

## **I Serve Not for Political Expedience**

Doug Richey, State Representative HD39

*"This is no time for ease and comfort. It is time to dare and endure."* - Winston Churchill

I'm running for Speaker of the House for the 103rd General Assembly. This news broke formally in June of 2022. Questions followed the announcement to ascertain the 'how' of my endeavor. How do I intend to secure this responsibility when I'm not doing so from the Floor Leader's office? Great question, though perhaps not the most important. Thus far, I've exceeded all of my benchmarks in establishing a successful Speaker's race, but I acknowledge the obvious. Political expedience has reigned for several cycles, where no one dared to run against the newly elected Floor Leader. Who would want to? I ask, "Why not?" We face times of tremendous consequence, times that compel me to "...dare and endure...", in spite of political difficulty. Enter Doug Richey's asymmetrical effort.

I began my effort knowing the challenge. Because of that, I spoke with both of the front-runners in the Floor Leader race, before the end of the 2022 Session, to explain my plan. My effort was not driven by a lack of confidence in either of them. They're both trusted friends. It was and is, however, driven by a desire to serve consistent with my skill set, experience, and convictions. They were both aware that political expedience didn't factor into my equation. I've always enjoyed engaging hard tasks and am not known to bow before the altar of convenience or risk aversion. With that, I announced

prior to the election of the Majority Floor Leader, to clearly communicate to our caucus members that I wasn't running 'against' the Floor Leader, rather I'm running 'for' Speaker of the House.

Now the 102nd General Assembly is convened, and my effort continues with encouraging results. Becoming Speaker shouldn't be easy. There should exist no unobstructed path to that consequential responsibility for anyone. I intend to persist in garnering the trust and confidence of House colleagues while hoping for, and fully supporting, a very effective Floor Leader. I want Floor Leader Jon Patterson to shine so brightly in his task that it makes it harder for me in my task; he must be effective. To desire otherwise, would be a disservice to my caucus, in particular, and to Missourians, in general.

As I encourage my colleagues to vet me, I also ask Missourians, in general, to do the same. This is what I offer:

I believe in, 1) Convictional Leadership: principles and truth matter and they're worth defending; 2) Collaborative Leadership: we're a large body of smart and talented people that deserve to be heard and valued; 3) Servant Leadership: any true leader knows the value of serving others; and, 4) Discerning Leadership: pitfalls must be navigated, the future anticipated, and the present addressed, as relational dynamics are managed.

I will not, 1) Sell my soul to the devil to win; 2) Offer 'party favors' to secure support; 3) Turn my back on fundamental principles or Republican ideals/platform to pander; or, 4) Engage in sophomoric attacks to discredit my opponent(s).

I will, 1) Stand for what is true; 2) Fight for a free and moral society; 3) Treat everyone with respect; 4) Welcome accountability; and 5) Ultimately walk away from public service, by God's grace, with my integrity.

I welcome the heavy mantle of responsibility that the Speakership brings. I look forward to formally hearing from my colleagues this coming September when they vote for the Speaker-Elect. It may be considered politically disadvantageous to compete with a sitting Floor Leader for the Speakership, should he choose to run; however, I'm confident that when we vote in September, our caucus will do so with the understanding that we must elect our next Speaker, free of a blind commitment to political expediency.