

The *St Albans Messenger* Endorses Chris Bray for Lt. Governor

There are two candidates in the Democratic primary for Vermont's Lieutenant Governor: Steve Howard and Chris Bray. Mr. Howard looks at political life as being one giant, continual fist fight – and he's the pugilist. Mr. Bray is the consensus builder. His gift is his ability to get things done, to organize disparate groups around a common cause.

Vermont would be best served if Mr. Bray won Tuesday's Democratic primary. What we need is a productive discussion, not bombast.

And consider the numbers: Both Mr. Howard and Mr. Bray have served as representatives in the Vermont House. Mr. Howard introduced 11 bills, none of which passed. Mr. Bray introduced 15 bills, 10 of which passed.

That's instructive in that Mr. Bray is obviously working within the party's mainstream and shows an ability to follow through with something he began. Mr. Howard is considerably to the left of Mr. Bray, and has not been successful with his legislative initiatives.

Vermonters, in the main, are tired of the theatre. Times are tough, but the opportunities remain. If we are to succeed in figuring out the best ways forward, we will need a Lieutenant Governor whose commitment is to the solution, not the self-aggrandizing efforts that pump up the ego, but little else.

Mr. Bray's resume is also the superior. Mr. Howard's is that of a professional politician. Little else. Mr. Bray has done a bit of everything. And successfully. He's been a logger and carpenter [in his youth], he's worked at National Life, taught English at UVM, and started his own business, Common Ground Communications. He knows the travails of most Vermonters. He's been there. The job isn't about his political advancement, it's about finding ways to make Vermont's quality of life better.

He has been successful in important ways. His most important legislative accomplishment has been his Farm-to-Plate Investment Program, which the Legislature approved in 2009. He is motivated by the idea of sustainable agriculture and understands that if properly organized and supported, it could be an enormous boon to the state's agricultural industry, to the health of all Vermonters, and to our economy. It could also be worked into UVM's Spires of Excellence, one of which focuses on food production.

That's exciting. It also shows the range of his vision. It's a project that could involve us all, which is more appealing than wallowing in the trenches, embroiled in political catfights that get us nowhere.

Finally, Mr. Bray is a decent human being who places a premium on doing the right thing. He's motivated by big ideas, not big fights. He is the better choice.

by Emerson Lynn 19 August 2010

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