



For Immediate Release
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Myrtle Beach Sun News Endorses Tim Scott for Congress

During the extremely competitive Republican primary for the nomination to replace retiring U.S. Rep. Henry Brown, a dominant issue for Horry and Georgetown voters choosing between state Rep. Tim Scott and his chief opponent, Paul Thurmond, was relative strength of the two Lowcountry residents' allegiances to the Grand Strand.

In fact, in the initial nine-way contest, Horry County Republicans preferred a local, Clark Parker, over either candidate - though the districtwide votes lifted Scott and Thurmond into the runoff over Parker. The Sun News editorial board viewed both Scott and Thurmond as excellent candidates from the beginning, but ultimately were swayed in our recommendations by the strong commitment Thurmond had shown to the Grand Strand, winning the support of so many of our elected officials.

Scott, however, prevailed by wide margins on June 22. The better-qualified and more visible of his two possible Democratic opponents lost in a surprise contest similar to the Alvin Greene nomination, leaving Scott a wide-open path to victory in November over perennial candidate Ben Frasier and a cast of inexperienced, underfunded third party hopefuls. Without any semblance of a competitive fall contest, Scott could have chosen to spend all that time in Washington politicking for what will clearly be a leadership role in Congress' new freshman class, but we are pleased to report he appears instead to have redoubled his attention to Horry County and its issues.

When we spoke to Scott last week, we asked whether Brown had offered him any advice. "He told me he was a congressman because Horry County made him so," Scott replied, a fact that vote totals from the 2008 election clearly bear out. Scott apparently listened. A glance at our archives shows numerous appearances by Scott along the Grand Strand since his primary win, an encouraging sign of an open mind toward constructive criticism. Based on our conversation with him, this is more than the routine campaigning of an appropriately cautious front-runner: Scott's knowledge and depth of Grand Strand issues - which were never slight to begin with - has significantly deepened since the primaries.

Scott takes a hard line on much federal spending, but when we asked if he believes dredging the Georgetown port back to its 27-foot depth should be a federal priority, he unhesitatingly replied, "Absolutely." That's not a hard question. Where Scott's intellect and attention to detail evinced a visionary form of thinking was in his explanation - that the burgeoning wind industry off the Grand Strand's coast makes the Georgetown port a

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logical place to launch from, and that the wide footprint of Boeing could also create new industrial opportunities to revive the port.

With a major transportation bill likely in the works during the next congressional term, our next representative could be the key to the life or death of Interstate 73, a project that Scott has pledged his support for. He says that he will make Brown's old spot on the transportation committee his first request to the Republican leadership, which could be even more pivotal if the Republicans retake the House in November.

The only open question we still have about Scott is where his interests will lie once he actually arrives in Washington. Coupled with his staunch conservative ideology, the Republican leadership will surely seize on Scott's race as evidence of growing diversity in their party, as well they should - a party composed exclusively of white people does not have much future as the U.S. becomes rapidly more multicultural. It's easy to imagine him giving the Republican response to a State of the Union speech, for example, and with his raw political talent he would surely perform the task admirably. But if Scott lets the national party's needs overtake those of his district - if the national stage proves too tempting, and his work hours are dominated by cable news appearances - then his election will be ultimately be a net loss for the First District.

Scott appears to have been judicious in his participation in the Beltway culture thus far - he's had a handful of national interviews just before and after the primary, but not in a way that distracted him from becoming more familiar with the Grand Strand. Protecting the interests of the home district is the fundamental job of a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, which is why we have consistently argued that this race is among the most important our readers will decide this year.

Though we expect to disagree with Scott on some of his policy positions, if he continues applying his abundant talent, energy and intelligence to these local issues, we are confident that Horry County will be extremely well-served by his representation.

Source: <http://www.thesunnews.com/2010/10/24/1768794/at-the-launch-pad.html>

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