



NEWS / PROFESSION

Kentucky DC Enters Race for U.S. Congress

HANDFUL OF OTHERS CAMPAIGNING FOR STATE SEATS

Michael Devitt

While many people don't consider 2006 an "election year," because the next presidential election won't be held until 2008, the reality is that it's a year in which major political change can take place in the United States. More than 450 elected officials, including one-third of the U.S. Senate and the entire U.S. House of Representatives, are seeking re-election this November.

Traditionally, doctors of chiropractic have not had much success running for political office on the national level. According to the seminal text *Chiropractic: History and Evolution of a New Profession*, only one chiropractor, Anthony Tauriello (D-N.Y.), has been elected to the House of Representatives, serving as a member of the 81st Congress from 1949 to 1951.



**James Bloink, DC,
is running for the
U.S. House of
Representatives.**

That could change dramatically, however, if Dr. James Bloink has anything to say about it. A 1983 graduate of National College of Chiropractic, Dr. Bloink opened a practice in Scottsville, Ky., the following year with his wife Janice (also a 1983 National graduate). Before embarking on a career in chiropractic, he served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970 as a member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, receiving the Bronze Star and an Army Commendation Medal for service to his country. While he has no prior political experience, Dr. Bloink possesses vast knowledge of the business world and a strong work ethic; in addition to his chiropractic practice, he operated an automotive business from 1991 to 1998, and he currently maintains a 134-acre cattle farm.

So, why is Dr. Bloink seeking to represent the citizens of Kentucky's 1st Congressional District? The reasons are varied, but in a word, he feels it's time for things in Washington to change.

"My motivation for running for Congress is to help bring back the checks and balances that have been lost in Washington in the past years," Dr. Bloink explained in an interview with *Dynamic Chiropractic*. "We have too many special interests running the government, and we need to get the focus back on the citizens and jobs that are needed in our communities. We need to get government burdens off the small businesses and create more jobs."

"There comes a time when one should step up and try to make a change in government," Bloink added. "We need a change in the direction the country is headed at the state and national levels. We need people in Washington that can create an image of faith, not fear, to the nation and the world."

One of the main issues of concern to Dr. Bloink is the state of health care in the U.S. If elected, he pledges to do his best to improve the current health care system, and to ensure that the interests of the chiropractic profession are represented in that system.

"Universal health care is coming, as is seen in Massachusetts. We need to make sure that chiropractic is included with parity of service and access for the constituents," Dr. Bloink said. "We have no federal representation at this time, and it would be great to have someone on both sides of the aisle to co-sponsor a bill that would accomplish this end."

According to Dr. Bloink, two other candidates are campaigning to be the Democratic nominee for the 1st Congressional District - Tom Barlow, a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Eric Streit, a director and former serviceman. A primary election will be held May 16th to determine the Democratic candidate, who will challenge incumbent Ed Whitfield for the congressional seat in November.

No matter which candidate wins the primary, Dr. Bloink believes that chiropractic's concerns will be heard in Washington, D.C. "I have assured both [of the other candidates] that they will receive 100 percent of my support if they win the primary," he said. "They have assured me that chiropractic will be represented if they are elected."

The potential for a doctor of chiropractic to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives represents a tremendous opportunity for the chiropractic profession. All practicing doctors of chiropractic, no matter where they reside, are encouraged to visit Dr. Bloink's official campaign Web site (www.JimBloinkForCongress.com) to offer their support.

Note: Dr. Bloink is not the only chiropractor with congressional aspirations: Recall that David Langheier, DC, is hoping to head to Washington as the Republican representative for the 9th Congressional District in Florida. His campaign Web site is www.GoDave06.com. For more information, read "Dr. Langheier Goes to Washington: Florida DC Running for Congress" (www.chiroweb.com/archives/24/07/01.html) in the March 26, 2006 issue.

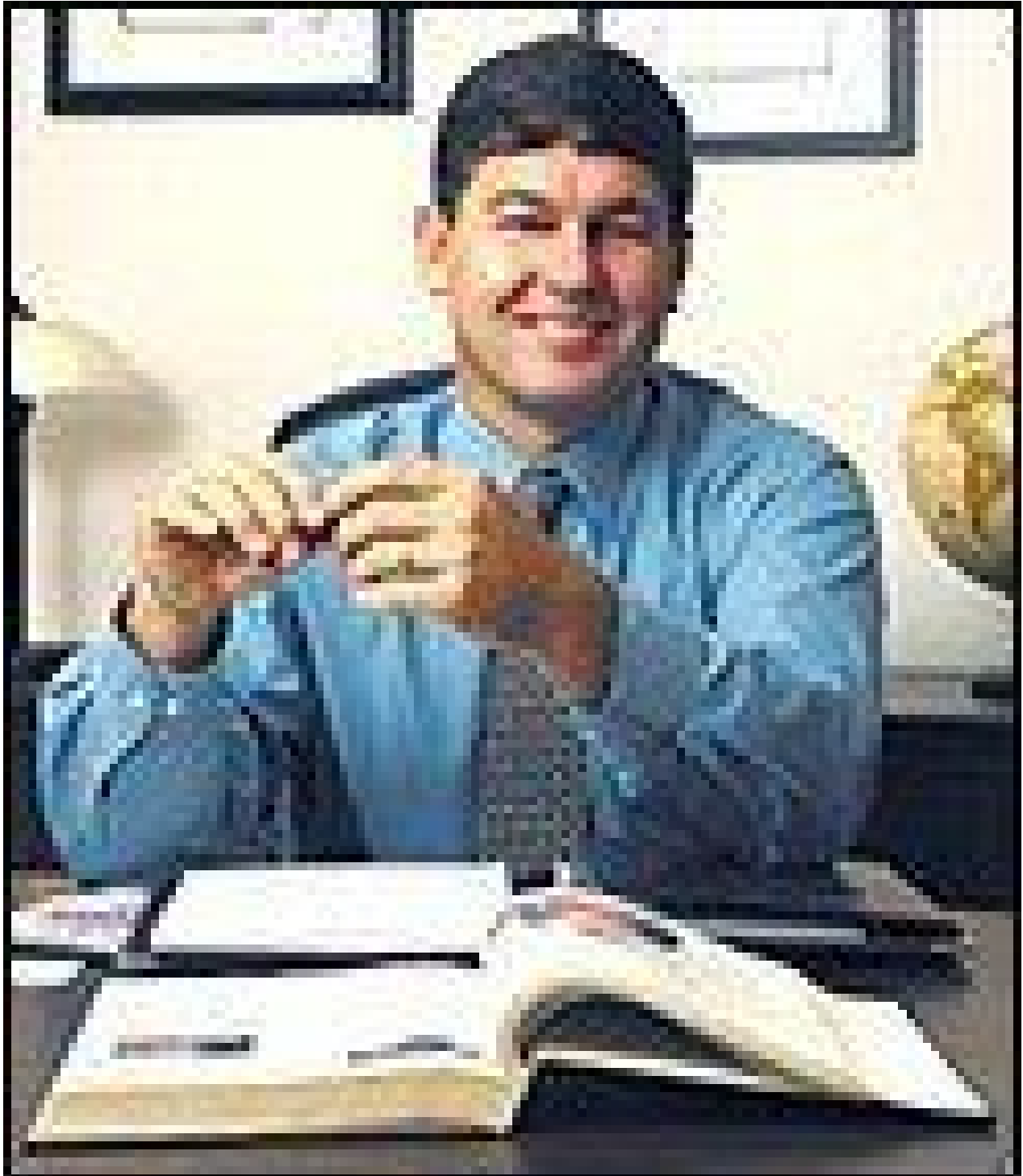
Chiropractic Candidates Join State Races

While Dr. Bloink is seeking to enhance the image of the chiropractic profession on the national level, several chiropractors are attempting to reshape the political landscape at the state level. Among the DCs that have officially declared themselves as candidates for public office in their respective states are (profiled in alphabetical order as follows):



Frank Farkas, DC. One of two doctors of chiropractic currently serving in the Florida Legislature (the other being Dennis Jones, DC, current majority leader of the Florida Senate), Dr. Farkas recently announced his intention to run for the 16th Senate District. At present, Dr. Farkas serves as a state representative for Florida's 52nd House District, a position he has held since first being elected in 1998. Among his responsibilities, he chairs the House Commerce Council. He also has chaired the House Health Care Committee.

As a member of the Florida House, Dr. Farkas co-sponsored the Affordable Health Care for Floridians Act of 2004, which has helped to improve the quality of health care in Florida, and has increased access to affordable health insurance. He has received numerous awards for his efforts, including a Distinguished Service Award from the Florida Chiropractic Association and a Legislator of the Year Award from the Florida Health Care Association. For more information, visit his campaign Web site: www.FranklyFarkas.com.



Rod Jones, DC. The son of the aforementioned Dennis Jones, Rod Jones is one of three Republican candidates vying to succeed Everett Rice as the representative for Florida's 54th House District. He is a partner and co-owner of the Community Care Medical Center in St. Petersburg, where he has practiced since graduating from Life Chiropractic College. In addition to his chiropractic practice, he has served as an active ready reservist with the United States Coast Guard for almost 20 years.

A native of Pinellas County, Dr. Jones' campaign platform emphasizes five points: improving public safety, protecting the environment, providing affordable quality health care to all Floridians, controlling and effectively managing community growth, and providing children with the best education possible. In March, the Florida Chamber of Commerce gave its official endorsement to Dr. Jones as a candidate. For more information, visit www.VoteRodJones.com.



David Madeira, DC. Dr. Madeira is one of five Republican candidates campaigning for a state

senate seat in Pennsylvania's 20th District. A 1989 graduate of New York Chiropractic College, he operates a busy practice in Dallas, Pa. In 2004, he was named "Chiropractor of the Year" by the Pennsylvania Chiropractic Association. He currently serves as president of the Pennsylvania Chiropractic Educational and Charitable Foundation.

Since announcing his candidacy in September 2005, Dr. Madeira has campaigned using a conservative platform on social and economic issues, with an emphasis on reducing or eliminating various taxes. Most recently, Dr. Madeira earned the endorsement of Pat Toomey, himself a former congressman. "Pennsylvania Republicans want the Republican Party to be a conservative party, and David Madeira is the conservative in this race," Toomey said of Madeira. "He will work tirelessly for lower taxes, fiscal discipline and, in short, limited government." For more information on Dr. Madeira, visit www.MadeiraForSenate.com.



Ken Peluso, DC. A 1983 graduate of Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, Dr. Peluso has been an active participant in the affairs of Palm Harbor, Fla., on a variety of levels, including the Palm Harbor Chamber of Commerce, the Palm Harbor Community Services Board and the Pinellas Economic Council. His dedication to serving the interests of the community is part of the reason he has decided to run as a Republican candidate for Florida's 48th House District.

In a statement on his Web site, Dr. Peluso outlined his decisions for running for office and what he hopes to accomplish if elected: "I feel confident that I can make a difference in the lives of each

and every one of our families. For over two decades I have made Palm Harbor my home, raising my children and operating my own health care clinic. As a father, husband and businessman in Pinellas County, I know the issues that are important to all of us. If elected, I promise to work hard on these issues bettering health care, improving education, and making our communities safer."

For more information on Dr. Peluso's campaign, visit his Web site: www.KenPeluso.com.



Steven Perman, DC, DACBSP, DACBN. Dr. Perman will challenge three-term incumbent Rep. Richard Machek for the chance to represent the residents of Florida's 78th District. Although he has never held public office, Dr. Perman would, if elected, bring to the legislature several years of experience in the political arena. Since 1994, has served as chair of BAC-PAC, a political action committee for chiropractors in South Florida. He is also a member of the ACA's legislative committee. His efforts to promote the profession have not been lost on his peers, who named him

the Florida Chiropractic Association's "Chiropractor of the Year" in 2005. That same year, he was honored by the American Chiropractic Association as its Alternate Delegate of the Year.

A Democrat, Dr. Perman's platform emphasizes improvements in hurricane preparedness and response, and expanding access to affordable health care. When asked why he decided to run for public office, Dr. Perman stated that he wanted to make a difference by bringing a "new voice" to the legislature. "I've been involved in political action on behalf of the chiropractic profession for 12 years on the local, state and federal levels," he said. "I just felt it was time for me to step up and try to make a difference as a new voice in the Florida Legislature, and to represent the residents that make up my district." For more information, visit www.BelieveInSteve.com.

Robert E. Rhoderick Jr., DC. A Democratic candidate for Pennsylvania's 39th District House seat, Dr. Rhoderick is making his first run for political office against longtime incumbent Rep. David Levdansky. While he has little political experience, he has been an active member of his community, serving as a member of the Charleroi Rotary Club board of directors for three years, including two years as its president. He is also a successful business owner, operating a private chiropractic practice in Charleroi. (He has since taken a leave from his practice to campaign.)

In an interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* in April, Dr. Rhoderick said that he decided to run for office due to an existing debate over tax reform in Pennsylvania, and his personal belief that "major reforms" are needed in the legislature. He also told the *Post-Gazette* that he was funding his own campaign, and that he would take no outside donations. If elected, he would push for reforms on campaign finance and property taxes. As this issue goes to press, Dr. Rhoderick has not created a Web site publicizing his campaign.

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While the above list represents (to the best of our knowledge) all doctors of chiropractic running for public office in 2006, there is always the possibility that we may have missed a DC or two whose campaign efforts haven't been as highly publicized. Therefore, if you know of any chiropractors who are running for office this year, but were not mentioned in this article, please contact us at editorial@mpamedia.com, so we can report on their campaign efforts in a future issue of the publication.

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