell**; and environmental engineer **Rand Knight**. The filing deadline is May 2; the primary is July 15.

? Kentucky: Horne Bows Out of Senate Race. **Andrew Horne**, a former Marine, veteran of the war in Iraq and an attorney, withdrew from the Democratic contest for the US Senate nomination to challenge Senate Minority Leader **Mitch McConnell** (R). While Horne gave no reason for his decision, he lost the 2006 congressional primary in the 3rd District in part because, unlike **John Yarmuth**, his successful opponent, he lacked a fortune of his own. Had Horne stayed in this year's Senate primary, he would have faced two wealthy candidates, **Greg Fischer** and **Bruce Lunsford**. The primary is on May 20. **Barack Obama** by 54% to 35%.

? Mississippi: Shows Bows Out, Too. Former Congressman **Ronnie Shows** (D) has withdrawn from the Democratic contest to choose a challenger for newly-seated US Sen. **Roger Wicker** (R). Shows absence gives a major boost to former Gov. **Ronnie Musgrove** (D), who was already the favorite for the Democratic nod.