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Don Barber Scores Another Major Endorsement

Good Government Group Gives Barber Seal of Approval

Don Barber's bid for the 51st state Senate seat built up more steam today after Barber (D-Caroline) garnered Citizen Action's endorsement. The statewide grassroots organization's focus on protecting consumers, fighting for universal, quality, affordable health care and campaign finance reform found a perfect fit in Barber's candidacy.

Only last week Barber received the Working Families party endorsement, which brings experienced campaign workers to Barber's cause and puts his name on a second ballot line.

"Citizen Action is proud to throw its support behind Don Barber," said Karen Scharff, Executive Director of Citizen Action. "He is a strong fighter for working families. Whether the issue is health care, education funding or clean elections, Don Barber is on the right side, the side of hard-working New Yorkers. We have 20,000 members in our grassroots organization, and they will rally behind Don in this battle."

Barber expressed his gratitude for Citizen Action's vote of confidence. "Citizen Action represents all the right values," he said. "We worked hard for their endorsement because we know they put the needs of New York's families first. Their call for clean elections and campaign finance reform gets to the root of Albany's gridlock. They want to take big money and influence buying out of our state elections, and so do I."

Scharff was particularly critical of the 22-year incumbent Jim Seward's ties to insurance companies. "As chairman of the Senate Insurance Committee, Seward has blocked every attempt to control HMO rates. These companies are making windfall profits—rates have risen 93% since 2001. And it's no secret that Seward's money comes largely from insurance companies and their lobbyists. That's why he puts insurance company profits first, and upstate families last."

"Citizen Action fits into the broad coalition we're building," Barber pointed out. "The good government groups our campaign is attracting all stand on the side of upstate families who are struggling to pay their bills. We've had 22 years of the same old thing from my opponent, 22 years during which it's gotten harder and harder for families to make ends meet, and this legislative session is more of the same Albany gridlock. We need serious reform, and I intend to fight for it."

"Citizen Action will provide more energy and know-how to our effort to win this state senate seat," said Tarah Rowse, Barber's campaign manager. "Support for Don Barber is growing in leaps and bounds. This endorsement proves it."

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