

OFFICE OF
GENERAL COUNSEL

2018 APR 23 AM 11:55

**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION**

Rick Scott
PO Box 3791
Tallahassee, FL 32315;

Rick Scott for Florida
PO Box 3791
Tallahassee, FL 32315; and

MUR No. 7370

New Republican PAC and Mori Hosseini, Treasurer
224 E. 6th Ave.
Tallahassee, FL 32303

COMPLAINT

This Complaint is filed pursuant to 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(1) against Rick Scott, Rick Scott for Florida, New Republican PAC, and Mori Hosseini, Treasurer (collectively, "Respondents") for multiple violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended (the "Act"). In short, Scott appears to be using the super PAC, New Republican PAC, of which he is the chair, to raise and spend soft money to support his candidacy for U.S. Senate.

I. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

New Republican PAC (the "Committee") is an independent-expenditure only PAC that is registered with the Federal Election Commission. Though the Committee first registered in 2013, by late 2016/early 2017, its fundraising and spending had ground to a halt. In May 2017, Florida Governor and now-candidate for United States Senate Rick Scott was made the PAC's chair.¹ According to press reports and the PAC's filings with the Commission, Scott "revived" the PAC, raising almost \$1.2 million for the PAC in 2017, and \$275,000 in the first month of Scott's leadership alone.² The PAC received large donations from donors who typically give in connection with Florida elections, not federal ones. This has included contributions from businesses that benefited under the Scott administration, including \$100,000 from The Villages,

¹ New Republican PAC, Press Release: Governor Scott to Chair "New Republican" Federal Super PAC (May 11, 2017), *available at* <https://newrepublican.org/governor-scott-chair-new-republican-federal-super-pac/>. A copy of the press release is attached as Exhibit A.

² Marc Caputo and Matt Dixon, Scott takes big step toward Florida Senate challenge, *Politico* (Feb. 1, 2018), *available at* <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/01/rick-scott-florida-senate-bill-nelson-midterms-381262>. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit B.

a retirement community; \$50,000 from MCNA, a dental benefits administrator; and \$50,000 from Gulf Coast Health Care, a nursing home company.³

Under Scott's watch, the PAC hired Scott's core team of consultants from his prior gubernatorial campaigns. The PAC hired Scott's former chief of staff and campaign manager, Melissa Stone, as executive director.⁴ In 2017 alone, the PAC has paid Stone's firm, Cavalry Strategies LLC, the PAC's largest vendor, \$61,595.72, for "Political Strategy Consulting" and "Travel." It retained Scott's longtime fundraiser, Deborah Aleksander, and paid her firm \$18,750 in 2017 alone.⁵ And it has paid On Message, the firm of long-time Scott consultant Curt Anderson, \$47,921.00 in 2017 alone.⁶ The committee's treasurer is Meri Hosseini, a "top adviser" to Melissa Stone" who Scott appointed to the University of Florida Board of Trustees in 2016.⁷

Though Scott only formally declared his candidacy on April 9, 2018,⁸ he has long been preparing to run for the U.S. Senate. When Scott met with donors to raise funds for the PAC, it was reported that Scott was displaying "confidence" about a Senate run and "talked up his good polling numbers."⁹ In early March, Scott advisors and others reported to the press that they thought a Senate announcement was imminent.¹⁰ And taking the helm of the Committee has been one step Scott has taken towards that end. As far back as May 2017, political strategists from both parties saw the Committee as a vehicle for Scott to raise money in anticipation of his

³ *Id.*

⁴ Press Release, Exhibit A. Data collected from the Commission's website is attached as Exhibit C.

⁵ *Politico* (Feb. 1, 2018), Exhibit B. Data collected from the Commission's website is attached as Exhibit D.

⁶ *Politico* (Feb. 1, 2018), Exhibit B. Data collected from the Commission's website is attached as Exhibit E.

⁷ Matt Dixon and Marc Caputo, Trump's New Year's resolution: Getting Scott to run for Senate in Florida, *Politico* (Dec. 31, 2017), available at <https://www.politico.com/states/florida/story/2017/12/31/scott-to-meet-dine-with-trump-at-mar-a-lago-165109>. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit F.

⁸ See Maegan Vazquez and Eric Bradner, Florida Gov. Rick Scott formally announces run for Senate, challenging Bill Nelson, CNN (April 9, 2018), available at <https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/09/politics/rick-scott-running-senator/index.html>. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit G.

⁹ *Politico* (Feb. 1, 2018), Exhibit B.

¹⁰ Sean Sullivan, Florida Gov. Rick Scott to put in face time with GOP donors ahead of possible Senate run, *Washington Post* (March 3, 2018), available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/03/03/florida-gov-rick-scott-to-put-in-face-time-with-gop-donors-ahead-of-possible-senate-run/?utm_term=.df119126c096. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit H.

Senate candidacy.¹¹ And two Republican officials told the *New York Times* that Scott's advisors' work on the PAC was "an indication that he intends to challenge Senator Bill Nelson."¹²

On April 9, 2018, the same day that Scott declared his candidacy for Senate, the Committee revamped its website and mission. Though the PAC's website previously indicated that its purpose was to support President Trump, Committee transformed overnight into "an Independent Expenditure Only PAC (i.e., a Super PAC) focused on the election of Rick Scott in the race for Florida United States Senate."¹³ The Committee's website now is solely focused on supporting Scott, containing pages such as "About Rick," and pages detailing Scott's position on various issues. It does not appear as if Scott has relinquished his role as Chair of the Committee since declaring his federal candidacy.

II. LEGAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

A. Scott May Have Used Soft Money to Support His Senate Candidacy

Under the Act, a "candidate is "an individual who seeks nomination for election, or election, to Federal office" who "has received contributions aggregating in excess of \$5,000 or has made expenditures aggregating in excess of \$5,000" or has "given his or her consent to another person to receive contributions or make expenditures on behalf of such individual ... in excess of \$5,000."¹⁴ Commission rules provide for a limited exception to this rule: under the "testing the waters" exception, an individual may raise and spend funds "solely for the purpose of determining whether an individual should become a candidate."¹⁵ However, "[o]nly funds permissible under the Act may be used for such activities."¹⁶

It appears as if Scott has violated this prohibition by using the Committee to support his federal candidacy. Even though he did not declare his federal candidacy until April 9, he has been using the Committee to advance his election. Since May 2017, he has used the Committee to pay his core team of consultants, in anticipation of his federal candidacy. Press reports indicate that he

¹¹ Gary Rohrer, Gov. Scott forms new PAC ahead of likely U.S. Senate run, *Orlando Sentinel* (May 22, 2017), available at <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/politics/political-pulse/os-gov-scott-political-committee-20170518-story.html>. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit I.

¹² Jonathan Martin, Trump Should Get Behind Romney's Candidacy, McConnell Says, *New York Times* (Feb. 17, 2018), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/17/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-midterms.html>. A copy of the article is attached as Exhibit J.

¹³ New Republican PAC Website, Who We Are, at <https://newrepublican.org/who-we-are/> (last visited April 9, 2018). A copy of this website is attached as Exhibit K.

¹⁴ 52 U.S.C. § 30101(2).

¹⁵ 11 C.F.R. §§ 110.72(a), 110.131(a).

¹⁶ *Id.*

was using the Committee to promote his candidacy, discussing his plans with donors at Committee fundraising events.¹⁷ And while Scott has been preparing for a Senate bid for months, he does not appear to have registered a 527 organization to pay for any testing-the-waters expenses.

Most significantly, the very same day that Scott declared his federal candidacy, the Committee revamped its website, suddenly transforming itself from a committee dedicated to supporting President Trump to one dedicated to supporting Scott. This timing cannot be mere coincidence; instead, Scott and the Committee plainly prearranged this transition. Thus it appears as if Scott consented to the Committee spending funds on behalf of his candidacy, triggering candidacy for Scott on a date earlier than the one he declared. But regardless of when he triggered candidacy, it appears as if he has been using the Committee to improperly pay for expenses associated with his exploratory activities and his candidacy for Senate.

B. The Committee Has Raised and Spent Soft Money in Violation of the Act

Regardless of whether the Committee aided Scott's campaign before he formally declared his candidacy, now that Scott is a federal candidate, the Committee is prohibited from raising or spending funds outside of the federal limits in connection with any federal election. The Act's soft money prohibition prohibits not only candidates, but entities that have been "directly or indirectly established, financed, maintained or controlled" by a federal candidates, from soliciting, receiving, directing, transferring, or spending funds in connection with an election that fall outside of the federal limits and source prohibitions.¹⁸ Since May 2017, the Committee has unquestionably been controlled by Scott; by all accounts, he has controlled the committee's hiring and firing, installing his own campaign advisors into the key roles of the Committee, and has been responsible for raising the bulk of the Committee's funds.¹⁹ Accordingly, the Committee may not spend funds that were raised in excess of the limits or from federally impermissible sources, nor may it raise such funds. Right now, the Committee is actively soliciting funds in unlimited amounts from individuals and corporations, in clear violation of the Act.²⁰

This analysis is not changed by the fact that Scott was not a federal candidate when he first took over as Chair of the Committee. In past advisory opinions addressing nonfederal committees of newly elected federal officeholders, the FEC has treated those committees as "established" by

¹⁷ See *Politico* (Feb. 1, 2018), Exhibit B; www.fec.gov.

¹⁸ 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e).

¹⁹ See 11 C.F.R. 300.2(c)(2)(ii), (viii).

²⁰ See New Republican PAC Website, Donation Page at https://secure.anedot.com/new-republican/new_rep_website ("New Republican PAC may accept unlimited contributions from individuals, corporations, and other business entities"). A copy of this web page is attached as Exhibit L.

federal candidates for purposes of the soft money ban.²¹ Moreover, Commission rules recognize that permitting an individual to establish an organization pre-candidacy would permit circumvention of the Act, and prohibit this very conduct. Such an organization must sever all ties with the federal candidate or officeholder for two full years before the organization may raise or spend soft money.²²

Accordingly, even if the Commission concludes that Scott did not use the Committee to support his federal candidacy, it must find that, to the extent that the Committee has raised and spent nonfederal funds after Scott became a candidate date, it has violated the Act.

III. CONCLUSION

As described above, there is compelling evidence that Rick Scott has violated the Act by raising and spending soft money to advance his federal candidacy. The Commission should investigate this matter promptly to determine whether such a violation occurred. If it does, the Commission must find reason to believe that Respondents have violated the Act, impose the maximum civil penalty permitted by law, enjoin respondents from any and all future violations, and impose such additional remedies as it finds necessary and appropriate.

Respectfully Submitted,



End Citizens United by,
Matt Burgess
P.O. Box 66005
Washington, DC 20035

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of April, 2018



Notary Public



²¹ Adv. Op. 2009-06 (Risch); Adv. Op. 2007-01 (McCaskill).

²² 11 C.F.R. § 300.2(c)(4)(ii).

END CITIZENS UNITED

DEMOCRATS FIGHTING FOR REFORM

MUR # 1370

April 17, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find the referenced exhibits that End Citizens United's complaint against Rick Scott for Senate mentions. A copy of the original complaint is included in here for reference.

-End Citizens United

OFFICE OF
GENERAL COUNSEL

2018 APR 23 AM 11:55

202.798.5253

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P.O. Box 66005 • Washington, DC 20035

EXHIBIT A

NewRepublican.org: Governor Scott to Chair “New Republican” Federal Super PAC

Press Release

5/11/2017

Today, Florida Governor Rick Scott announced that he will chair the Super PAC NewRepublican.org, launching a new national effort to change and rebrand the way the Republican Party approaches the challenges of the future.

Governor Scott said, “New Republican’s goal is to make the Republican Party Great Again. Both political parties are hopelessly stuck in WWI style trench warfare. Both political parties are failing us. There is nothing new, it’s the same thing every day – lob some grenades over the ditch and then brace for incoming. The goal of New Republican is to break out of this trench warfare. We have to get rid of all our tired old political jargon and clichés.

“New Republican will market ‘open versus closed’ systems and ‘new versus old’ policies. We will make it clear that Republicans favor an open economy that is free to grow versus a closed and regulated government economy that stagnates. We favor an open education system that provides choices as opposed to a closed antiquated government run system that is one size fits all. We favor an open health care system that stimulates innovation versus a closed government run system. We favor organic bottom-up solutions to problems, the Democrats favor top-down big government solutions to every problem. We favor empowering people at the local level, the Democrats favor federal government decisions made in Washington.”

New Republican was founded by Republican strategist and advertising legend Alex Castellanos a few years ago. Castellanos will serve as the Super PAC’s senior advisor. The Governor also announced that his former chief of staff and 2014 reelection campaign manager, Melissa Stone, will serve as the executive director of New Republican. Taylor Teepell, who has previously served in Governor Scott’s administration and the administrations of Miss. Governor Haley Barbour and La. Governor Bobby Jindal, will serve as the PAC’s finance director.

“Donald Trump’s election was a complete shock to the system in Washington,” Governor Scott said. “This is the perfect opportunity to do things differently. The President is a friend of mine. I’ve known him for about 20 years. I am committed to helping him as he fights against the political machine and attempts to force real change upon a political system and a city that hates change. Donald Trump needs a Republican Party that supports him with ideas that will make American Great, and ideas that the American people want. New Republican will be an idea generator.”

Visit NewRepublican.org for more information and to view the some of the TV and digital advertising the PAC is prepared to launch in the coming months.

EXHIBIT B

Politico: Scott takes big step toward Florida Senate challenge

By Marc Caputo and Matt Dixon

2/01/2018

In the clearest sign he's ready to challenge Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson, Florida Gov. Rick Scott has raised more than \$1.1 million for a super PAC he recently revived and stocked it with top consultants from his previous campaigns. Privately, he's talked up his good polling numbers, according to several supporters who have spoken to Scott recently.

A Scott bid would complicate Democratic hopes of winning back the Senate next year — of the 10 Democrats up for reelection in states carried by President Donald Trump, Nelson has been considered one of the most vulnerable.

The term-limited governor said Tuesday that he'll make up his mind about the race after the March 9 end of his last regular 60-day legislative session as governor. Scott won't say which way he's leaning, but some of those familiar with the governor's thinking peg the likelihood of him running between 80 and 95 percent.

"In my opinion, the governor is highly likely to make this race. He has plenty of time to make a final decision," said William Rubin, a top Tallahassee lobbyist who became personal friends with the governor decades ago when he represented Scott's hospital company, Columbia/HCA.

"The Florida economy is good," Rubin said, "and people are feeling good about the direction of our state under his leadership."

Rubin won't discuss the specifics of his private conversations with Scott, but others who have spoken to the governor in confidence say he has delivered the same message about his potential prospects as a Senate candidate. They say he references poll numbers that show his job approval ratings are promising, more Florida voters than not think the state is on the right track and he's essentially tied with the incumbent Nelson in public opinion surveys when the two are matched up.

"Rick is really his best consultant," said one top Florida campaign contributor who spoke with Scott about his interest in running against Nelson. "He won't come out and say he's running, and there's still a chance he won't. But you can tell by his body language and everything he's doing that he's getting ready."

When asked what are the chances of a Scott Senate bid, the contributor said "85 percent." Another said the chances were 95 percent.

The governor has been displaying this confidence to an increasing number of new donors this year to his New Republican PAC, which he started to lead as chairman in May. The federal PAC, which had been founded in 2013, was rebranded under Scott as a pro-Trump committee and began gobbling up checks from donors who typically give to Florida candidates for state offices, not federal ones.

In the first month under Scott, the federal committee pulled in more than \$275,000 in donations, many from interests that fared well in the 2017 spring legislative session. In the final six months of the year, the committee hauled in more than \$848,000, according to campaign finance reports the committee filed Wednesday.

Among the committee's top donors: The Villages, a central Florida retirement community that has long been a big state GOP donor (\$100,000); MCNA, a dental-benefits administrator that won a carve out from the state's Medicaid program during the 2016 session (\$50,000); and Gulf Coast Health Care, a Pensacola-based company that owns 35 nursing homes across the state. The company was on the winning end of a contentious nursing home fight last session. It gave \$50,000.

Since May, Scott has hired Virginia-based fundraising firm Drucker Lawhon, a firm whose biggest client this cycle has been a joint fundraising committee led by Louisiana Republican Rep. Steve Scalise. The super PAC paid the firm more than \$20,000 over the last reporting period, according to Federal Election Commission records. During that same reporting period Traction Capital, the firm founded by committee finance director Taylor Teepell, also brought in nearly \$32,000 from July to December 2017.

Scott also brought on the prominent Republican law firm Holtzman Vogel Josefiak Torchinsky, whose many national clients include the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee. The NRSC, which already has staff in Florida, is chaired by Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, who shares the same political consulting firm — OnMessage Inc — with Scott and his federal super PAC.

Other Scott insiders working for New Republican PAC include his longtime fundraiser, Deborah Aleksander, and his former chief of staff and 2014 campaign manager Melissa Stone.

OnMessage's founder, Curt Anderson, has steadfastly refused to discuss what the governor plans to do, in part because he said the decision is up to Scott and he'll make the call on his own time.

Anderson has acknowledged that Scott could face political headwinds in this midterm election that he hadn't experienced before. In 2010 and 2014 when Scott ran for governor and then reelection, voters punished the party in power in the White House — Democrats. But even though those were anti-Democratic years, Scott never won a majority of the vote in his tight victories. This year, a Republican sits in the White House — a president with whom he has close ties — and Trump's approval ratings are relatively poor.

Anderson said Scott has the record and the resources to weather those forces.

"The further down the ballot you are, the more in danger you are of a wave washing you out to sea. But in Senate and governors races, you usually spend enough money to create your own weather patterns," Anderson said in a previous interview.

Democrats, Anderson pointed out, also have struggled at the polls in recent Florida midterms, regardless of what party controls the White House. The only Democrat who has bucked that trend: Nelson, a three-term senator.

"If you have a Scott-Nelson race, it will turn on who has a better record and a better campaign," Anderson said.

Scott has delivered the same message to donors and other political figures.

At the same time he leads the federal New Republican PAC, Scott has been raising and spending money for and from a state-level political committee called Let's Get to Work.

In total, Scott raised more than \$4.9 million in 2017 through the state and federal political committees he runs.

Federal law would prohibit Scott from being an announced federal candidate who coordinates with either his state or federal committees, which can take unlimited corporate money that Senate candidates aren't permitted to receive.

So if Scott announces for U.S. Senate, his state political committee can't be used to further his candidacy. The federal PAC, however, can under specific circumstances.

As a result of the potential limitations, Scott has begun to de-emphasize fundraising for the state-based Let's Get to Work while spending more and more money from it.

At the end of last year, Scott used the state committee to fund \$2 million worth of TV ads. And over the past six months of 2017, the state committee raised \$380,002 while the federal-level super PAC brought in \$848,416. The one-two fundraising punch underscores why he is such a dangerous candidate at any level: the governor can raise coin.

In addition to getting donors to pony up, Scott is a multimillionaire who, insiders say, would be ready to spend what it takes to win. In his two previous elections, he spent about \$86 million of his own money.

In Washington, one top Republican connected to Senate campaigns said the party knew this would be a tough year and they've pegged all their hopes on Scott in Florida.

"It's been a Rick Scott-or-bust race from the beginning," the Republican said. "We know we just need to let him take his time, but we feel confident he'll run."

At this point, Republicans need Scott to run to have a shot at beating Nelson. Barring an unknown dream candidate with unlimited resources, any other Republican would probably lose to Nelson, said Brian Ballard, a top lobbyist and fundraiser.

"If Scott doesn't run, I think we'll lose that seat," Ballard said. "It's too late now."

EXHIBIT C

FEC

New Republican PAC, Disbursements to Cavalry Strategies, 2017-2018

Accessed 4/06/2018

Disbursements

[Export](#)

Viewing about 11 filtered results for:

[Clear all filters](#)

Data type: processed

NEW REPUBLICAN PAC (C00544544) x

01/01/2017 -

04/06/2018

"cavalry strategies" x

Spender	Recipient	State	Description	Disbursement date	Amount	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	12/04/2017	\$10,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	11/06/2017	\$7,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	TRAVEL	09/24/2017	\$180.43	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	09/24/2017	\$7,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	08/28/2017	\$7,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	TRAVEL	07/19/2017	\$319.66	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	07/19/2017	\$7,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	TRAVEL	06/21/2017	\$2,584.98	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	06/21/2017	\$7,000.00	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	TRAVEL	05/24/2017	\$6,510.65	▶
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	CAVALRY STRATEGIES LLC	FL	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	05/24/2017	\$7,000.00	▶

EXHIBIT D

FEC

New Republican PAC, Year-End 2017 Amendment 1 filing, Page 63

Accessed 4/06/2018

Image# 201802239095523480

SCHEDULE B (FEC Form 3X) ITEMIZED DISBURSEMENTS

Use separate schedule(s)
for each category of the
Detailed Summary Page

FOR LINE NUMBER:
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PAGE 63 OF 81

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Any information copied from such Reports and Statements may not be sold or used by any person for the purpose of soliciting contributions or for commercial purposes, other than using the name and address of any political committee to solicit contributions from such committee.

NAME OF COMMITTEE (In Full)

NEW REPUBLICAN PAC

Full Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)

A. DEBORAH ALEKSANDER LLC

Mailing Address 3583 MOSSY CREEK LANE

City
TALLAHASSEEState
FLZip Code
32311Purpose of Disbursement
FUNDRAISING CONSULTING

Candidate Name

Category/
Type

Office Sought:

☐ House
☐ Senate
☐ President

Disbursement For:

☐ Primary ☐ General
☐ Other (specify) ▼

State:

District:

Date of Disbursement

MM	DD	YYYY
11	26	2017

FEC Identification Number

C

Transaction ID : 2072

Amount of Each Disbursement this Period

18750.00

☐ Memo Item


EXHIBIT E

FEC

New Republican PAC, Disbursements to OnMessage Inc., 2017-2018

Accessed 4/06/2018

Disbursements

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Data type: processed
 NEW REPUBLICAN PAC (C00544544) x
 01/01/2017 - 04/06/2018
 "onmessage" x

Spender	Recipient	State	Description	Disbursement date ▼	Amount	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	12/04/2017	\$5,000.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	WEB ADVERTISING	11/27/2017	\$10,000.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	11/06/2017	\$5,000.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	10/20/2017	\$10,049.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	WEB ADVERTISING	10/13/2017	\$5,000.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	08/13/2017	\$7,872.00	
NEW REPUBLICAN PAC	ONMESSAGE INC.	MD	POLITICAL STRATEGY CONSULTING	08/01/2017	\$5,000.00	

EXHIBIT F

Politico: Trump's New Year's resolution: Getting Scott to run for Senate in Florida

By Matt Dixon and Marc Caputo

12/31/2017

President Donald Trump wrapped up another private lunch Sunday in South Florida with Gov. Rick Scott, but the biggest political item wasn't on the official New Year's Eve menu at Trump International: Whether Scott will run for U.S. Senate or not in 2018.

No one is a bigger booster of the idea than Trump, who rang in the 2017 New Year with private calls to the term-limited Scott and politicians urging him to challenge Florida's three-term incumbent, Sen. Bill Nelson, the only Democrat elected statewide. In June, Trump publicly called on Scott during a Miami event about Cuba policy to seek the Senate seat. And Trump did it again in September.

"I hope this man right here, Rick Scott, runs for the Senate," Trump said after examining Hurricane Irma's damage in Fort Myers and Naples, Scott's hometown.

Each time, Trump has urged him on, Scott has demurred.

And, if the Senate race came up again at lunch, those who know the governor expect him to stay tight-lipped. It's a nod to his cautious and meticulous approach to politics, as well as his awareness of Trump's Twitter trigger finger, which could disclose a secret the governor wants to keep under wraps.

"Rick is careful and he loves the president, but he hasn't made his mind up [about a Senate bid] and he doesn't want this just blurted out," said a Florida Republican insider familiar with the governor's thinking.

A White House spokeswoman said in addition to discussing ongoing hurricane recovery efforts, infrastructure and the tax cut bill in their meeting, the president underscored the importance of Scott's leadership in Florida, and the two indicated that they look forward to working together in the new year.

After this story was initially published, the governor's office said Scott and Trump did not discuss the 2018 Senate race.

As one of 10 Democrats facing reelection in a state Trump won, Nelson is seen as vulnerable by many political insiders. But Trump's relative lack of popularity — and Florida voters' penchant for punishing the party of the president in power — could weigh on Scott, who would probably have to spend tens of millions of his own fortune on a race.

Polls indicate the epic potential matchup between the two is tied.

Scott is expected to make a decision in the coming weeks. He just finished out a \$2 million ad blitz funded by his Let's Get to Work political committee, which has about \$500,000 cash on hand. Scott is allowed to coordinate, raise and spend unlimited corporate money for the state political committee as long as he's not a federal candidate. Among the nearly \$108,000 in expenditures on consultants this month: \$56,000 for "research" by OnMessage Inc.

"My view on this is that it's going to be a very tough year for Republicans all over this country," said Chris Ruddy, founder of the conservative NewsMax publication, who's a member of Trump International and Mar-a-Lago. "There's going to be such an anti-Trump wave, because of all the negative media attacks against the president, it's going to be a tough year."

Regardless of how much Trump and Scott talk about politics, they were expected to dwell most on Scott's top issues as governor, according to aides.

"President Trump invited Governor Scott to lunch this Sunday. The governor looks forward to speaking with the president about issues that are important to Floridians, like the needed repairs to the federally operated Herbert Hoover Dike surrounding Lake Okeechobee and the recovery of Florida's citrus industry from Hurricane Irma," said John Tupps, Scott's communications director. "Whenever the governor meets with federal officials, including the president, he advocates for Floridians."

Since Trump's election, Scott has grown closer to the president, whom he has known for decades.

In January, Scott attended a large candlelight dinner honoring Trump. The following month, he joined Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker at a private lunch with the president and talked about Obamacare. The president and Scott then watched "La La Land" at the White House, and they later dined together at Trump International Hotel. They then joined family members and U.K. Independence Party leader Nigel Farage for dinner at the Trump International Hotel Washington.

Weeks later, in March, Scott joined Trump at St. Andrew Catholic School in Orlando for a school-choice event. In the limo ride with the president, Scott and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) pitched Trump on a proposed Cuba crackdown that the president announced the next month.

Also in June, Scott met at the White House to pitch Trump, again, on helping out with infrastructure, and the Okeechobee dike specifically. Later that month, Scott joined Trump's daughter-in-law, Lara Trump, at a New York State Republican Committee annual gala.

In August, the topic of infrastructure again was on the table when Scott joined the president for lunch at Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, N.J. Then, in September, Trump publicly pitched Scott as a Senate candidate after Hurricane Irma struck. Later that month, after Scott visited Puerto Rico as it grappled with Hurricane Maria's destruction, Scott again had lunch at the White House.

"This is not a time for politics," Scott said on the White House lawn at the time as he pledged to "do everything I can" to help the island's governor, Ricardo Rosselló.

But for all the downplaying of politics, it binds Scott and Trump.

Scott now runs the New Republican PAC, which is branded as a pro-Trump super PAC. It is working to "re-brand" the Republican party in Trump's image, including appealing to Hispanic voters.

"Donald Trump's election was a complete shock to the system in Washington," reads the group's website. "This is the perfect opportunity to do things differently."

Though the super PAC is branded as pro-Trump, the site features Scott and has become the landing spot for political contributions from Florida donors that generally give large amounts of money in state — not federal — races, a fact that has led many to speculate the group will play a large role in backing Scott's likely 2018 Senate bid against Nelson.

Among the donors since Scott took over the super PAC are Gulf Coast Health Care, a Pensacola-based company that owns 35 nursing facilities across the state that won a heated intra-party funding fight last session (\$40,000); and the holding company of The Villages, a politically powerful retirement community in Central Florida (\$100,000).

The committee's treasurer is Mori Hosseini, a longtime Florida Republican rainmaker that Scott appointed to the University of Florida Board of Trustees in 2016, and one of its top advisers is Melissa Stone, a former Scott chief of staff and longtime political consultant.

But there's only so much Scott can fundraise as he enters his lame-duck last 60-day legislative session, which begins Jan. 9. After the budget is fully signed, Scott loses a big amount of fundraising leverage and will have to rely on his personal millions.

Florida Republicans like Ruddy say they expect Trump will continue to urge Scott to run for Senate anyway. He said the two men "have a mutual admiration society" for each other when they're together. And Trump is deeply interested in Florida politics. He even joked that Trump might switch his residence from New York after signing a tax cut bill that makes residency in states like Florida more attractive.

"Donald's adopted home state is Florida. After this whole tax thing, that might change. Who knows?" Ruddy said.

EXHIBIT G

CNN: Florida Gov. Rick Scott formally announces run for Senate, challenging Bill Nelson

By Maegan Vazquez and Eric Bradner

4/09/2018

Florida Republican Gov. Rick Scott launched his long-anticipated challenge to Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson on Monday, officially kicking off one of 2018's most important -- and likely most expensive -- races.

Scott announced his entry into the race in interviews and a video posted on his social media accounts reviewing his two terms as governor.

"I never planned to fit in, and I won't fit in in Washington, either," Scott says in the video. "It's time to shake that place up. We don't need another politician in Washington. It's full of politicians, and that's why it's broken."

Scott has served in the governor's mansion since 2011 and has long been courted to join the Senate race.

Asked if he considers himself a "Donald Trump Republican," Scott told Politico: "I consider myself Rick Scott. I don't consider myself any type of anything." The governor would not tell the publication whether the President would campaign for him.

In a statement following Scott's announcement, Nelson said: "I've always run every race like there's no tomorrow -- regardless of my opponent."

Nelson later told CNN's Wolf Blitzer Monday afternoon that "there are so many differences" between himself and Scott.

"I think Rick Scott will say and do anything to try to get elected, but I've always thought that if you just try to do the right thing, the politics is going to take care of itself," he said.

Scott was the last major Republican recruiting target on a 2018 Senate landscape that features Democrats defending seats in 10 states that Trump won in 2016. He's been viewed as the only Republican with a chance of seriously challenging Nelson.

Scott previously won two close races for governor. He's also shown he is willing to spend tens of millions of dollars of his own money on campaigns -- a trait that is especially important in Florida, a large and expensive state for television advertising.

Anticipating Scott's entry into the race, Democrats have spent months readying their attacks on his two terms in Tallahassee.

The Senate Majority PAC, a Chuck Schumer-aligned super PAC, released a digital ad over the weekend as part of a six-figure campaign this week blasting Scott for cutting businesses' taxes while raising property taxes and slashing education funding.

"History has proven that if you want to predict how Rick Scott will act, figure out what will benefit his political career and his bank account," said J.B. Poersch, the super PAC's president.

In a memo sent to reporters Monday morning, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee executive director Mindy Myers previewed the party's line of attack against Scott by calling him "self-serving and dishonest" and saying he is "looking out for himself at Floridians' expense."

Myers said Scott's actions as governor have made him \$46 million richer. She also highlighted the deaths of 14 seniors in a nursing home during Hurricane Irma and accused Scott of deflecting blame for the Parkland shooting and the Florida International University bridge collapse that killed six people. Myers pointed out that Scott's gubernatorial wins in 2010 and 2014 came in tight races, and that Florida has seen a shift in Democrats' favor since Trump took office -- including wins in the St. Petersburg mayoral race and two hotly contested state legislative special elections.

"Scott's self-serving political brand, his administration's failures and a hostile political environment will all cripple his campaign," Myers said.

South Dakota Republican Sen. Mike Rounds signaled support for Scott on CNN's "New Day" Monday morning, though stopped short of a full endorsement.

"Senator Nelson is a friend of mine. He is a hard worker. At the same time we need votes," he said. "I would welcome (Scott's) inclusion in the race."

EXHIBIT H

Washington Post: Florida Gov. Rick Scott to put in face time with GOP donors ahead of possible Senate run

By Sean Sullivan

3/03/2018

Florida Gov. Rick Scott plans to spend some time with influential Republican donors this weekend, ahead of a possible Senate campaign launch that could shake up the battle for the majority in the midterm elections.

While Scott has no public events on his official schedule for Saturday, he is slated to speak at the Republican National Committee's spring donor retreat in Palm Beach, Fla., according to a Scott adviser and an RNC official. He spoke at the same event last year.

After addressing the RNC, Scott plans to head across the peninsula to Naples, where his home is, for a dinner with donors to a super PAC he is chairing called New Republican.

Joanna Burgos, a Scott adviser, said the super PAC gathering is one in a series of regular get-togethers he has had with the organization ever since he joined the group last spring. Donors and spouses are expected to attend, Burgos said.

A Scott associate who has been in contact with the governor predicted Scott could launch a Senate bid soon after the scheduled end of the Florida legislative session on March 9. Separately, a Republican frequently in touch with top GOP senators and officials said they were privately anticipating the same timeline.

The people spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private conversations.

Scott has not said publicly whether he will run for the Senate. He was reelected in 2014 and is term-limited, so he cannot run for the governor's office this year.

Burgos said she expects Scott to face questions about his plans at Saturday's super PAC gathering, but his answer on the Senate race will be the same one he's given before.

"He hasn't decided, and he will decide when he believes it's time," she said.

As both parties gear up for the midterms, Scott is seen as one of the biggest remaining variables in the battle for the Senate majority.

President Trump and other Republicans have encouraged him to run against Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.).

GOP leaders believe that in addition to making Florida an instantly competitive contest, a Scott candidacy would force national Democratic groups to spend more money in the state than they would otherwise. That would leave the Democrats, the thinking goes, with less cash to shell out in states such as Tennessee and Texas, where they are trying to expand their Senate reach into GOP terrain.

Republicans hold a 51-49 majority in the Senate. Democrats are defending 10 seats in states Trump won in 2016, including Florida.

A Quinnipiac University poll released this week showed a close hypothetical race, with Nelson leading Scott, 46 percent to 42 percent.

Scott has spent much of the past couple of weeks dealing with the aftermath of the deadly mass shooting at a Parkland, Fla., high school. He has been holding news conferences on school safety and has broken

from the policies of the National Rifle Association by endorsing raising the minimum age for purchasing rifles to 21.

The governor also has been in regular contact with Republican donors in recent months. A multimillionaire, Scott has self-funded past campaigns, but he has made clear that donors outside of Florida would be counted on if he were to get into the Senate race, people familiar with his discussions have said.

EXHIBIT I

Orlando Sentinel: Gov. Scott forms new PAC ahead of likely U.S. Senate run

By Gary Rohrer
5/22/2017

Ahead of a likely 2018 run for U.S. Senate, Gov. Rick Scott has set up a political action committee designed to appeal to younger and Hispanic voters.

The super PAC, called New Republican and announced last week, is meant to sell the GOP's philosophy to young voters who want less government in their lives, Scott said.

"We need to go after the young. They believe in this, if you go talk to them," Scott told Fox News on Wednesday. "They like Uber, they like Lyft, they like choices. They like open government, they're not looking for big government."

New Republican will be run by Melissa Stone, Scott's top political adviser, who was named as its executive director.

The committee is seen by political strategists in both parties as a vehicle to raise money ahead of Scott's anticipated bid to unseat Democratic U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson in 2018.

"He is running for Senate. That's all this is about," said Brian Burgess, a GOP operative and former Scott spokesman.

A prodigious fundraiser, Scott has pulled in more than \$3.1 million to his Let's Get to Work political committee this year. But money for a state political committee can't be used to run for a federal office.

Super PACs can take in and spend unlimited donations from individuals and corporations but aren't allowed to donate directly to candidate's campaigns. They are supposed to operate independently from a candidate's campaign.

Scott hasn't officially announced whether he'll run for Nelson's seat, but he has been speaking out more on federal issues. In recent weeks he's called for Venezuelan dissidents to be freed and boasted of his close relationship with President Donald Trump. He's also pointed out his ability to garner federal dollars for state projects.

"He's always been more comfortable talking about federal issues. He's always been more interested in them," said Steve Schale, who helped run Barack Obama's campaign in Florida in 2008 and Alex Sink's unsuccessful campaign for governor in 2010. "He's frankly run both of his governor's races in a lot of ways on federal issues."

Scott's forays into national politics have come as he's been unable to persuade his fellow Republicans in the Legislature to get on board with his agenda.

His requests for \$200 million to repair the Herbert Hoover Dike in Lake Okeechobee, \$100 million for tourism marketing and \$85 million for business incentives all were rejected by lawmakers in the \$82.4 billion budget passed earlier this month. Scott has yet to officially receive the budget from the Legislature but has hinted he could veto the entire bill, bringing lawmakers back to Tallahassee to try again.

But squabbling with lawmakers in Tallahassee won't necessarily damage Scott's chances in 2018.

"Taking on a Republican-controlled Legislature in a race where he probably won't have a strong primary challenger doesn't hurt him at all," Burgess said. "In fact, it enables him to [move] slightly more into the middle where he has to be for a general election."

Schale said he suspects the New Republican committee is Scott's way of trying to expand his base of voters ahead of the 2018 election, which he thinks could turn into a backlash against Trump. As a tactic, though, it's unlikely to work unless he diverts from Trump's policies, he said.

"I don't think the Republicans have an outreach problem with African-American and Hispanic voters; they have a policy problem," Schale said. "Until they're willing to address that they can raise all the money in the world for entities like [New Republican], and it's not going to change the fact that Donald Trump has people knocking down doors and taking children and deporting them."

Democrats, though, have scoffed at Scott's electoral chances before and shouldn't do so a third time, Schale conceded.

"A lot of people underestimate just how shrewd of a political operative Rick Scott is," Schale said.

EXHIBIT J

New York Time: Trump Should Get Behind Romney's Candidacy, McConnell Says

By Jonathan Martin
2/17/2018

Senator Mitch McConnell said in an interview on Friday afternoon that President Trump should rally behind the Senate candidacy of Mitt Romney despite his blistering criticism in 2016, arguing that Mr. Romney's potent bid was an illustration of the Republican Party's improving fortunes entering a challenging midterm campaign.

"I can't imagine that he's not," Mr. McConnell said when asked whether Mr. Trump was comfortable with Mr. Romney, who on Friday made official his long-expected candidacy for a Senate seat from Utah. "We don't want to lose the seat, and this looks like a pretty formidable candidate."

Mr. McConnell, the majority leader, said that Mr. Romney would enter the Senate with a stature similar to what Hillary Clinton brought as a junior senator. "The best way to think about that, and I told him this a couple of months ago, I said: 'You'll be a freshman like Hillary Clinton was,'" Mr. McConnell recalled. "He will come in here with a level of national identity and respect that will make him effective from Day 1."

His glowing appraisal stood in contrast to that of the White House, which aggressively lobbied Senator Orrin G. Hatch, the veteran lawmaker who currently holds the Utah seat, to seek an eighth term in large part to block Mr. Romney's path. Some close to Mr. Trump worry about giving Mr. Romney a platform from which he could run for president again, and Mr. Romney said in remarks Friday night to Utah Republicans that he would not shy away from taking on the president if necessary.

"I'm not always with the president on what he might say or do, and if that happens, I'll call them like I see them, the way I have in the past," Mr. Romney said at a party dinner in Provo, adding that he largely supports Mr. Trump's domestic agenda and could work with the White House.

While enthusiastic about the handful of Senate candidates, including Mr. Romney, he has helped recruit, Mr. McConnell offered a sober assessment of what the party faces in the first midterm election of Mr. Trump's unpopular presidency.

"The odds are that we will lose seats in the House and the Senate," Mr. McConnell said in the 30-minute interview in his Capitol office, adding: "History tells you that, the fired-up nature of the political left tells you that. We go into this cleareyed that this is going to be quite a challenging election."

But Republicans have a significant structural advantage as they try to protect their one-seat majority in November: They are defending just eight seats, while Democrats have to protect 26, including those of two independents who caucus with them. Of the seats Democrats are trying to retain, 10 are in states that Mr. Trump carried in 2016.

And after struggling to woo top-tier candidates in some states, Republicans are starting to find more success as they receive a lift from the tax overhaul they passed in December. In addition to Mr. Romney, Representative Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, after heavy lobbying by Mr. McConnell and Mr. Trump, reversed himself and said on Friday that he would challenge Senator Heidi Heitkamp, a Democrat seeking re-election in a state that the president won by 36 points.

Advisers to Gov. Rick Scott of Florida, in an indication that he intends to challenge Senator Bill Nelson, a third-term Democrat, have moved to set up a "super PAC," according to two Republican officials. And Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee, after saying he would not run again and ridiculing Mr. Trump, indicated this past week that he may not retire after all.

Mr. Corker's public misgivings, however, have complicated the Tennessee race, where Representative Marsha Blackburn, a staunch conservative, was already lining up support, and where Democrats landed a formidable candidate, former Gov. Phil Bredesen.

Mr. McConnell, who is close to Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, an ally of Mr. Corker, was guarded in his comments about the election, but he chuckled when pressed on the incumbent's apparent change of heart.

"It does underscore that people want to be in the Senate," he said, trying to make the best of what could become a messy primary contest. "And that's a different environment from late summer, early fall," when the Republicans were stung by their failure to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Equally delicate is the fate of Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi, who at 80 has had a series of health problems and whose seat is being eyed by a hard-line state senator, Chris McDaniel, who nearly beat him in a bitter 2014 primary race.

Mr. McConnell called it "premature" to assess the prospect of a special election this year to replace Mr. Cochran, but did acknowledge that "there could be" one. "It's up to Senator Cochran to make that decision," he said.

Privately, though, Republicans are already scrambling to protect Mr. Cochran's seat. Party leaders fear that a candidacy by Mr. McDaniel could create a competitive race, and perhaps even spiral into a debacle similar to what happened in Alabama last year, when Roy S. Moore's loss gave the state's Democrats their first Senate election victory in 25 years.

Visiting the White House this past week to help promote Mr. Trump's infrastructure proposal, Gov. Phil Bryant of Mississippi found himself buttonholed by the president, who, citing the Moore disaster, said that Mr. Bryant should appoint himself to Mr. Cochran's seat should it become vacant, according to a Republican official briefed on the conversation.

Mr. McConnell has also privately encouraged Mr. Bryant to take the seat if it becomes available, but the governor has so far resisted the entreaties. Republicans close to Mr. Cochran, who is the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, say that while he is not ruling out stepping down this year, he will not contemplate quitting until Congress finishes its 2018 spending bill next month.

More broadly, Mr. McConnell said he was open to intervening in some party primary contests, as he did in the Tea Party era, but would do so on a state-by-state basis.

He made clear he was supporting Representative Martha McSally of Arizona, who is running against a pair of immigration hawks to replace Senator Jeff Flake. And he said he did not want to see Don Blankenship, the former coal mine owner imprisoned for violating federal mine safety standards, become the party's standard-bearer against Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia.

Mr. McConnell harshly criticized a series of red-state Democrats, but took repeated aim at Mr. Manchin, with whom he has tangled in the past and is plainly eager to beat in a state that has otherwise embraced the Republican Party.

"Joe thinks he can just kind of talk his way through all of this, but talk is really cheap when your record doesn't meet the rhetoric," Mr. McConnell said, noting Mr. Manchin's opposition to a series of Republican measures, including the tax bill.

Mr. McConnell acknowledged that some of his candidates were struggling to raise money — "I concede the fund-raising problem," he said. But he said it was largely the result of having to face so many incumbents, who are typically better able to draw donors.

Still, he said that a Supreme Court case, scheduled to be argued on Feb. 26, that is expected to curb the ability of public sector unions to automatically deduct dues from their members could have an impact on Democratic fund-raising.

He called the case "an example" of why he had found it so important to block former President Barack Obama from replacing Antonin Scalia on the court after his death in 2016, a move that Democrats remain bitter about.

And, without being prompted, Mr. McConnell said he hoped that the court would broadly address what he described as the left's effort to outlaw gerrymandering.

"What do you think the founding fathers had in mind when they gave it to the state legislatures?" he said of redistricting powers. "They thought it was going to be a political exercise."

While eager to trumpet the tax measure, Mr. McConnell said that "the single best thing we've done, in conjunction with the administration, are the court appointments," including that of Neil M. Gorsuch to the Supreme Court.

And even though he and Mr. Trump heatedly clashed over the summer, Mr. McConnell said he had "no complaint" about the president today.

Mr. Trump's re-election, however, will not be Mr. McConnell's top priority in 2020: The famously competitive senator, who will be 78 at that point, revealed that he is fully committed to running for re-election and chided this reporter for not assuming as much.

EXHIBIT K

NewRepublican.org: Who We Are

Accessed 4/09/2018

Who We Are

New Republican PAC is an Independent Expenditure Only PAC (i.e., a Super PAC) focused on the election of Rick Scott in the race for Florida United States Senate. Our mission is to run a strategic independent campaign focused on defining the election between a successful and accomplished Governor who would bring fresh ideas to Washington, D.C. versus an out-of-touch 45 year self-serving career politician who has voted against seniors and killed jobs.

How We Will Run Our Independent Campaign

New Republican is committed to running a strategic, targeted independent campaign using a combination of new technology and proven voter contact tactics.

- Be regional focused – understanding that a Panhandle voter is different than an I-4 corridor voter.
- Be sensitive to voters' heritages and communicate in their preferred language.
- Target voters where they are consuming information.
- Run a campaign focused on individual voters and their vote determinative issues.

The election between Rick Scott and Bill Nelson is currently a statistical tie. We have a very clear and narrow path to victory. Every vote will matter and no dollar can be wasted. We are committed to using 90% of our budget on voter contact and using each dollar effectively and efficiently.

In addition to running a strategic and efficient campaign, New Republican is dedicated to operating an above board and ethical independent campaign. All donors and contributors should feel confident both that their money will be well spent and New Republican will be an independent campaign they are pleased to be associated with.

Why Your Support Is Critical

Florida is one of the most expensive states in the country to advertise. There are ten unique media markets. It can cost upwards of \$4,000,000 a week (1,000 points) to advertise.

In the most recent U.S. Senate race – Rubio vs. Murphy there was a combined spending of \$110,472,024 with \$50,571,131 spent by outside groups.

The left is energized and they will stop at nothing to defeat Rick Scott. In order to elect Rick Scott to the U.S. Senate it is critical that we have equal or more fire power to laud Rick Scott's accomplishments and define Bill Nelson for the next six months.