

## **Chicago Sun-Times**

Scott Fornek, August 4, 2004

HEADLINE: Keyes, GOP discuss taking on Obama;  
Md. Republican mum on whether he'd run

Conceding he is not convinced "it's a good idea to parachute into a state and go into a Senate race," former Republican commentator Alan Keyes nevertheless flew into Chicago from his home in Maryland today to talk to GOP leaders about the race against Democrat Barack Obama.

"I'm very flattered that they think that it's worthwhile to talk to me," Keyes told a horde of reporters in the Loop.

A former radio and TV talk show host, Keyes refused to say whether he was planning to ask the Republican State Central Committee to consider him for the race or what it would take for him to take the plunge.

But he sure sounded like a candidate trying out his lines.

"Well, I have come in in response to, I think, a very strong effort on the part of the leadership in the state of Illinois to take advantage of what is a priceless opportunity, a priceless opportunity for the state and for the country that arises from the fact that the Democrats have nominated somebody who is a radical ideologue but who is an articulate spokesman for the positions that have been characteristic of the Democratic platform," Keyes told reporters as he entered the panel's meeting at the Union League Club.

Keyes is one of two candidates that the central committee is considering to replace Jack Ryan, who stepped down amid allegations he once took his wife to sex clubs. On Tuesday, the panel winnowed down a field of 14 candidates to Keyes and former deputy drug czar Andrea Grubb Barthwell.

Barthwell, a supporter of abortion rights, is considered an ideological opposite of Keyes, a staunch opponent of abortion and gay rights. The central committee was planning to interview both today.

Keyes was greeted by about a couple dozen supporters waving "Keyes for U.S. Senate" and "Pro-Life, Pro-Marriage" signs.

"Keyes for Senate!" they chanted.

Conservative activist Jack Roeser, a wealthy businessman from the northwest suburbs, said he expected to help raise \$1 million for Keyes.

"He'll give some spine to the Republican Party, whose leadership hardly wants him," Roeser said. "But he's what they're going to take, and it's the best thing for the party. It means that the Republican Party will be running on Republican principles with a real spokesman."

Joseph Scheidler, head of the Pro-Life Action League, was concerned about Keyes' lack of ties to Illinois, but said he thought the problem could be overcome.

"Once they start debating, I think people will get involved in the issues and he could win because he's so brilliant, such a good speaker," Scheidler said. "And I think it will be a good contest. However, Obama's a fantastic speaker, too. I was very impressed by his talk at the convention. . . . Here's a man with sincerity even though I disagree with a lot of his philosophy.

"Oh, a formidable opponent absolutely."

Keyes, who ran for president in 1996 and 2000, admitted the residency issue would be a problem.

"I do not take it for granted that it's a good idea to parachute into a state and go into a Senate race, so I think it has to be something where I would be convinced that that's not only consonant with federalism as I understand it, but that it's in the best interest of the state and of the nation," he told reporters. "And that's what it would have to be."

## **Chicago Sun-Times**

Lynn Sweet, Washington Bureau Chief

October 8, 2004

Pressure's greater on Bush to perform well tonight

President Bush walks into tonight's second debate with John Kerry at Washington University in St. Louis under the most pressure to perform in a format that may not play to his strengths and after botching things up in their first showdown.

Bush has been testing a few new lines in past days to have at the ready tonight in the town hall-style meeting. The questions will be asked by real people, which adds unpredictability in how things unfold, especially if a questioner has an attitude.

In addition, the candidates may decide to roam or do something for effect -- such as remove a suit coat -- unlike the first debate, where they were mandated to stay behind their lecterns.

The president has been acknowledging that he created a problem for himself by looking variously angry, arrogant or irritated during their first debate last Thursday in Coral Gables, Fla.

At a rally Thursday in Wausau, Wis., Bush updated a line in his stump speech, where he has been mocking Kerry for calling the Iraq war "the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Said Bush, "You hear all that, you can understand why somebody would make a face." The president had a variation on the same "face" line in a speech Wednesday in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where he also practiced some damage control for going on and on in the first debate about how much "hard work" it is being president.

"It wasn't easy for my opponent to become the single most liberal member of the Senate. You might even say it was hard work," Bush said.

'Soft' supporters in audience

The second of three debates will be moderated by ABC's Charles Gibson, with the 90-minute session governed by rules negotiated by the two campaigns.

Don't expect a lot of town hall-like give-and-take, however, because the people asking the questions in the audience are banned from any follow-ups.

The audience will consist of between 100 and 150 people -- not undecided, but likely voters who see themselves as "soft" supporters of the president or the Massachusetts senator -- selected by Gallup, the polling organization.

Gibson was supposed to receive their questions in advance and will decide which ones to ask. Gibson is, the rules say, to cut off a person if the question is switched. He is also to try to make sure the topics cover a range of issues.

But all roads may lead to Iraq this evening, with the Bush administration's execution of the war having dominated the news this week.

Referring to a new report from the chief U.S. weapons hunter in Iraq that concluded there were no weapons of mass destruction when the United States attacked in March 2003, Kerry on Thursday said the findings show "definitive evidence" why Bush should be denied a second term.

Bush, faced with the report, said the United States was "right to take" action because the country is "safer today" with Saddam Hussein in prison because he retained the "intent" to gain WMD.

Ken Mehlman, Bush's campaign manager, said in a conference call with reporters Thursday that Kerry will be pressed to explain his notion that the United States must pass some "global test" when it comes to protecting the country against terrorists. Bush has labeled this the "Kerry Doctrine," intended to draw the contrast with his "Bush Doctrine," under which the United States launched the preemptive Iraqi strike.

Glenn, my undecided voter friend who lives in the battleground state of Michigan -- he goes back and forth whenever we talk -- said he was probably going to make up his mind after tonight.

527 ads aimed at Obama

In August, I wrote about the creation of Empower Illinois, a 527 political group established to nick some dents into Democratic Senate nominee Barack Obama. Conservative activist Jack Roeser told me Wednesday he gave \$40,000 to the group, which will start running television ads in Downstate markets Monday dealing with "terrible votes" cast by Obama, a state senator.

Roeser said he recently hosted a funder for GOP Senate nominee Alan Keyes in Carpentersville that took in about \$10,000. According to Keyes spokesman Connie Hair, former United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick will headline a lunch for Keyes in Chicago next Thursday.

Tue August 17, 2004 19:01 EDT

Keyes explains 'marketed-oriented' approach to slave reparations

MIKE ROBINSON  
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO (AP) \_ Republican U.S. Senate candidate Alan Keyes assured conservatives Tuesday that despite his remark a day earlier that an argument can be made for providing reparations to slave descendants, he opposes any ``effort to extort money damages from the American people."

``The idea I have often put forward to address this challenge involves a traditionally Republican, conservative and market-oriented approach," Keyes said in a statement issued by his campaign after aides said a number of conservatives called to express concern.

Keyes said his plan to exempt slave descendants from federal taxes rather than make reparations payments to them would ``encourage business ownership, create jobs and support the development of strong economic foundations for working families."

It ``takes no money from other citizens while righting the historic balance that results from the truth that black slaves toiled for generations at a tax rate that was effectively 100 percent," Keyes said.

``I have consistently opposed the effort to extort monetary damages from the American people," he said.

Campaign aides said Keyes would meet Wednesday with wealthy entrepreneur and outspoken conservative Jack Roeser to discuss the issue.

Roeser told The Associated Press on Tuesday that he had planned to make an independent expenditure of \$100,000 to publicize Democrat Barack Obama's state Senate record on taxes and other issues and compare it to the views of Keyes. But he said he would not if Keyes backs reparations.

``I feel very much like the average conservative guy about this," Roeser said. ``This will not fly. Mr. Keyes is a philosopher and he cannot let loose talk sit there, because it's very disturbing."

Roeser said he wouldn't discuss the independent expenditure with Keyes, which would be illegal under federal law.

At a news conference earlier Tuesday, a fired up Keyes discussed the debate over expanding O'Hare International Airport, an issue he has yet to take a stand on, saying the multi-billion dollar issue is paralyzed by political corruption.

``It's sort of like you're sitting in a room and off in a corner of the room is a deeply smelly toad that is filling the room with a nasty odor," Keyes said. ``And everybody is holding their cocktails and wearing their ties and they're not talking about this smelly toad but the room is filled with the stink of it."

“That stink is political corruption,” he said. “That stink is the willingness to undermine what needs to be done for the people so that you can serve your power interest and your political interest. And this stink is in everybody’s nostrils.”

O’Hare is beset by delays because of congestion, and federal officials are pushing Chicago to come up with a solution.

Mayor Richard M. Daley and members of the business community want to expand O’Hare while Republicans want to build another major Chicago-area airport at Peotone in the far south suburbs. The debate has raged for years.

Keyes offered no specifics about what he meant by political corruption but he seemed to suggest he meant political bickering over jobs and contracts. Democrats control Chicago politics and the jobs and lucrative contracts at O’Hare and Midway; Republicans would likely have more influence under the Peotone plan.

A spokesman for Obama, Robert Gibbs, said the Democratic candidate favors a compromise under which O’Hare would be expanded and a new airport built.

Keyes, a former diplomat and conservative commentator from Maryland, stepped in as the GOP Senate candidate this month after primary winner Jack Ryan dropped out.

He promised to make a decision on O’Hare as soon as possible.

Keyes did say he had become convinced that U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., who represents the south suburbs and has broken with most Democrats by backing a new airport, was correct in saying the south suburbs haven’t had their fair economic share.

## **Chicago Sun-Times**

Scott Fornek

August 19, 2004

### Keyes won't back down on reparations

His voice rising to a yell, Republican U.S. Senate nominee Alan Keyes told a bipartisan civic group Wednesday he "will not budge" from his belief that descendants of slaves should be exempted from income taxes to help heal the wounds of past discrimination and segregation.

The former presidential candidate disdainfully brushed aside questions over whether his suggestion should apply to rich African Americans such as Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan or Oprah Winfrey.

"Do you know how many Oprah Winfreys there might have been running around in the 1930s or in the 1920s or in the 19-teens that got nowhere because the doors were shut in their face?" Keyes thundered. "If you think that because I wear a conservative label, I have forgotten that history and am not mindful of that injustice -- then I will tell you now that you are wrong."

Keyes delivered his blistering defense at a luncheon of the City Club of Chicago, scolding fellow conservatives who challenged his proposal and evoking the struggle of his African-American parents, saying they had talent and "hearts and spirit and strength and faith."

"Why didn't they get to a point where they could stand on this platform?" Keyes asked.

Vying against Democrat Barack Obama, Keyes drew heat from conservatives earlier this week when he proposed exempting descendants of slaves from income taxes for a generation or two, a view he insists "involves a traditionally Republican, conservative and market-oriented approach."

On Wednesday, Keyes ridiculed the fuss over his position, saying it is simply a tax break, something "Republicans and my conservative brethren" don't object to when applied to a "wealthy corporation."

Conservative activist Jack Roeser met with Keyes for what Roeser called "a long argument and an intense one" over the issue before the speech. A Barrington businessman, Roeser said he still is not sold on Keyes' reparations proposal, but still plans to support him anyway. "I will tell my friends that this is a good man, and we should support him."

## SPRINGFIELD JOURNAL REGISTER

Obama stars on Governor's Day 'I don't take things for granted,' he tells Democrats

By DOUG FINKE  
STATE CAPITOL BUREAU

Wednesday was Governor's Day at the Illinois State Fair, but there is no question that the real star of the day was U.S. Senate candidate Barack Obama.

Fresh from gaining national exposure at the Democratic National Convention, Obama, a state senator from Chicago, was greeted with wild enthusiasm at every appearance on the fairgrounds, even as he cautioned the party faithful not to get over confident about an election still nearly three months away.

"I don't take things for granted," Obama said at the traditional Democratic state fair rally. "I'm not going to screw around with 80 days left (until the election). I'm going to work harder the last 80 days than I did the first 18 months."

Five months ago, Obama was just another Democratic candidate ready to square off against Republican Jack Ryan. But Ryan quit the ticket after allegations surfaced that he had taken his ex-wife to sex clubs in the 1990s.

Obama was catapulted into the national spotlight when he gave the keynote address at the Democrats' national convention three weeks ago. His stature was further embellished by the Republicans' inability to lure another candidate to run against him. The Republicans finally chose conservative pundit Alan Keyes of Maryland.

"Despite the fact we have 12.5 million people in Illinois, (the Republicans) could not find one person to run for U.S. Senate," crowed U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin of Springfield. "Do you need a candidate for Senate who can find Annapolis (Maryland), but not Illiopolis or Teutopolis?"

Rockford Mayor Doug Scott said a number of Republicans had attended an Obama appearance there soon after the Democratic convention.

"There were a lot of Republicans in the crowd that just said: 'I like this guy. I believe in this guy,'" Scott said. "It almost has a Paul Simon feel. You know, I don't really agree with this guy on a lot of issues, but I believe what he says. I believe he is sincere."

Ciney Eads of Cerro Gordo said he had supported Blair Hull in the March Democratic primary. "I can see why (Obama) won the way he did," Eads said. "I think he's one of those people who cannot only talk to people, but he listens to what they have to say, which a lot of politicians don't do."

Some Republican officials believe Keyes will motivate more GOP voters to go to the polls Nov. 2 and could help tip the scales in favor of the party in key legislative races. Democrats control the Illinois House and Senate, and Gov. Rod Blagojevich is a Democrat.

House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, chairman of the Illinois Democratic Party, isn't so sure that's going to happen.

"From what I've read of Keyes' statements, he's going to bring a lot of people to the polling place to make sure that he loses," Madigan said.

In Chicago on Wednesday, Keyes gave a 30-minute luncheon speech before the City Club of Chicago and faced questions about his recent suggestion that descendants of American slaves be exempt from paying federal income taxes for a generation or two as a form of reparation. That has raised the ire of Republican conservatives, but Keyes stood by the proposal as a way to stimulate economies in black communities.

"If somebody thinks that I'm going to back away from my belief that we can take this step to create an environment of opportunity for people who were deprived of that opportunity systematically ... let it be heard throughout this state: I will not budge," Keyes told an audience of about 300. "I will stand in defense of justice for them, and that is how it's going to be."

Conservative Republican Jack Roeser downplayed Keyes' remarks and said he'll help raise funds on behalf of the candidate. The two had had a private meeting earlier Wednesday to discuss their views on a range of issues.

"I think for thoughtful people and for real conservatives, they ought to put it behind them," Roeser said of the reparations issue. "(Keyes) is not going to hurt them there, but he is going to shock the black community into realizing that Democrats sure in hell haven't served the black people very well."

Obama has said he doesn't support slavery reparations. Both he and Keyes are African-American.

Keyes, a 54-year-old former presidential candidate, planned to attend Republican Day today at the state fair, an adviser said earlier this week.

## ILLINOIS LEADER

### Alan Keyes on Reparations

Tuesday, August 17, 2004

By The Leader-Chicago Bureau

CHICAGO -- Republican U.S. Senate candidate Alan Keyes has just released a statement clarifying what appeared to be a surprising position he took at a news conference yesterday.

"I think a cogent argument could be made for reparations in principle," Keyes is quoted as saying to reporters yesterday, according to the Chicago Sun-Times.

The Chicago Tribune expanded:

Keyes gave a brief tutorial on Roman history and said that in regard to reparations for slavery, the U.S. should do what the Romans did: "When a city had been devastated [in the Roman empire], for a certain length of time--a generation or two--they exempted the damaged city from taxation."

Keyes proposed that for a generation or two, African-Americans of slave heritage should be exempted from federal taxes--federal because slavery "was an egregious failure on the part of the federal establishment."

The response from conservatives was immediate. "Who downstate will now vote for Keyes?" wrote IllinoisLeader.com reader Randall Mead of Springfield today. "I certainly won't."

This afternoon, Keyes released the following statement, clarifying his position:

I have consistently opposed the effort to extort monetary damages from the American people. As I have argued in the past, the great sacrifices involved in the Civil War represented the requital in blood and treasure for the terrible injustices involved in slavery. In this form the so called "reparations" movement represents an insult to the historic commitment that many Americans made to the end of slavery, which included the sacrifice of their lives.

I have also consistently maintained that the history of slavery, racial segregation and discrimination did real damage to black Americans, left real and persistent material wounds in need of healing.

In various ways through the generations since the end of slavery, America has tried to address this objective fact, but without real success. This was at least in part the rationale for many elements of the Great Society programs of the sixties, and for the original and proper concept of affirmative action developed under Republican leadership during the Nixon years.

Unfortunately, the government-dominated approaches of the Great Society, which purported to heal and repair the legacy of historical damage, actually widened and deepened the wounds. They undermined the moral foundations of the black community and seriously corrupted the family structure and the incentives to work, savings, investment, and business ownership.

The idea I have often put forward to address this challenge involves a traditionally Republican, conservative and market-oriented approach: removing the tax burden from the black community for a generation or two in order to encourage business ownership, create jobs and support the development of strong economic foundations for working families.

This has the advantage of letting people help themselves, rather than pouring money into government bureaucracies that displace and discourage their own efforts. It takes no money from other citizens, while righting the historic imbalance that results from the truth that black slaves toiled for generations at a tax rate that was effectively 100 percent.

I have also made it clear that while I believe that the descendants of slaves would be helped by this period of tax relief, my firm goal and ultimate objective is to replace the income tax, and thereby free all Americans from this insidious form of tax slavery. It is well known that this is one of the key priorities of the Keyes campaign.

In response to Keyes' statement, conservative Jack Roeser of Family Taxpayers Network told IllinoisLeader.com, "I expect Keyes would say this is one of those interesting subjects to be talked about among people sharing ideas. Reparations is an impractical concept. Everybody in every category has been wronged in one or the other, and you cannot single one out."

Roeser continued, "Keyes is a man of ideas, and I expect he gets into discussions like this that are proper in their proper place, but that he would never vote for reparations. The problem with American politics is that people don't get into deep discussions."

## CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS

Keyes guarantees rocky ride for GOP  
Moderates, fund-raisers balk; future battles seen

August 16, 2004

By Greg Hinz

Party apart: Conservatives in the Illinois Republican Party "are ecstatic" over Alan Keyes' entry into the Senate contest, says a consultant. But his candidacy also has intensified infighting among party factions. AP/Wideworld photo

An Illinois Republican Party that desperately needs a shot in the arm may be getting a much bigger jolt than it's prepared for, courtesy of Alan Keyes, the party's fiery new Senate nominee.

The former presidential candidate turned Illinois pol already has displayed a knack for grabbing headlines and motivating the GOP's potent religious right here. Some party leaders, like U.S. House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert from Kendall County, argue that Mr. Keyes will grow on voters as they compare his positions with those of the Democratic nominee, state Sen. Barack Obama.

But, at the same time, signs of trouble are flashing.

Party moderates, who dislike Mr. Keyes' views on cultural issues, are threatening to sit out his race. "I haven't been asked" to support him, says U.S. Rep. Judy Biggert, R-Hinsdale, a leader among party moderates. "I disagree with him on a lot of issues. . . . I'd have to talk to him first before deciding."

Equally disaffected are key fund-raising figures in the business community, who consider Mr. Keyes weak on free-trade issues.

Should those groups continue to balk, a big Keyes loss this fall will constitute so many bombshells in a long-looming war for the soul of the party, with implications for the 2006 gubernatorial race and other contests, insiders say.

A big Keyes loss will "leave the moderates and the conservatives reaching for each other's throats," predicts top GOP campaign operative Glenn Hodas, who has worked for candidates in both camps. "Both sides are going to blame the other."

Of course, Mr. Keyes could surprise most observers and fare well. But that would only boost conservative efforts to clean house and change the party's direction

The potential for factional warfare within the state GOP have been building for decades. The party's long-term domination of both the Governor's Mansion and the General Assembly made it top-heavy, complacent and, according to conservatives, more concerned about making money than building an organization.

Unlike the Democrats, "We have not built a farm team in Illinois," says Michael Stokke, the top political aide to Mr. Hastert. "You have to bring people along."

#### Leadership breakdown

"The real story is the utter failure of Republican institutional leadership," says Chicago attorney Joseph Morris, a veteran conservative leader. "The royalists were in charge."

The leadership gap widened after the 2002 elections, when the party lost not only the governorship but its longtime House and Senate leaders. All the barely suppressed frustrations within the ranks finally bubbled over this spring when conservative Jack Ryan folded his Senate race amid racy disclosures from his divorce files.

Much of the GOP's conservative wing argued that Mr. Ryan had been unfairly forced out by moderates like state party Chairwoman Judy Baar Topinka. (Ms. Topinka, the state treasurer, was unavailable for comment.) When she failed to find a replacement candidate for Mr. Ryan despite a month of looking, the conservatives and Mr. Keyes made their move.

Conservatives "are ecstatic" over Mr. Keyes' selection, says GOP consultant and political Web site co-founder Brian Timpone. "The super hard core loves Keyes" and his focus on issues like abortion, gay marriage and abolishing the income tax.

State Senate Republican Leader Frank Watson hopes that street fervor will translate into gains this November.

But even some conservatives have reservations.

"Keyes is a little bit arrogant, and he comes across as uncivil," says Greg Blankenship, a low-tax Libertarian who directs the Illinois Policy Institute, a Springfield-based think tank. "I don't think that plays well."

#### Money issues

Moderates take that a step farther. "They got what they wanted. They can pay for his race," snarls one party leader, who asks not to be named.

DuPage County GOP Chairman Kirk Dillard pulls no punches. The state senator from Hinsdale says the selection of Mr. Keyes "does not help me" attract female and minority voters, and his trade views "are not good for the party's fund-raising apparatus."

Mr. Keyes replies that party unity counts. "Everybody benefits from a Keyes campaign," he told Crain's in a phone interview.

But money is a problem. Mr. Keyes will be able to count on anti-abortion activists such as Jack Roeser, president of Illinois Family Taxpayers Network, who says he'll contribute around \$100,000 to an independent committee that will help the pro-Keyes effort get started. And the party can give him some limited help. What Mr. Keyes really needs, however, is to tap the huge corporate network that generally helps Republicans. While Mr. Obama has his own problems

with recent U.S. trade policy, it's Mr. Keyes who needs corporate help to raise the at least \$3 million he'll need to mount a credible race.

#### Trade matters

"I'm not a mindless free-trader," says Mr. Keyes, who has harshly criticized the North American Free Trade Agreement, calls U.S. involvement in the World Trade Organization "unconstitutional," proposes higher tariffs and, like Mr. Obama, would have voted against giving the president "fast track" authority to negotiate more trade deals. "I'm not against trade," he says, but, "the free traders have to listen when people tell them that this is hurting (working-class Americans)."

Gerald Roper, president and CEO of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, says such views "could be a deal-breaker for him" with potential business donors. Michael Lynch, treasurer of the political action committee at Glenview-based Illinois Tool Works Inc., says his panel is still weighing lots of factors but concedes a call for higher tariffs "would give me some heartburn."

However that plays out, the GOP is scheduled to replace Ms. Topinka as state chairwoman shortly after the November vote, and then will have to gear up for the 2006 gubernatorial contest.

"Are (moderates) going to back Obama?" asks Patrick O'Malley, a conservative who ran for governor in 2002 and plans to do so again in 2006. "There's a restructuring going on in the Republican Party now. No one controls it."

## DAILY HERALD

New ad to criticize Obama's votes on crime, abortion

By Eric Krol Daily Herald Political Writer

Posted Tuesday, October 12, 2004

As the two major-party U.S. Senate candidates prepare to debate tonight, a new ad attacking Democratic hopeful Barack Obama for being too liberal is set to make its debut.

The ad, titled "What Do We Really Know About Barack Obama?" is the work of Empower Illinois, an independent 527 group allowed under the recent federal campaign finance reform law.

Obama and Republican opponent Alan Keyes are scheduled to debate at 7 p.m. tonight at the Old State Capitol in Springfield. It can be heard on WBBM 780-AM.

The 15-second ad, which will air this week on radio in the Chicago area and on TV in Springfield, calls into question three Obama votes during his career as a state senator.

The ad criticizes Obama for votes on tougher sentences for criminals, abortion and sex education.

Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs said the argument that Obama is soft on crime doesn't hold any water, pointing out Obama's been endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police.

"This is just a ridiculous attempt to try to scare people with fake information," Gibbs said.

Obama, who had raised more than \$10 million as of June 30 and will file an updated finance report this week, has yet to air TV ads in the Chicago area during the fall campaign.

His campaign has TV ads running downstate and Obama has been busy raising cash for other Democratic candidates across the country.

Empower Illinois and its separate media fund are run by Jeff Davis, who worked for then-Republican Senate nominee Jack Ryan until he left the race. One of Empower Illinois' biggest donors is Jack Roeser, a Carpentersville businessman who started the conservative Family Taxpayers Network.

By law, Keyes' campaign cannot have anything to do with Empower Illinois' activities. The ad, however, does include criticisms that Keyes has lobbed at Obama while campaigning.