

John C. Ackerman

Tazewell County Board

Continuing a Family Tradition of Community Service

November 20th, 2010

***** Position Update *****

**Questions Presented by the
53rd Senate District Appointment Committee**

1)#Question: Why are you seeking this appointment to the State Senate? Is there a particular issue that motivates you, and if so, what is it? What will be your main priority in office?

I am seeking the appointment to the State Senate in order to serve a larger section of the citizens of Central Illinois. I consider it an honor and a privileged to serve the citizens of Tazewell County. Over the past few years, I have had the honor of working on the multi-county campaigns of 10th Judicial Candidates Michael Risinger and John Vespa and also on the statewide campaign of Bill Brady. All three of these allowed me the opportunity to work for a larger cross section of Central Illinois and I would love the chance to be able to represent them at the State Level.

2)#Question: List your three most significant accomplishments.

I would look at this question from two different angles. If you are asking me about the most significant accomplishments of my young life, that would be completely different than what I think you are asking about; my political accomplishments. Family is of the utmost importance to me. With that I have broken this question down to answer both sets of questions.

2A) As far as life accomplishments, I would have to say having the love of my beautiful wife and newborn child. I know everyone says this, but I really did marry above my station. My wife's love and support has been wonderful and her understanding of what can be a complicated public life daily schedule is incredible. Our son is the joy of the world right now. Just coming home each night to his smiling face makes the world seem right. Secondly, I would list the blessing and support of a very large and extended family. Christian Ackerman, the original Ackerman settler in 1830, started our family down a continued life of public service that continues till this day when he was a key organizer of not only the Apostolic Church in Morton but also the Village of Morton itself. Since his example, volunteerism and public service have been strongly stressed in my family as part of being a citizen. Finally, I would list rank of Eagle Scout along with many other youthful accomplishments. At the time I was one of the youngest Eagle Scouts in the State, a trend I continued to repeat with my work in the Order of the Arrow, Model Illinois Government and even early Political work.

2B) As far as Political Accomplishments, I would point first to my Campaign pledge from my last campaign to improve constituent communication and transparency of Government. I accomplished this first by setting the example with my website and then followed up by working to improve Tazewell County's failed website. Secondly, I would list my service to the Brady campaign. I was able to use my ability to broadcast a message throughout Central Illinois to grab attention for the Brady Campaign. With anything from local press releases and news reports to magazine columns and ads to just communicating with the media and directing them to Brady events, I was able to assist the campaign by

focusing more media attention on it. Finally, I would point out my proven track record of getting my message out to my constituents and from working with diverse groups of individuals to get an agenda through.

3)# Question: *Central and Southern Illinois has lagged behind the rest of the state in the creation of private-sector jobs and economic development. What specific steps would you recommend to create jobs and improve the economic climate in our area?*

The main problem with job growth in Illinois is the over taxation of businesses and the intrusion of government into the competitive market. Government cannot effectively create jobs but does have the ability to drive jobs away, which is what we are seeing today in Illinois. We need to get the State of Illinois into a position in which it is attractive to business. We need to cut some of our repetitive and over extended regulation of business that makes it harder to place a business in this state. And finally we need cut in many areas the number of public jobs (or publicly protected jobs) we have and replace them with competitive private sector jobs.

4)#Question: *The State of Illinois is facing historic budget deficits while struggling to pay its bills on time. What solutions would you propose to help right Illinois' financial ship?*

The main financial problem with the State of Illinois truly is a spending problem. As mentioned above the removal of many wasteful positions would help, but I support also an across the board spending cut to every State department. The idea that this current inflated government cannot operate with less funding is laughable at best, disgustingly viewed by most taxpayers. I have yet to see a government organization that does not have any wasteful fat that could be trimmed to save the taxpayers, including my own Tazewell County Board. The problem with this today is that we lack an executive leader that can make the hard decisions and stand up to the wasteful spenders. Until we can elect an executive leader that can do this, it is our responsibility to communicate the problem and work to hold the line in the sand on this wastefulness.

5)#Question: *What ideas do you offer to make health care more affordable and accessible for families in Central Illinois?*

The major problem with Health Care today is a lack of understanding of how the current system works. Too few understand the need to fund private health care plans and thus rely on the government to bail them out when they get in trouble; mainly younger families that are focused on pay and not benefits. We also have a need to encourage greater private sector competition. Finally, we need to get control of the wasteful duplication in the medical community and also the get control of the threat of ridiculous medical lawsuits and thus a reduction in the amount of medical liability.

6)#Question: *How would you improve childhood education in Central Illinois?*

I would recommend making it easier for individual school districts to merge and share similar costs. Administration is one area where we see an over expenditure when comparing Illinois Schools to those of other states. I would like to see a greater usage of the role of the Regional Superintendents Offices or the removal and restructuring of this office. I also feel we need to open these districts up to the competitive market by allowing parents the flexibility to place their children in the school district of their choosing. Rather than forcing families to continue to send their students to failing districts while neighbors a few miles away have the luxury of sending theirs to successful districts, I would recommend giving the parents the ability to choose which district is doing the job of educating the best. If this results in the reduction of schools, it would be better than the continued wasteful funding of districts that fail to keep up year after year.

7)#Question: *The political corruption scandal surrounding Governor Blagojevich has been an embarrassment for our state and shattered the public trust. What ethical reforms would you propose to restore faith in Illinois government and public service in general?*

I have strived to be very open and honest about my role in government. I talk openly with anyone about my views and positions and also encourage them to get involved rather than stand outside yelling about what they see as wrong. More than anything I see that politics is intimidating to most people. They see the individuals in it as too different from themselves to understand their positions and views. Others are confused about how to get involved or under the belief that they cannot make a difference. I have worked to introduce many current leaders to the world of politics and have strived to help other candidates and citizens understand how the system works and how they can get involved. By opening the door for these individuals and bringing them into the tent, we remove the distance they feel from the decision makers and make it easier for them to understand all of the things that are going right rather than focusing on what needs to be fixed.

8)#Question: Please list and explain any other issues or priorities that motivate you to seek this State Senate seat.

I believe whomever is chosen for this position needs to be an individual that has already proven the ability to work such a large and vast district. We cannot have an individual that has excelled at working for one group or another but has not had the opportunity to work for all of the citizens. My past election results have proved that I cannot only draw Republican support but also Independent and Democrat not because I have traded beliefs for their votes but rather because I have communicated my conservative beliefs to them and explained why my message is correct. Another benefit I have in this area is my current district. My current district is larger in population than 70% of the counties in the State of Illinois, including all but two in this district. I have the honor of working for not only municipal leaders and citizens but also rural farmers and outdoorsman. I have also enjoyed the strong support throughout this vast County Board District, proof of my success in representing more than just one section of the citizens. Of the other candidates, only three have represented more individuals.

9)#Question: What has been your involvement in the Republican Party? How have you helped to build it and how will you remain engaged if you are appointed to the State Senate?

I have been involved in public life for over thirteen years, almost 40% of my young life. I have had the privilege of not only being elected myself, but helping several of our current leaders in their elections. I was proud to assist our congressman Aaron Schock in his first election as a write in candidate for the Peoria School District when many in our county did not even know his name. Locally, I was proud to support our current Coroner in his first election bid. Regionally, the judicial campaigns of John Vespa, Michael Risinger, Steve Kouri and the first Senate race of Dan Rutherford have been highlights. Recently and of the highest honor, I was proud to work for the Bill Brady campaign. This past election cycle, I hosted or assisted in fundraisers for Bill Brady, John Vespa, Michael Risinger and Dan Rutherford. Currently I am assisting a teenage Republican candidate running for one of our local City Councils.

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