

Now or Never PAC Fact Check “Better Off?” September 30, 2012

Ad Claims	Fact Check
<p>Duckworth: “I think the people in this district and especially businesses are better off” GFX: Tammy Duckworth Citation: Fox TV, 9/14/12</p>	
<p>Narrator: “Better off? Come on Tammy. Hardworking families and businesses are struggling. GFX: Better Off? Families and businesses struggling</p>	<p>FACT: Taxes on Middle Class Families and Small Businesses Have been Cut. In September, 2012 <i>PolitiFact</i> rated President Obama’s statement that he had cut taxes for middle class families. In their report, <i>PolitiFact</i> rated the claim mostly true and stated, “Obama has signed off on two major tax cuts for middle-class families: the Making Work Pay tax credit that was part of the economic stimulus of 2009 and a temporary reduction in Social Security payroll taxes that went into effect in 2011. As part of the stimulus, formally known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, single workers collected a \$400 tax credit, and working couples got \$800. The credit didn’t come in the form of a check; it worked out so that most workers had about \$400 less in federal income taxes withheld from their paychecks spread out over the entire year. Most workers received a tax cut under that plan, with the exception of some high earners. The tax cuts phased out for couples who make more than \$250,000 or a single person making over \$200,000, according to an analysis from the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center.” The report continued, “Obama also has passed an array of tax cuts for small businesses. Eight of them were included in the stimulus, the Affordable Care Act (also known as the health care law), and the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act (also known as the HIRE Act). Among the cuts were the exclusion of up to 75 percent of capital gains on key small business investments; a tax credit for the cost of health insurance for small business employees and new tax credits for hiring Americans out of work for at least two months. Another eight cuts came via the Small Business Jobs Act, signed by Obama in September of 2010. These included: adding deductions for business cell phone use;</p>

	<p>creating a new deduction for health care costs for the self-employed; allowing greater deductions for business start-up expenses; eliminating taxes on all capital gains from key small business investments, and raising the small business expense limit to \$500,000. Three months later, the president signed a tax bill that raised the expense limit to 100 percent of small business new investments until the end of 2011. It also extended the elimination of capital gains taxes for small business investments through the end of 2012.” The claim was only rated “Mostly True” because the President’s statement lacked additional context. [<i>PolitiFact</i>, 9/7/12]</p>
<p>Narrator: “Better off? GFX: Better Off?”</p>	
<p>Narrator: “Duckworth supported Governor Blagojevich’s budget that increased taxes and spending by billions.” GFX: The Pantagraph: Duckworth: “It is so important to me that the Governor’s budget get passed.” Citation: The Pantagraph, 3/25/07</p>	<p>FALSE CITATION: Now or Never PAC’s Ad Cites Incorrect <i>Pantagraph</i> Article. According to the ad’s citation, Duckworth’s support for the governor’s budget was expressed in a March 25, 2007 article. However, according to Nexis Lexis database, her statement: “It is so important to me that the governor’s budget get passed” was actually reported by the Pantagraph on April 1, 2007. [<i>Pantagraph</i>, 4/1/07]</p> <p>MISLEADING: Ad Took Duckworth Statement Out of Context--Her Statement of Support in this Case was Based on VA Jobs. On April 1, 2007 Duckworth’s responses to a question and answer session with the <i>Pantagraph</i> were published. When asked about veterans’ homes, she stated “They are well run but they are understaffed. It is so important to me that the governor’s budget get passed because there is an additional 104 positions for staff that will go out to my four veterans’ homes.” [<i>Pantagraph</i>, 4/1/07]</p> <p>Both articles are included at end of fact check.</p>
<p>Narrator: “As a Blago appointee, an audit found Duckworth was guilty of misusing or misreporting \$4 million of taxpayer money.” GFX: Tammy Duckworth: Blagojevich Appointee, Guilty of Misreporting Taxpayer Money. Office of the Auditor General</p>	<p>FACT: IDVA Did Not “Misuse” \$4 Million in Taxpayer Money. According to the Illinois Auditor General’s FY 2006-FY 2008 audit of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, the auditors found that “The Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs did not report certain</p>

	<p>financial information to the Office of the Comptroller through the financial reporting process. During FY 2008 the Department received a pass through grant with the Capital Development Board of \$4,383,464 for expenditures incurred for the construction improvements to the Department's LaSalle Veterans' Home in accordance with the State Homes Construction Program. However, the Department failed to report this amount from the federal government in its FY 08 Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) package for the General Revenue (001) Fund." At no point does the audit state or in any way suggest the funds were misused, but rather that the grant was "inadvertently omitted" from a report prepared by staff member who had not previously completed the reporting process. [Illinois Auditor General, DVA FY 08 Full Report, accessed 9/30/12]</p>
<p>Narrator: "Tammy Duckworth: A Blagojevich pal who supports higher taxes and wasteful spending." GFX: Tammy Duckworth: Supports Higher Taxes and Wasteful Spending</p>	<p>FALSE: Duckworth Supports Lower Taxes and an End to Wasteful Spending. On her campaign website, Duckworth has stated her support for lowering taxes for middle class families and ending wasteful spending practices. She wrote, "We must let the Bush era tax breaks for the super wealthy expire and ensure that multinational conglomerate corporations, many of which paid no federal income taxes last year, pay their fair share." She continued, "We need to end subsidies to the oil and gas industry, as well as certain wasteful agricultural subsidies." [Tammy Duckworth for Congress, accessed 9/30/12]</p>
<p>Narrator: "Maybe Tammy's better off but we aren't." GFX: Better Off? Paid for by Now or Never PAC (www.nowpac.com) and not authorized by any candidate or candidates committee. Now or Never PAC is responsible for the content of this advertising.</p>	

The Pantagraph (Bloomington, Illinois)

April 01, 2007 Sunday

Duckworth: A 'perfect storm' builds on vets care

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LENGTH: 780 words

SPRINGFIELD - Gov. Rod Blagojevich appointed Tammy Duckworth as director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs in November. The 38-year-old Hoffman Estates resident was named to the position after she made an unsuccessful bid to replace retiring U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde in Congress. Duckworth is a former Army helicopter pilot who lost her legs after an attack in Iraq. Her husband, Brian Bowsbey, leaves with his National Guard unit for a stint in Kuwait and Iraq on Thursday.

In her \$102,000-per-year job, she oversees an agency that handles benefits, education and state-operated nursing home care for military veterans and their families. Last week she was in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Springfield and Bloomington. We caught up with her to find out how things are going in her first few months on the job:

Q. What are your goals in your new position?

A. I'm very concerned that after this war is over in Iraq and Afghanistan that people will lose interest and we will no longer have the groundswell of support for veterans and programs to support our veterans. At the same time, our Vietnam vets are entering the health care system. They are all reaching their mid-60s.

I'm really trying to prepare us to be able to handle a perfect storm of two different booms of populations of veterans.

Q. Any specifics for the younger veterans?

A. I certainly want to implement new post-traumatic stress disorder programs in Illinois because I don't think there is adequate attention or funding being paid to it at the national level.

Q. What about the older veterans?

A. I want to work on getting a new home for veterans opened up in Chicago. I think a 200-bed facility in Chicago is vital because almost a third of our veterans are from the Chicago area and yet we don't have any facility there for them.

Q. Is that something on tap for this year?

A. It's further down the road. We need to be responsible about how we fund it.

Q. You testified last week on some of the issues regarding the conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

A. Senator Obama was the one who invited me to speak in 2005 when I was still a patient at Walter Reed, on the same issue. They invited me back two years later to follow up.

Q. Have you toured the existing Illinois veterans homes?

A. I have and I plan on going back to all of them on a quarterly basis.

Q. What were your impressions?

A. They are well run but they are understaffed. It is so important to me that the governor's budget get passed because there is an additional 104 positions for staff that will go out to my four veterans' homes.

Q. Were the buildings in good condition?

A. Our Quincy home is the oldest home we have. It was actually built to support our veterans of the Civil War. It needs work. We're constantly spending money to update it. I just had a water main break in Manteno. I certainly have issues trying to keep maintenance up on them. The LaSalle home, we're building an 80-bed expansion on that.

Q. How does your husband's deployment play into what you're doing?

A. I almost think it's harder to be the family that gets left behind than the one who is going off to war. When you're going off to war, you're just focused on doing your job. When you're left behind you're worried about your loved one. The shoe is on the other foot, no pun intended. I think it's going to help me bring a new sensitivity to what the families are going through back here. I'll be struggling with my own things that I'll have to cope with. There are husbands who mow the lawn and do the maintenance around the house. I probably rely on my husband to do a lot more of that now that I am disabled.

Q. What are your future plans? You've been mentioned as a potential Cabinet appointee if a Democrat wins the White House. Will you run for Congress again?

A. I really feel I have a commitment and a debt to the men who carried me out of Iraq. I must live every day in honor of that sacrifice. I know that sounds really corny. But I think back to what they went through because they thought I was dead. Every day, this is bonus time, I'm going to work as hard as I can and annoy as many people as I need to in order to work for vets. As for Congress, I'll be honest and say I haven't ruled it out.

The Pantagraph (Bloomington, Illinois)

March 25, 2007 Sunday

Governor explains where his computer skills are @

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SECTION: OPINION; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 740 words

During a press conference in Chicago last week, Gov. Rod Blagojevich went a bit off script to tell reporters how he was learning how to send messages using a Blackberry.

If you're not familiar with the Blackberry, don't worry: It was obvious our governor wasn't either. Essentially, the thing is a cell phone capable of sending e-mail.

According to reports, the governor said he had to ask a staffer what the @ symbol - also known as an ampersat - stood for.

In other words, it would appear our governor has not spent a lot of time e-mailing things.

We mention all this because the revelation came out the same day the governor put out a press release touting a new Web site as part of the state's observance of Lincoln's 200th birthday.

He can tell you how to access the Web site, just don't ask him to do it himself.

The rift widens

Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn came out last week against the governor's controversial tax overhaul, saying higher taxes on businesses will be passed along to consumers.

The governor's not-so-loyal running mate said he hadn't talked directly to the governor about his opposition.

We're assuming they didn't e-mail each other either.

The PR campaign rolls on

Lucky for him, the governor's staff isn't quite so technologically illiterate.

As part of Blagojevich's campaign-style push to boost state spending on health care and education, members of his staff are helping citizens write letters to newspapers across the state expressing their support for his plan.

The staff members are apparently providing letter writers a template to help them make sure the governor's talking points are included in the letters.

So, if you see a letter that starts out like this, you'll know it didn't come from the person who wrote it, but from someone in the governor's office.

"I view healthcare as a basic human right. Unfortunately, well over 1 million Illinoisans don't have that right and when the uninsured go to the emergency room for something that could have been prevented, everyone pays the price."

You'll remember that the letter-writing campaign is just one element of a multi-pronged public relations battle being waged by the governor.

He's appearing in television advertisements, he's spent \$110,000 of taxpayer money to send letters to small businesses and he's tried to enlist economic development officials to do dubious surveys aimed at gauging interest in the plan.

Last week saw him dispatch top agency officials to cities and towns across the state in an effort to drum up support for the proposal.

Among them was Tammy Duckworth, the new director of the state's Department of Veterans Affairs, who had to shift her attention away from her regular job of watching over the state's growing population of veterans in order to promote the governor's tax hike.

Hopefully Duckworth had a Blackberry with her to keep in touch with her office.

He said it

"Your lieutenant governor, your partner, is out there proposing a different plan? That is just amazing," said state Sen. Larry Bomke, R-Springfield, in response to Quinn's public dispute with Blagojevich over the governor's tax hike plan.

A penny not earned

A state audit released last week revealed that the Illinois Department of Human Services has been falling short in its efforts to determine whether residents in its mental health facilities were eligible for private insurance or federal assistance.

Auditors put the potential loss of revenue at \$6 million.

In response to the auditor's findings, the agency went after the unbilled accounts and claimed it had come up with \$2.6 million.

While that's an improvement, the findings show the state is still leaving \$3.4 million on the table.

Throwback note

A top aide to former Gov. George Ryan has landed a new job.

Dave Urbanek, who served as the convicted governor's mouthpiece during his years as governor and secretary of state, has left state government to take a job as a spokesman at MacMurray College in Jacksonville.

Erin Go Bragh

House Speaker Michael Madigan recently took a break from the action during a busy legislative week in Springfield and jetted overseas to the Emerald Isle.

While in Dublin, reports indicate the Chicago Democrat had a chance to listen to a speech by U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald.