

KOHL'S FOR GOVERNOR

Dear Friends,

The last four months have been absolutely amazing. My campaign's message of limited government, fiscal responsibility, and personal responsibility has resonated with not only GOP activists but also with a much broader cross section of Minnesotans. I've had a chance to meet and get to know hundreds of activists from across the state and visit places I would typically not have a reason to visit. All of this has reaffirmed for me that this is a great state full of great people with great potential.

One of the challenges facing my candidacy from the beginning was that I am not as well known as some of my fellow candidates. I trusted this challenge would be a great opportunity to make a positive first impression on many who are just getting to know me. I am confident that I have succeeded at this and look forward to continuing to build upon these new relationships. I have been truly humbled by the level of encouragement and interest in my message and my candidacy from people all across Minnesota.

Although I have continued to gain political and financial supporters since our party's October 3rd convention, it has become clear to me that the activists are lining up in much greater numbers behind some of the other candidates in the race, and there continues to be speculation about others who may enter the race. I certainly continue to believe that I'm the strongest Republican to take on the DFL candidate in 2010, but I also believe that this decision belongs to our party's delegates, not to me.

In light of this and after much prayer and deliberation, I am making the very difficult decision to suspend my campaign for Governor.

I want to thank my wife Kelly and our children for their sacrifice over the past several months. I also want to thank everyone who volunteered, contributed or supported my campaign in some other way. Your friendship, support, and generosity has been humbling and I can never thank you enough.

Although this is a difficult decision, I am pleased with the impact I was able to have on the race over the past few months. I remain the only candidate to move beyond the rhetoric of supporting limited government by coming forward with a plan to move Minnesota in that direction – my new Minnesota Spending Freeze. I have repeatedly had other candidates tell me they agree with my ideas and they have begun advocating for similar policies. And I have had countless activists tell me how much they appreciate my thoughtful approach to the issues and my ability to articulate conservative principles in a way that has appeal beyond just the party faithful.

I don't know today what my political future holds, but clearly we as a state and country face very difficult challenges. I look forward to finding ways to contribute to solving those challenges in a manner consistent with the principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility and personal responsibility.