



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2008

CONTACT: Robert Doeckel
CELL: (608) 217-0194

Will Conservative Ads Also Target Ripp's Support for Healthy Wisconsin?

Smear Campaigns Ignore Ripp Calling Healthy Wisconsin 'Great'; Target O'Neil in Same Race for Calling Plan 'Place to Start'

Interviewer: "How do you feel about initiatives like Healthy Wisconsin that came up in the legislature in the last session?"

Keith Ripp: "Some of those things are great, Healthy Wisconsin, you know." – *Wisconsin Eye*, 6/21/2008, minute marker 18.39, http://wisconsineye.com/wisEye_programming/ARCHIVES-state_elections.html#cpn_080621_moo_47th

Madison – Two conservative groups trashing Democrat Trish O'Neil with an onslaught of inaccurate and racist ads and mailings for calling the "Healthy Wisconsin" plan a "place to start," have curiously ignored her Republican opponent Keith Ripp, who told a video interviewer the plan was "great."

The Michigan-based All Children Matter and the group Coalition for America's Families have spent in excess of \$1 million running similar smear campaigns against Democrats in Wisconsin. The central citation used in one of the ads points to an interview in which O'Neil called the plan a "place to start." Ripp, on the other hand, offered affirmative support for the plan.

"Why hasn't Keith Ripp's support for 'Healthy Wisconsin' incurred the racist wrath of the conservative goon squad?" asked Scot Ross, Executive Director of One Wisconsin Now. "Keith Ripp may need to do a huge flip flop and drop his support for the plan or All Children Matter and the Coalition for America's Families are going to trash him with the same ads they are using against his opponent."

Stories in the Green Bay, Eau Claire and La Crosse media markets, where Democratic candidates are being attacked by the groups, have pointed out that in many instances the subjects of the attack, like O'Neil, have not voted for nor affirmatively endorsed the plan.

All Children Matter is the most notorious of these organizations. It is a \$10 million pro-private school vouchers group financed by right wing billionaires and millionaires, including Dick and Betsy DeVos and the Wal-Mart heirs. The Michigan-based group was hit with a \$5.2 million fine by the Ohio Elections Commission on Friday, April 4 for illegally funneling \$870,000 into Ohio campaigns.

(more)



OWN Release – Page 2

All Children Matter remains under investigation in Wisconsin after the State Elections Board determined in November 2006 that All Children Matter violated rules about express advocacy. That investigation is in the hands of Wisconsin's Government Accountability Board. Additional information about the group is available at: www.AllCashMatters.org.

The Coalition for American's Families was forced to change a sleazy and inaccurate advertisement against former Supreme Court Justice Louis Butler earlier this year. An independent watchdog organization, the Wisconsin Judicial Campaign Integrity Committee denounced a Coalition advertisement against Butler for making "false statements that add nothing to the understanding of the issues in the campaign."

Ross said health care reform is a critical issue, which deserves full discussion and debate.

#

One Wisconsin Now is a statewide communications network specializing in effective earned media and online organizing to advance progressive leadership and values.