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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ACHTENBERG NOMINATION

MR. PRESIDENT, THERE MAY BE A NUMBER OF GOOD REASONS TO OPPOSE MS. ACHTENBERG'S NOMINATION, BUT ONE REASON IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME: IN HER PUBLIC ACTIONS AND IN HER PUBLIC RHETORIC, MS. ACHTENBERG HAS BEEN AN OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

IN FACT, MS. ACHTENBERG HAS BEEN MORE THAN A CRITIC. SHE HAS BEEN THE RINGLEADER OF AN IDEOLOGICAL CRUSADE TO REMAKE THE BOY SCOUTS IN HER OWN IMAGE.

THE PUBLIC RECORD IS THE PUBLIC RECORD: AS AN ELECTED SAN FRANCISCO SUPERVISOR AND A BOARD MEMBER OF THE BAY AREA UNITED WAY, MS. ACHTENBERG WAS A KEY PLAYER IN THE EFFORT TO KICK THE SCOUTS OUT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND THEN LED THE CHARGE TO FORCE THE UNITED WAY AND OTHER CORPORATE SPONSORS TO WITHHOLD FUNDING FROM SCOUT PROGRAMS.

AS A SUPERVISOR, SHE INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE CITY'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND STATE LEGISLATORS TO AMEND THE SCOUT'S CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER SO THAT THE CHARTER WOULD CONFORM WITH HER OWN IDEOLOGICAL AGENDA.

AND THEN, ALSO IN HER CAPACITY AS A CITY SUPERVISOR, MS. ACHTENBERG INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION URGING THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO TO CUT SOME OF ITS TIES WITH THE BANK OF AMERICA BECAUSE THE BANK HAD RESUMED ITS PRACTICE OF GIVING CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO THE BAY AREA SCOUTS.

SOME MIGHT CALL THESE TACTICS HEAVY-HANDED, PERHAPS EVEN BORDERING ON EXTORTION. THEY CERTAINLY SUGGEST THAT MS. ACHTENBERG CAN EXHIBIT SOME INTOLERANCE HERSELF, INTOLERANCE DIRECTED AT THOSE WHO MAKE THE MISTAKE OF DISAGREEING WITH HER OWN VERY POINTED POINT-OF-VIEW.

BUT, MR. PRESIDENT, THE BOTTOM LINE IS: WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT SOME CRIMINAL YOUTH GANG, OR "THE CRIPS" AND "THE BLOODS," OR EVEN THE YOUNG REPUBLICANS.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA--THE BOY SCOUTS--AN ORGANIZATION THAT HAS GIVEN MILLIONS OF YOUNG AMERICANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN THE VALUES OF DISCIPLINE, HARD WORK AND FELLOWSHIP THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

IN MY VIEW, WE NEED TO DO MORE TO SUPPORT THE BOY SCOUTS, NOT TRY TO SABOTAGE THEM--NO MATTER WHAT OUR IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVATIONS MIGHT BE.

MR. PRESIDENT, I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST MS. ACHTENBERG PERSONALLY. IF SHE IS CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE, I WISH HER THE VERY BEST AS SHE ASSUMES HER RESPONSIBILITIES AT HUD.

BUT, IN LIGHT OF HER PAST EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE ONE OF THE FINEST PRIVATE, CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS IN AMERICA TODAY--THE BOY SCOUTS--I CANNOT IN GOOD CONSCIENCE SUPPORT HER NOMINATION.

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, WE MUST SHOW RESPECT AND TOLERANCE FOR THOSE AMONG US WHO HAPPEN TO BE GAY. BUT SHOWING TOLERANCE AND RESPECT SHOULD NOT FORCE US TO EMBRACE AN IDEOLOGICAL AGENDA THAT MOST AMERICANS DO NOT ACCEPT.

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