

Close, but Not Close Enough: Democrats Lose Again by the Slimmest of Margins in New Mexico's First Congressional District

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The Republican Party has held the New Mexico First Congressional District (CD1) seat since 1969 despite the urban character of the district and party registration figures that favor the Democrats with Democratic registration at 45.4 percent (189,642) and GOP registration at 35.2 percent (146,941) and the remainder in a third party or declining to state.¹ At the state and local level Democrats in Bernalillo County, which encompasses 77 percent of NM1, generally win non-federal races easily. For example, in 2004, Democratic candidates won twelve out of thirteen contested races in the county. Voting patterns at the presidential level in the district, however, are very competitive. For example, in 2004 Senator John Kerry won the district with 51 percent of the vote. Interestingly, the district is unique in its ethnic composition as not simply a minority-majority district, but a place where Anglos and Hispanics represent nearly equal proportions of the population and both groups dominate both the local and state political culture. Given these characteristics and the fact that very few House seats are in swing districts, New Mexico's First District is an on-going battleground as a target for a Democratic takeover. The situation generates strong, competitive Democratic candidates who can raise lots of money and the activity of a variety of group interests on both sides of the aisle. In the 2006 cycle, these factors along with the Democratic wave that was building due to a poor national political environment, including the worsening situation in Iraq, gas prices hitting over \$3.00 a gallon, and the President's plummeting approval rating made the race look even more promising for Democrats and their allies.

The current Republican incumbent Representative Heather Wilson won the seat in 1998 in a special election when GOP Representative Steve Schiff died in office. In that race, the Green Party played a spoiler role taking 14 percent of the vote, leaving the Democratic candidate with 39 percent and Wilson with a plurality win at 44 percent (See Table 1). In 2000, with a relatively weak Democratic challenger and a still active Green Party, Wilson received half the votes. By 2002 the Democrats were focused on the race and nominated whom they believed would be a stronger candidate, State Senate Pro Tem Leader Richard Romero. But, in 2002 Wilson's numbers surged to 55 percent, and in a repeat race with Romero in 2004, which was the fifth most expensive race in the country and the most expensive House race in New Mexico history, she repeated her strong showing with 54 percent of the vote.² In 2006, in an uncontested primary the Democrats selected state Attorney General Patricia "Patsy" Madrid, a Hispanic woman, for their nominee. She was a strong candidate with experience and name recognition from her successful statewide campaigns and had won in the district in both of her bids for attorney general, and as an incumbent she won with 57 percent of the vote. Though Wilson held on to her seat in 2006, it was a nail biter in which provisional balloting, a Help America Vote Act

¹ Data calculated by authors based upon data from the New Mexico Secretary of State's office, October 13, 2006.
² See Lonna Atkeson and Nancy Carrillo "2004 New Mexico First Congressional District Race: Déjà Vu 2002 Heather Wilson Versus Richard Romero," in *Dancing without Partners: How Candidates, Parties and Groups Interact in the New Campaign Finance Environment*, ed. by David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson and Kelly D. Patterson (Provo: Brigham Young University, 2005).

(HAVA) requirement, meant the race outcome was unknown until ten days after Election Day. In the end, the incumbent won her seat by an extremely slim margin of 861 votes, making it her closest race to date.

Candidate and Party Strategy

The campaign started early in New Mexico. In October 2005, Patricia Madrid announced her plans to run as the Democratic challenger to Heather Wilson. By January of 2006, the first public poll was released, taken by Democratic firm Lake Research, showing a statistical dead heat in a Madrid-Wilson line-up with a one point margin for Wilson (44 percent to 43 percent).³ This helped to create early interest and enthusiasm in the race and put it on the national map as a possible takeover in Democratic efforts to win the fifteen seats needed to take control of the US House. Poll numbers throughout the race would show a tight race with neither candidate breaking outside of the margin of error.

In June, both candidates easily won their respective and non-competitive primaries and in July the race started with a bang. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) kicked it off July 6 with radio ads blasting Wilson for skipping a congressional vote on the Iraq War to attend a campaign fund-raiser in Albuquerque at which President Bush was the star attraction. Wilson's response was rapid. She began softly with a positive ad. She was an "honest, independent-minded Republican."⁴ In the ad she says, "My job is to work for New Mexicans, to represent New Mexico back in Washington. Sometimes I'm working with people who are in my party. Sometimes they're not in my party. But that's OK. People sent us to Washington to get things done on problems that matter to them." But, it was the first negative TV ad of the campaign aired a week later that got all of the attention and provided an early surprise to the Madrid campaign.⁵ The ad's theme focused on a state issue attempting to connect Madrid to former state treasurer Robert Vigil, charging that Attorney General Madrid turned a blind eye to state corruption.⁶ Despite the surprise, the Madrid campaign responded quickly with their own ad one week later denying Wilson's corruption claims and questioning her ethics for taking campaign money from then indicted and former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. With the early start of the air war, New Mexicans were exposed to a long and negative race with both campaigns attacking and defending and neither candidate gaining a clear edge over the other.

The themes raised by Wilson in the two July ads were repeated throughout the race and focused on her independence from President Bush and the White House and the character of her

³ The Cook Report, "2006 House General Election Polls, November 8, 2006." At <
http://www.cookpolitical.com/members_content/house/poll.php>, 7 January 2007.

⁴ Jeff Jones, "TV Spots Take to the Air," *Albuquerque Journal*, July 13 2006, A1.

⁵ Jeff Jones, "Wilson, Madrid Are Just Getting Started; Negative Ads Will Continue until Election Day, Albuquerque Pollster Says," *Albuquerque Journal*, July 20, 2006, C1; Jeff Jones, "Wilson Ad Is Called Untrue AG Madrid Never Got Warning Letter," *Albuquerque Journal*, August 3, 2006, A1; Heather Brewer, Madrid for Congress Political Communications Director, interview by Lonna Atkeson, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 20, 2006.

⁶ State treasurer Robert Vigil was arrested in October 2005 on federal charges of extortion, racketeering, and money laundering related to a kickback scheme in which he would demand money, including campaign contributions, in exchange for state business. See, Andy Lenderman, "New Mexico State Treasurer Indicted in Kickback scheme," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 17, 2005, A1.

opponent. The latter being an attempt by Wilson to localize the race away from Washington and the national parties and focus it on the two candidates as individuals. This meant on several occasions that Wilson took clear and distinct views different from the White House. For example, before the campaign kickoff she was one of the first Republicans to openly question the National Security Agency's wiretapping of domestic telephone calls.⁷ She also voted against a weak ethics reform bill,⁸ publicly supported talks with North Korea, and argued that popular New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson should possibly participate in any US negotiations;⁹ and in a TV ad she said she would vote to override Bush's veto of stem cell research legislation.¹⁰ Indeed, President Bush even defined her as independent during a June fundraising event for her in Albuquerque saying, "Heather is an independent soul and that's what you want."¹¹ To keep her race local, Wilson generally refused to discuss her campaign itinerary with national reporters, not wanting them on her campaign trail.¹² Nevertheless, the early nature of the first candidate attack ad was, no doubt, recognition of the race's very competitive nature and Wilson's attempt to define the race, put Madrid on the defensive, and force Madrid to respond, which consequently began draining her resources. As pollster and state political pundit Brian Sanderoff noted, "one tactic among incumbent politicians in recent years is it to go for the early political kill with advertising attacks."¹³

Madrid's emphasis, however, was national, linking Wilson to Bush, the war in Iraq, and political scandals in the House, including those scandals surrounding Mark Foley and Tom Delay. Wilson had served on the U.S. House Page Board Committee, which oversees House pages, which made for a clearer link between Wilson and House mismanagement. The nationalization of the race was important for Madrid because national issues were important to her base, and if she could mobilize her base, she could win the election.¹⁴ Post election poll data suggest that this was an accurate characteristic of the district.¹⁵ More than half of all voters identified national issues as most important, with roughly one-in-five voters (22 percent) indicating that a change of power in Congress was most important to them, another one-in-five (23 percent) indicated it was the Iraq War, and roughly one-in-seven (14%) voters indicated it was ethics and corruption.

The Democratic Party's strategy is straight forward given the partisan characteristics of the district. As Matt Farrauto, executive director of the Democratic Party of New Mexico (DPNM) explained, "In New Mexico politics, it is Campaign Politics 101 for us, we just turnout out Democrats."¹⁶ But according to the Executive Director, for the Republican Party of New Mexico

⁷ James Brosnan, "Wilson Criticizes Wiretap," *Albuquerque Journal*, February 7, 2006, A2.

⁸ Michael Coleman, "Wilson's Vote on Ethics Bill Quiets Critics," *Albuquerque Journal*, May 5, 2006, B3.

⁹ Michael Coleman, "Governor Willing To Talk to North," *Albuquerque Journal*, October 10, 2006, A1.

¹⁰ Kate Nash, "Wilson Asserts Independence with Ads," *Albuquerque Tribune*, September 27, 2006, A1.

¹¹ Tania Soussan and Leslie Linthicum, "Bush Pit Stop Nets \$375,000 for Wilson; 300 Attend Fundraiser While 200 Protest Outside," *Albuquerque Journal*, June 16, 2006, A1.

¹² Mary Jo Brooks, *News Hour* Producer, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, October 10, 2006.

¹³ Jeff Jones, "Wilson-Madrid race tight; 45% in District 1 Back Incumbent; 42% Favor AG," *Albuquerque Journal*, September 3, 2006, A1.

¹⁴ Brewer, interview; Matt Farrauto, DPNM Executive Director, interview by Lonna Atkeson, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 27, 2006.

¹⁵ Poll data come from a post election survey of registered voters in New Mexico's First District by Lonna Atkeson and Kyle Saunders.

¹⁶ Farrauto, interview.

(GOPNM), "life is much harder for Republicans."¹⁷ While Wilson can count on "near universal" support from her GOP base, to win she has to attract crossover Democratic voters. Therefore, for Republicans the strategy is turning out the base and then searching for and mobilizing those independent and Democratic crossover voters.

Money

An extraordinary amount of money was raised and spent by the candidates in this race, making it the most expensive US House race in New Mexico's history. Together, Federal Election Commission (FEC) records show that the two candidates raised and spent almost \$8 million dollars, increasing candidate spending in the race by a substantial 50 percent over 2004 and about twice as much as 2002. Moreover, all of this money was spent on the general election campaign as both candidates had no primary competition. Wilson, with large donations from PACs and the party out raised and out spent her opponent by a little over 40 percent. In terms of real dollars this is a large sum of money with Wilson spending \$1,230,727 more than challenger Madrid. The Madrid Campaign felt that this money gap, in the end, was important to her slim defeat.¹⁸

As shown in Table X.3 incumbent Wilson raised almost \$4.8 million with over half (\$2.6 million) of her support coming from individual donors and another 38 percent (\$1.8 million) coming from PACs. Madrid had to rely more heavily on individual donors with nearly 81 percent (\$2.7 million) of her total receipts raised in this way, out raising Wilson on this dimension. For Wilson, a little over four out of five (81 percent) of her individual donations came from within the state. Madrid, however, had to rely on donations both in and outside of the state with a majority (53 percent) coming from outside New Mexico.¹⁹ Heather Brewer noted that the race garnered national media including articles in *The Nation*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *New York Times*, as well as coverage on *National Public Radio* and *The News Hour*. She reports that this attention "made it possible for us to tap into a national donor constituency, which we needed to compete with Wilson."²⁰

Other contributors gave much more heavily to the incumbent. PACs, for example, which overwhelmingly give to incumbents, gave Wilson almost three times as much money as they gave Madrid.²¹ A closer look at these numbers reveals both how incumbency and ideology work to increase candidate coffers. Wilson's PAC contributions stem largely from her committee assignments in the House with donations coming from the finance, insurance, real estate, energy and natural resources, health care, real estate construction, communications, and electronics sectors.²² She also received many donations from a variety of single-issue, Republican

¹⁷ Marta Kraemer, GOPNM Executive Director, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, Albuquerque, New Mexico, December 6, 2006.

¹⁸ Brewer, interview.

¹⁹ Center for Responsive Politics, at <<http://www.opensecrets.org/races/sector.asp?ID=NM01&cycle=2--6&special=N>>, 15 December, 2006.

²⁰ Brewer, interview, November 21, 2006.

²¹ This is approximately the same ratio between the incumbent and challenger that we observed in the 2004 CD1 race, see *Dancing without Partners*, ed. Magleby et al.

²² Political Money Line, at <http://fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_candpg.exe?DoFn=H8NM01174*2006>, 15 December 2006.

leadership, and business PACs including the National Rifle Association (NRA) Political Victory Fund, Leadership PAC 2004, Independent Insurance Agents of America Associated General Contractors of America, National Cable and Telecommunications Association PAC, etc.²³ Madrid received her largest PAC donations from organized labor (e.g. Machinists non-Partisan Political League, United Steelworkers of America, etc.) and a variety of Democratic Single Issue Groups including: the National Abortion Rights Actions League (NARAL), EMILY's List, Sierra Club, Feminist Majority, etc.²⁴ All in all, business groups gave Wilson 70 percent of her PAC contributions, while labor donated a mere \$36,500. Single issue groups gave the majority (53 percent) of Madrid's PAC contributions, followed closely by labor groups, which represented 38 percent of her PAC contributions, while business PACs gave a token \$40,999.²⁵

The national parties spent heavily in the race. Table X.3 shows the groups that filed independent expenditures for and against each candidate. The DCCC spent \$1.05 million, while the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) spent slightly more at \$1.08 million dollars.²⁶ On the Democratic side, this money purchased media time to run negative attack ads that began in July 2006. On the GOP side, 96 percent of the money against Madrid went for negative media buys that began Labor Day weekend. The remaining four percent went to phone banks for GOTV efforts. There were four independent expenditure in support of Wilson included. Three expenditures were for the purchase of a survey and the other supported a canvassing efforts.

Both state parties lamented the relatively little money they had to spend on their coordinated campaigns.²⁷ Coffers had been exceptionally high in 2004 with a very active presidential campaign making both parties feel like paupers in this midterm race. The DPNM had only about half of a million dollars to spend statewide on their GOTV efforts and most of that went into the First District race.²⁸ The GOPNM interestingly had a half-time Help America Vote Act Director to monitor election law, monitor the Secretary of State's office on election irregularities, and prepare lawyers to send to precincts statewide on a moments notice.²⁹

In addition to the parties, a variety of groups participated in independent expenditures for and against the candidates, and some 527s were also active in the race (see Tables X.3 and X.4). Groups supporting Madrid were EMILY's List, the National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of State, City and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), and the National Humane Society. Interestingly, EMILY's List, the National Humane Society, and NEA are new players in this race. Support for Wilson came from the National Association of Realtors PAC (NAR), the Right to Life PAC, and the American's PAC. In terms of other interest groups spending, the Alliance for Quality Nursing Care, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCOC), and 527 Americans for Honesty on Issues, were also pro-Wilson or anti Madrid. Interestingly, the

²³ Political Money Line, at < http://fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_candpg.exe?DoFn=H8NM01117*2006>, 7 January 2007.

²⁴ Center for Responsive Politics, at <<http://www.opensecrets.org/races/bio.asp?D=NM01&cycle=2006&special=N>>, 7, January 2007.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Political Money Line, at < http://fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_indepexp.exe?DoFn=06H8NM01174> and < http://fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_indepexp.exe?DoFn=06H8NM01117>, 7 January 2007.

²⁷ Kramer and Farrauto interviews.

²⁸ Farrauto, interview.

²⁹ Kraemer, interview.

Realtors' group, who was very active in this race in terms of TV buys and direct mail, was not involved in previous races.

All in all when we consider total spending for the race in terms of the parties, the candidates, and interest groups, we see that those supporting Wilson outspent Madrid supporters by \$1,377,240. Total GOP and ally spending amounted to \$6,577,180 and Democratic and ally spending amounted to \$5,199,940.

The Effects of Money: The Air War

Roughly two-thirds of the candidates' war chests went to the air war, which was characterized by an early and enduring negative campaign that began in early summer. There were a total of fifty-three TV ads produced, with 64 percent of those coming from the candidates (see Table X.X). The DCCC produced seven negative ads, while the NRCC produced five. We highlight the themes below.

Madrid and Allies

Madrid produced fifteen different TV ads over the course of her campaign, eleven ads (73 percent) were negative, either contrast ads or attack ads defining Wilson and connecting her to Bush. Four ads were positive. The first Madrid TV ad was mostly positive and interestingly contrasted Madrid with President Bush. In it, she is applauded as a tough attorney general who is determined to take on the special interests in Washington; the ad concluded with, "I approve this message but the special interests won't approve of me." It placed her squarely against Bush. The remaining three positive ads, praised Madrid's efforts as New Mexico Attorney General in strengthening criminal enforcement, especially in the area of Internet sex crimes against children. One of these was a direct endorsement from Albuquerque Mayor Chavez saying, "I'm Marty Chavez and I've worked with Patricia Madrid, especially on fighting crime. So, I know Heather Wilson's attacks on Patricia Madrid just aren't true."

One major theme of both campaigns was an attempt to raise doubt about the trustworthiness of the other candidate. The most common attacks on Wilson linked her to corrupt politicians, special interests, and President Bush. Two of the attack ads from the Madrid campaign were direct responses to attacks from Wilson. One begins, "Heather Wilson said this year she'd be nice but now she's falsely attacking Patricia Madrid." It went on to say Madrid demonstrated ethical behavior in dealing with a local political scandal while Wilson "took forty-six thousand dollars from indicted Republican leader Tom Delay then voted to make it harder to investigate him." Madrid also attempted to link Wilson, a member of the House Page Committee, to the Mark Foley scandal for failing to protect Congressional pages from sexual predators.

The DCCC produced seven television ads. They were all attack ads against Wilson. Their ads focused on the role of special interests, the War in Iraq, veterans' benefits and Wilson's close connection to George Bush. But, the larger and more general message was, "it's time to make a change." Thus, the national party and Madrid ads were very complimentary. One of the early ads showed highway billboard signs. The first billboard had a picture of Bush and Wilson together. As the camera went past, the announcer said, "They just keep driving in the same lane."

Additional billboards in the ad attacked Wilson (and Bush) for taking money from “Big Oil and Gas, and energy special interests.” One problem with this ad was that it included images of saguaro cactus, which do not grow in New Mexico making it a hey-day for the GOP to point out how un-New Mexican these outsiders are.³⁰ The DCCC quickly altered the ad though and removed the thorny problem. Two of the other DCCC ads focused on veterans. They criticized Wilson because she voted to give herself a raise while she voted against bonuses and benefits for the men and women serving in Iraq. Two of the ads emphasized Heather Wilson had changed and no longer represented the interests of New Mexicans. One of these ads showed footage of Wilson defining part of her job as representative as “showing up to vote” and then accusing Wilson of missing “a critical vote on the War in Iraq to hold a fundraiser with George Bush.”

None of the interest groups supporting Madrid produced strictly positive television ads for her. They were all anti-Wilson attack ads that had themes very similar to other pro-Madrid players. For example, an early ad from the Association of Trial Lawyers attacked Wilson for taking money from pharmaceutical companies and failing to “put people first.” An ad from AFSCME on Spanish television said Wilson “came to Washington to work, but she acts like a tourist doesn’t she?” The NEA produced two negative ads. The ads were very similar to each other. One was in English and the other in Spanish. Both criticized Wilson because she “followed President Bush and voted to cut education by billions of dollars.” Both ended with a strong endorsement for Madrid.

Wilson and Allies

Wilson produced nineteen unique ads, four more than Madrid, with most (58 percent) of those being negative. There were eight strictly positive ads. Four of the eight positive ads were endorsement ads. Senators John McCain and Pete Domenici praised Wilson, highlighting her military experience. Two endorsement ads were done in Spanish—one by local celebrity Al Hurricane and one by a popular senior New Mexico politician, Manuel Lujan. Both emphasized the dangerous times and called for reelecting veteran Heather Wilson. The remaining positive ads by the Wilson campaign worked to reinforce her campaign motto—Heather Wilson is “Independent. Honest. Effective.”—and attract crossover Democratic voters. One ad discussed the key role Wilson played in keeping Kirkland Air Force Base open. This is a large base providing many jobs in the Albuquerque area and has been targeted for closure twice in the past few years. Two positive ads also discussed her role in improving Medicare benefits and prescription drug coverage. In one positive ad, Wilson contrasted herself with the President explaining that she supports stem cell research.

The anti-Madrid attack ads produced by the Wilson campaign covered a number of topics, but the overriding theme was to raise doubts about Madrid’s competence and integrity and focus on the differences between them as individuals. These ads were largely about the character of Patricia Madrid. Ads attacked Madrid for freeing an Internet child predator during her administration as Attorney General, for taking money from local special interests, for being soft on terrorism, for failing to investigate local corruption, and for incompetence. The incompetence attacks were particularly effective. In one powerful ad at the close of the campaign, Wilson used

³⁰ Jeff Jones, “Where Have All the N.M. Saguaro Gone?” *Albuquerque Journal*, September 23, 2006, E1.

footage from the debates to demonstrate Madrid’s incompetence. The Wilson ad presented an edited clip from the Wilson-Madrid debate where Madrid appears unprepared to answer a question about raising taxes. Wilson asks, “Can you cite something that would give people of New Mexico some kind of reassurance that you will prevent a tax increase?” The rest of the clip shows Madrid pausing and fumbling in her attempt to respond to the question. Many political pundits believed this ad was Madrid’s downfall, helping to redefine the race for voters away from the national message of change and instead focus on the character of the candidates and the competition between them as individuals.

The NRCC ads reinforced the negative flavor of the campaign and the focus on Madrid’s character. All five NRCC ads were attack ads against Madrid and leveraged the same attacks as those used by the Wilson for Congress organization. The NRCC ads had a distinctly stronger negative flavor than the Wilson Campaign ads. For instance, they directly accused Madrid of providing “access for money” as New Mexico’s Attorney General. One ad explicitly accused Madrid of being “weak on prosecuting corruption” and provided a quote from the *Albuquerque Journal* that there were “serious legitimate questions about Madrid and the Vigil-Montoya corruption scandal.” Three of the attack ads focused on Madrid’s incompetence and her ethics. One said, “a poll of district court attorneys gave Madrid the lowest marks of any judge in integrity, impartiality, knowledge of the law, and rules of evidence.” This was a very powerful negative ad, using damaging facts about Madrid’s years on the bench. These ads ran towards the end of the campaign and, in tandem with the Wilson-Madrid debate ad, raised questions about Madrid’s ability to handle the job of District 1 Representative.

Several interest groups generally allied with the GOP participated in the air war. The interest group ads supporting Wilson were positive with the exception of one ad paid for by Americans for Honesty of Issues, which criticized Madrid for wanting “taxes super sized.” The Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care produced an early positive ad thanking Wilson for her support on health care issues, especially important to seniors. The USCOC ran three positive ads early in the campaign that supported Wilson for her efforts in bringing gas prices down and finding renewable energy sources, for her support of small business health plans, and for her work to provide Medicare prescription drug coverage. These groups indicated they developed their ads well before the negative campaigning started and that their approach in New Mexico was similar to their efforts across the nation.³¹ Their direct mail, however, included both positive and negative ads, so they did not conduct a 100 percent positive campaign.³² The NAR also endorsed Wilson for her support of small business health plans. They were an active player in the air and ground war and focused on the small business health plan legislation in both the television and direct mail ads. As an organization, NAR has a membership of more than 1.2 million members from all areas of the real estate industry. Most of their members are affiliated with small real estate businesses. NAR identified thirteen key national issues and initiated a “50-state campaign” to lobby for action on these items.³³ Small business health plan legislation was identified as one of their top priorities. The Small Business Health Fairness Act supported by NAR and Wilson passed a House vote (263-165) in July 2006. NAR targeted New Mexico’s First District because it might be a close race and so they wanted to show their support for Wilson.

³¹ Mark Reynolds, Public Affairs Officer, USCOC, telephone interview by Loraine Tafoya, December 1, 2006.

³² Ibid.

³³ Monty Newman, NAR Government Affairs Liaison, telephone interview by Lorraine Tafoya, November 29, 2006.

Money: The Effect of the Ground War

Nearly all the groups, parties and the candidates had an aggressive get-out-the-vote (GOTV) effort that included vote early and/or absentee efforts. Governor Richardson, for example, with his huge \$13 million war chest engaged in an active GOTV absentee voter drive for the party generally, which no doubt helped Madrid. Early in the campaign season, he sent out a large mailer that included an absentee ballot request. Early voting in New Mexico began three Saturdays prior to Election Day on October 14. The advantage of early and absentee voting is that parties, candidate campaigns, and groups can purchase daily information from the county clerks on who has voted so they know when they have succeeded in getting someone to the polls and when they need to make another phone call or visit. Early and absentee voting has become increasingly popular, with just over half of all voters choosing to cast their vote in this way in 2004 and three-fifths of those cast their vote early. But early voting in Bernalillo County in 2006 was complicated by long lines, with some voters waiting several hours to vote, which may have reduced its popularity as it saw a substantial decline to only 21 percent of voters with an additional 25 percent voting absentee. Additionally, the paucity of other competitive statewide races in 2006 may have meant voters were more inclined to vote in a traditional precinct format on Election Day.

Mobilization efforts by both candidates included a number of visits by prominent political party insiders. These visits occurred early and late in the campaign, raised needed cash, and mobilized the base for both parties. Madrid's visits included Democratic political strategist James Carville on June 8, retired military General Wesley Clark on April 7, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on October 10, House Democratic Minority leader Nancy Pelosi on August 18 and October 29, Democratic House member Representative Raul Grijalva on November 1, and former President Bill Clinton on November 3. Wilson's visits included first lady Laura Bush on April 1 and November 3, President Bush on June 16, Senator John McCain on September 10 and former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft on October 16.

The candidates both used similar slogans in their direct mail ads. For Wilson it was "Independent. Honest. Effective," while Madrid's motto was "Always Independent... Always on Our Side." However, Madrid's slogan was primarily a direct mail strategy whereas Wilson integrated it throughout her campaign message. The candidates both appeared to employ a similar strategy—let their parties drive the bulk of the direct mail efforts. Both candidates sent e-mails to people who had made contact with their campaign (either by phone or through their websites). The e-mails were generally informational, providing, for example, the date and time of the candidates' original debate along with rebroadcast times. The Madrid for Congress team also used phone calls to remind people to attend a celebrity fundraiser for the Madrid campaign.

The Madrid campaign sent two pieces of direct mail. The first was an invitation to a \$1000 per person benefit featuring comedian Paul Rodriguez.³⁴ Paul Rodriguez also did several robo calls for Madrid, encouraging voters to support her campaign. Given that the seat already has a woman in it, one odd message said "Señor Martin Chavez (Albuquerque's mayor) asked me to

³⁴ There was also a \$300 option for the benefit that excluded the before and after gathering.

come to Albuquerque to do a show for Patricia Madrid. We need a woman in Congress."³⁵ The second piece was a small folded sheet that included casual photos of Madrid with New Mexicans and with her dogs. This piece used traditional New Mexico colors and briefly outlined her positions on the prescription drug program, energy independence, the environment, tax fairness, and establishing a timetable for bringing the troops home from Iraq.

The Wilson for Congress team used their slogan and campaign colors consistently on their positive ads. There was a slight modification for one positive ad that translated the slogan into Spanish—"Independiente. Sincera. Efectiva." Interestingly, the Spanish positive ads focused on different issues than the English ads. The Spanish ad mentioned Wilson's work to increase minority homeownership, the increase in Pell Grants, Wilson's role in co-sponsoring the Kidney Care Quality and Improvement Act of 2005,³⁶ and her work to increase bilingual funding. The English ads focused on personal integrity, education, the War on Terror, and job growth. The one piece of negative direct mail from the Wilson campaign team attacked Madrid for letting a sexual predator walk without jail time. Many of the negative ads used by the Wilson campaign and the GOPNM against Madrid had a similar look and feel. Most included at least one photo of a grumpy Madrid, calling her Patsy Madrid instead of Patricia Madrid.

The NRCC focused on television advertising in the New Mexico race and by our counts did not produce any direct mail, though the state party did. On the other hand, the DCCC produced five pieces of direct mail. All were negative attacks on President Bush and his role in the War in Iraq. Each had a small section asking voters to use their vote to send a message. One typical ad said, "Tell Heather Wilson and the Republicans in Congress that if they won't ask Bush for a plan in Iraq, you'll find someone who will." The Democratic National Committee (DNC) also sent out letters with campaign materials to targeted voters. The letters encouraged the recipient to take a few steps to help the Democrats take control of Congress. The recommendations were: adopt five voters, display an enclosed campaign sign, and contribute generously to the DNC.

Both state parties were very active in the ground war. The DPNM produced fifteen direct mail pieces that were a mixture of GOTV, positive ads for Madrid, and negative ads against Wilson. The DPNM produced one positive brochure for Madrid that looked very similar to the one produced by the Madrid for Congress organization. It used the same colors, highlighted the same issue positions, and used Madrid's slogan, "Always Independent... Always on Our Side." Of the remaining ads, six were GOTV efforts. Three of these ads also included lists of the Democratic candidates. One GOTV ad was specifically for Madrid. It was a door hanger that said, "Vote Tuesday, November 7th" on one side and had a photo of Madrid on the other side with the message "Vote for Change." The remaining six DPNM ads were attack ads aimed at linking Wilson with President Bush. A repeated theme on these ads showed Wilson and Bush together. The negative ads focused on the War in Iraq and special interests. Interestingly, one ad attacked Wilson for neglecting veterans by failing to support legislation that would improve veterans' benefits, echoing a DCCC TV ad on the same subject.

³⁵ Information provided by Nancy Carrillo, who received two robo calls from Rodriguez.

³⁶ DaVita ran a quarter page newspaper ad early in the campaign thanking Wilson for her work on this bill. Davita is a national, non partisan PAC and company that specializes in Kidney disease and dialysis.

The GOPNM produced the most direct mail in the campaign with thirty-three unique ads. Four of the ads were GOTV efforts. Similar to the Democrats, early on the GOPNM GOTV effort included applications for absentee ballots. The Republican ad attached to the applications was about the “War on Terror” and included photos of troops in action. The language differences between the two sides are striking in this area. Democrats called for an end to the “War in Iraq” while the Republicans called for winning the “War on Terror.” One Republican ad said, “Liberal Democrats want to Surrender in the War on Terror.” This ad as well as other war ads showed pictures of American troops and black masked terrorists with guns and knives. Positive party ads supporting Wilson focused on her experience as a veteran, her work “protecting America from terrorists,” and her work on several issues important to seniors (prescription drugs, Medicare, taxes, and Social Security). The positive ads repeated the Wilson campaign slogan of “Independent. Honest. Effective” and used the Wilson campaign colors.

The attack ads hit a variety of topics—Madrid’s ties to special interests, Democrats desire to raise taxes, Madrid’s pro-abortion stance, Madrid’s incompetence as a judge and as Attorney General, and Madrid’s questionable ethics in taking money from special interests and in failing to pursue corruption. Questions were also raised about Madrid’s use of public funds as Attorney General. Early in the campaign cycle, the Attorney General’s Office produced several brochures and a television ad about child protection efforts and detecting methamphetamine labs. The television ad and the brochures prominently featured Madrid and looked very much like campaign materials. Several of the negative ads warned about Madrid’s “ultra-liberal values.” Two ads linked Madrid to Nancy Pelosi, Ted Kennedy, and Hillary Clinton. Two of the ads focused on health care.

Interest Groups

America Votes, which was in nine states in 2006 and was in New Mexico in 2004, was a key player in the ground war. The coalition’s mission is to, “coordinate efforts of the progressive community.”³⁷ In 2006 the New Mexico America Votes coalition included the NEA, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), AFL-CIO, AFSCME, ACORN, EMILY’s List, the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), NARAL, Sierra Club, and Moveon.org.³⁸ Their main goal in working as a team is to assist members in sharing programs, strategies, information, and to minimize duplication efforts. Members share a centralized voter file and build relationships with other team members for success. While each member had their own program and unique tax status within which they must work, the broader goals of the America Votes coalition was to ensure broader voter participation with a special focus on voters who usually pass on midterm elections.³⁹ Despite Madrid’s loss, the coalition believed that its efforts were successful noting that 28,000 voters who did not vote in 2002 voted in 2006.⁴⁰ The governor also took credit for the increase in voter turnout among these so-called soft voters, noting that his campaign “spent

³⁷ Jennifer Ford, American Votes of New Mexico Executive Director, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, December 10, 2006.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

months and months canvassing voters to find the elusive 20 percent of voters who tend to vote in presidential elections, but not in midterm or state elections like the one this year.”⁴¹

One of the groups especially active in New Mexico in 2006 was EMILY’s List and its New Mexico Women Vote! branch. This was the first time EMILY’s List was active in this race, no doubt this is due to the gender of the Democratic candidate. In 2006, New Mexico WOMEN VOTE! conducted an extensive direct mail, phone, and radio campaign.⁴² They targeted more than 60,000 New Mexico registered voters, focusing on potential early voters. The phone campaign focused on getting out the vote, while the radio ads attempted to persuade voters to cast their ballots for Madrid. Two of the six pieces of mail from New Mexico WOMEN VOTE! were positive, while the other four were attacks on Wilson. One positive ad focused on Madrid’s work as Attorney General to keep children safer through “tougher laws...more cooperation and better technology” and the other focused on values and Madrid’s ties to New Mexico. The negative ads attacked Wilson for her special interest and Washington connections, for her willingness to blindly follow Bush in the War in Iraq, and for her questionable ethics. New Mexico WOMEN VOTE! also produced a door hanger providing polling information and encouraging people to vote.

The LCV had the most sophisticated campaign. In part, because they are a Massachusetts Citizens for Life (MCLF) group they are able to bundle their pro and anti messages together in their persuasion campaign. MCLF represents a court case that clarified that corporate and labor political groups are different from groups that are sponsored by individual donors. These latter groups political speech are protected under the first amendment and therefore are allowed to function under different political rules in their political activities. LCV New Mexico spent about \$250,000 on their local campaign, which included a door-to-door canvass, direct mail, a phone bank the last two weeks of the campaign, and radio ads the last three weeks that cost about \$40,000.⁴³ Their canvass consisted of identifying the one hundred precincts in the First District where Senator Kerry and Representative Wilson won or where State Senator Richard Romero won in his bid for the seat in 2004. They hired two to five paid canvassers and also relied on over two hundred volunteers. Their campaign was completely persuasive. First, their message focused on the need for a change in Congress, that the country was on the wrong track, and that Wilson was a rubber stamp for George Bush and part of the problem. Second, they identified the voters’ most important issues, which included many different issues (e.g. Iraq, terrorism, education, health care, and energy) and explained to them why Wilson was not performing well on their most important issues. Third, they used a positive persuasive message for supporting Madrid and why she would be strong on their most important issue. This three-prong strategy was essential because as Margaret Toulouse, executive director of LCV New Mexico, said, “It’s just not good enough to vote against somebody they have to have a reason to vote for somebody, especially when they’ve voted for Wilson before.”⁴⁴

⁴¹ Micheal Coleman “Going Down to the Wire: Candidates Work Phone, Press Flesh to Get Out the Vote,” *Albuquerque Journal*, November 3, 2006, A1.

⁴² Ramona Oliver, EMILY’s List Public Affairs, telephone interview by Lorraine Tafuya, December 4, 2006.

⁴³ Margaret “Maggie” Toulouse, League of Conservation Voters of New Mexico Executive Director, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, November 16, 2006. The \$250,000 represents all their spending on the race, while Table X.1 only includes that money used specifically for the independent expenditure for Madrid.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

The LCV produced five direct mail ads calling for change. Its ads focused on trusting LCV and the information it provided about the candidates. Because of its three-prong persuasive message, it wanted to establish itself as a go-to organization for information.⁴⁵ For example, one ad concluded, "Who can you trust when the mud starts flying? Trust LCV." The ads focused on energy and environment issues and tied Wilson to Bush administration policies. One ad took the form of a door hanger and praised Madrid because she "sued the Bush Administration to protect our land and water and to stop Big Oil price gouging." Starting on October 10, the LCV began its absentee voter drive, collecting and processing absentee requests for committed Madrid voters, and the last two weeks the organization made phone calls to Madrid supporters urging them to vote early.⁴⁶ In addition, LCV volunteers handed out campaign materials supporting Madrid at a local book signing for noted journalists and activists Amy and David Goodman.

Labor's mobilization efforts were strictly member-to-member, but that gave Labor a pool of 16,000 members and their families.⁴⁷ Its focus was strictly on the First Congressional District race. Labor did person-to-person contacts, direct mail, and phone banking to reach their membership.⁴⁸ It was the only group that did not encourage early or absentee voting. Labor relied predominantly on volunteers for their canvass, but also hired paid canvassers averaging about ten people knocking on doors a day during the campaign.⁴⁹ Their message was to discuss the issues that were important to them and compare the candidates on those issues. The AFL-CIO produced two pieces of mail. One was a negative attack against Wilson, linking her to Bush. On one side it had a photo of Bush and said, "If you want to stop George Bush's agenda, you have to replace Heather Wilson." On the other side there is a photo of Wilson and a photo of Bush with the message, "Send George Bush a message. Send Heather Wilson home!" Their other ad supported Madrid with a focus on the future for children. The AFT produced one direct mail ad that compared Wilson and Madrid's positions on education, retirement security, and health care issues and concluded by recommending Patricia Madrid for Congress.⁵⁰

Other organizations ran smaller campaigns supporting Madrid. The U.S. Humane Society ran radio ads and produced two direct mail ads supporting Madrid and attacking Wilson. One was a detailed letter that outlined several ways in which Wilson had failed to support animal rights. The other was a color ad that featured photos of animals and outlined issues important to the Humane Society. The New Mexico ad was similar to others produced in other states.⁵¹ It was customized to include voter information with a website listed for local information. The ad and the letter were sent to "friends of the Humane Society." Friends were identified as people who had contributed to the Humane Society or who had volunteered for local Humane Societies.⁵¹

The other Democratic supporters (Conservation Voters of New Mexico, Defender of Wildlife Action Fund, Taxpayers for Changing Congress, Human Rights Campaign, Communities Voting

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Chris Chaves, New Mexico Federation of Labor Executive Director, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, December 18, 2006.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Rachel McQuery, U.S. Humane Society Legislative Liaison, telephone interview by Lorraine Tafoya, November 29, 2006.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Together and New Mexico Families for Change in Congress) produced primarily direct mail negative ads attacking Wilson. The Democratic allies were mostly negative, unlike the GOP allies discussed below. The Human Rights Campaign had five direct mail ads with a mixture of both positive and negative messages. One ad encouraged early voting and provided polling place information and one ad was 100 percent positive. The other three ads said, "Vote No on Heather Wilson." Each negative ad picked a different issue. Two focused on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) issues. The third attacked Wilson for attending a fundraiser with Bush when "our troops needed her." Communities Voting Together produced four attack ads. The purpose of the group is to educate and mobilize low-income voters, especially Latinos and African Americans.⁵² Three attack ads connected Wilson to Bush and the fourth attacked Wilson for raising her own pay while refusing to raise the minimum wage.

Direct mail from Republican allies was smaller in scope than for Democratic allied groups. Only four GOP related groups actively participated in the First Congressional District race including: the USCOC, the NAR, the Seniors Coalition, and the American Medical Association's PAC (AMPAC). The AMPAC ads encouraged members to get out and vote for Wilson in order to protect Medicare payments to physicians. A representative from AMPAC said the New Mexico ad was part of a national campaign to protect Medicare.⁵³ They produced radio and television ads in four states (Arizona, Connecticut, Maryland and Tennessee) and sent direct mail to members in "most states."⁵⁴

The USCOC and NAR direct mail ads focused on small business health plans. One of these included the saguaro cactus, which recall does not grow in New Mexico, giving the laugh to the Democrats this time.⁵⁵ The USCOC produced five pieces of mail. One ad attacked Madrid's alliance with trial lawyers. Four ads were positive ads supporting Wilson and focused on different policy areas including: low-cost renewable energy, the prescription drug plan for seniors, and for job creation in New Mexico. The NAR direct mail ads were entirely positive in their support of Wilson. All five ads were consistent with the group's air war and focused on small business health plans and applauded Wilson's work "to expand health care coverage for small businesses and the self-employed."

The Seniors Coalition produced four solely positive ads. All four focused on Medicare and the prescription drug benefit. In addition, one ad identified other issues facing seniors, including Social Security, border security, and immigration reform. The ad argued that "the retirement security of seniors will be jeopardized" if border and immigration reform is not enacted. It directly endorses Wilson by giving her the Seniors Coalition 2006 Senior Guardian Medal of Honor. All the ads ask seniors to call Wilson and thank her for her support.

The NRA also produced a unique ad supporting Wilson. The ad was the newspaper wrapper for the *Albuquerque Journal* and was used on Election Day. It had a large photo of Wilson and said,

⁵² Campaignmoney.com, at, <http://www.campaignmoney.com/political/527/communities_voting_together.asp>, 5 January 2007.

⁵³ Jonathan Stevens, AMPAC Public Affairs Representative, telephone interview by Lorraine Tafoya, December 1, 2006.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Kate Nash, "Ghost Cacti Haunt House Race," *Albuquerque Tribune*, October 3, 2006, A1.

“Vote Heather Wilson. Congress.” The wrapper colors were red, white, and blue, and the NRA logo was prominently featured on the bag.

Non Partisan Groups

The one piece of direct mail that appeared to be neutral was a voters’ guide produced by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). It compared the AARP, Wilson and Madrid’s position on eight issues. The candidates agreed on all but one of them. Wilson opposed negotiating lower Medicare drug prices, while Madrid and AARP supported it. The guide, however, did not endorse either candidate.

Election Day and After

As the votes rolled in over the course of the election night, Madrid’s supporters were extremely happy. Bernalillo County showed her continuously, if marginally, in the lead. It was not until about midnight that the few non-Bernalillo precincts came in and switched the vote, giving Wilson her lead. Unfortunately for Madrid, Wilson never gave up her lead. At the close of Election Day, Wilson had 1,487 more votes than Madrid.⁵⁶ But, there were 3,756 provisional ballots, a requirement of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), and Madrid believed that upwards of 80 percent of those were for her, which could change the race’s outcome.⁵⁷ The process of counting provisional ballots, however, is extremely slow because each provisional voter must first qualify, and the rules for qualification were not straightforward due to a lack of good training. One attorney noted that “not only [were] different counties using different rules, but different counting tables within Bernalillo County [were] using different qualifying rules.”⁵⁸

The heart of the issue, which required a response from the Attorney General and Secretary of State’s offices and created a potential conflict of interest, was which signature lines on the provisional ballot had to be completed. This is because there are two sides to the New Mexico provisional ballot envelopes. The first side asks voters to write their name and birthday and has them sign an affidavit attesting that this is the only ballot they cast. On the second side of the envelope, there is a detachable voter registration form, to update the voter’s records, and there is also a signature required here. State law says, “A provisional paper ballot cannot be counted if the registered voter did not sign either the signature roster (at the polling places) or the ballot’s envelope.”⁵⁹ The legal question is whether or not the detachable form constitutes part of the envelope, and if so, does a signature there in the absence of one on the flip side constitute conformity with the law.⁶⁰ The attorney general’s office ruled that a signature anywhere on the envelope, including the detachable registration form, or on the precinct roster would meet the

⁵⁶ Trip Jennings and Jeff Jones, “Madrid Draws GOP’s Fire; Assistant Ag Gave Vote Count Advice,” *Albuquerque Journal*, November 14, 2006; Trip Jennings and Jeff Jones, “Parts of Envelope At Heart of Vote Battle,” *Albuquerque Journal*, November 15, 2006.

⁵⁷ Brewer, interview, November 21, 2006.

⁵⁸ Paul Kienzle III, private attorney working for GOPNM, telephone interview by Lonna Atkeson, December 19, 2006.

⁵⁹ Jennings and Jones, “Parts of Envelope At Heart of Vote Battle.”

⁶⁰ Attorney Paul Kienzle III said that the detachable form was not HAVA compliant because HAVA requires that the ballot and the registration form remain together.

legal requirements for a qualified ballot.⁶¹ This decision favored qualifying more ballots than disqualifying them and increased hope for Madrid.

On November 17 counting ended. Madrid could only cut the vote gap between her and Wilson by nearly half. And, while many people complained about the long and drawn out provisional vote count process, given the hand count and the need for voter qualification there is no way to speed up the process. Attorney Paul Kienzle III, who participated in this process in 2004 and 2006 (in both Bernalillo and Lea Counties) said, “counting provisional ballots is slow and tedious; its takes a long time and it’s a partially unfunded mandate. There’s nothing we can do to speed up the process.”

Conclusion

The scope of conflict in the First District was expanded from previous years. We saw new groups participating in the election contest and, as appears to be increasingly the case, voters saw a very long and negative campaign that lasted over 4 months. Additionally, the communication between interest groups on the left through America Votes is becoming increasingly organized, productive and appears to be very helpful to its members. As this organizational approach expands into other states it is likely to promote greater, more effective and more efficient mobilization efforts among these groups. In addition, parties and candidates messages were extremely complimentary, often using identical language and even the same colors in their ads.

It is also very clear that both national and local factors were important in this race. Changing power in Congress, the Iraq War, the War on Terror, and ethics and corruption were all important issues to voters in this contest according to post election polls. Ethics and corruption, however, due to the unique events in the state, had both national and local angles making it a potential negative for both Wilson and Madrid. The national Democratic wave, no doubt, helped to make this an extremely close race, which Wilson, a now 5th term incumbent, held on to by the skin of her teeth.

Many local and national political pundits argued the race turned against Madrid immediately following her only debate with Wilson on October 24 in which she performed badly. Madrid stumbled over words and on one particular question about taxes appeared silent for the first seven seconds and then an additional four seconds, a long time for silence in broadcast media. Wilson quickly capitalized on the gaffe by using debate footage in her TV commercials incessantly up to Election Day as a demonstration of Madrid’s incompetence and inability to provide leadership. Washington Post blogger Chris Cillizza named the ad one of the top ten ads for 2006, noting, “Actors in ads are great, but actual footage of your opponent stumbling is political gold.”⁶² And, New Mexico pundit Brian Sanderoff said, “This is going to become a classic, textbook example of one defining moment affecting the outcome of an election.”⁶³

⁶¹ Jennings and Jones, “Madrid Draws GOPs Fire.”

⁶² Jeff Jones and Michael Coleman, “Wilson Hangs on Despite Trends,” *Albuquerque Journal*, November 19, 2006, A1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

Though the pundits might be right, there are other important factors to consider in a race that was decided by a mere 861 votes. First, Wilson had more money than Madrid and spent that money aggressively on advertising in the last few weeks of the campaign. Second, two polls done just before the election, showed flip results with Research and Polling Inc. giving Madrid the lead and Public Opinion Strategy giving Wilson the lead, but both within the statistical margin of error.⁶⁴ And, polls throughout the race generally showed a tight race within the margin of error, though often Madrid was on top. Thus, neither candidate ever really broke out of the pack with a clear lead. Third, Madrid won the two largest counties and Democratic strongholds encompassing the First Congressional District—Bernalillo and Sandovol Counties— but just barely with 1,230 votes out of 189,392 votes cast in Bernalillo and by 164 votes with 7,834 votes cast in Sandovol. But Madrid had some very large losses in the small portions of the three other counties that encompass the district. In Santa Fe County, Wilson received 727 more votes than Madrid out of 1,949 votes cast. In Torrance County, Wilson won 1,173 more votes than Madrid out of 5,401 votes cast. And, in Valencia County, Wilson won 373 more votes than Madrid out of 6,377 votes cast. The latter counties' precincts being more Republican and small meant little Democratic mobilization activity was centered there since the Democratic strategy was largely focused on Bernalillo and turning out Democratic voters. This suggests a possible alternative reason. Democrats did not mobilize enough Democratic voters who vote Democratic.⁶⁵ In part, this analysis suggests that the Democratic strategy is problematic because the parties and the groups tend to focus on aggregate areas and not individual voters, and in doing so concede some areas to the GOP. While a strategy of areas is one key ingredient for success, a focus on individual Democratic voters within GOP areas may be essential to win the First Congressional District. Thus, instead of relying on Campaign Politics 101, they need to modify their strategy and learn from the Republicans to not concede any area and think instead of Democratic voters in GOP areas of strength as voters that need mobilization.

The same mistake was made in New Mexico in the presidential election of 2004. Democrats focused on a conventional and normally successful strategy: win in the largest population areas of the state and win the state.⁶⁶ Meanwhile Republicans were doing their best to compete in the largest populated areas, not conceding them, and also focus their attention on more rural areas of the state where Democrats had not focused. Increasing their turnout in those outer areas was the key to their 2004 success. This suggests that in close elections, where every vote counts, party, candidate and interest group strategy needs to leave no voter unattended.

⁶⁴ The Cook Report "2006 House General Election Polls, November 8, 2006." At <
http://www.cookpolitical.com/members_content/house/poll.php; 7 January 2007.

⁶⁵ Farrauto, DPNM Executive Director, lamented this fact, Farrauto interview.

⁶⁶ Lonna Rae Atkeson, Nancy Carrillo and Mekoce Walker, "New Mexico Presidential Race 2004: The Battle for Five Electoral Votes," in *Dancing without Partner*, ed. Magleby et al.

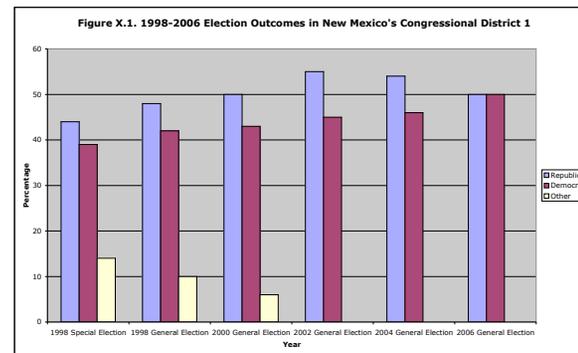


Table X.1. Independent Expenditures for and against Wilson and Madrid, New Mexico's First Congressional District 2006

	Representative Wilson		Attorney General Madrid	
	For	Against	For	Against
Democratic Allies				
DCCC		1,050,785		
EMILY's List		90,545	19,250	
NEA		277,119		
AFSCME		50,000	116,630	
Machinists			83	
Peace Action West Voter Fun			27	
Moveon.org			641	
LCV			110,798	
Republican Allies				
NRCC	43,448			1,079,880
Associated General Contractors of America PAC	1,046			
Realtors PAC	761,734			
National Right To Life Pac	15,494			
Total	837,935	1,468,449	412,835	1,079,880

Data taken from fecinfo.com

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Table X-2
 Candidate Receipts and Expenditures, New Mexico 1st Congressional District Race, 2005-06

	Patricia Madrid (D)	Heather Wilson (R)
From PACs	\$641,367	\$1,826,077
From individuals	\$2,730,382	\$2,599,424
From party	\$3,318	\$135,172
From candidate	\$0	\$0
Other contributions	\$1,925	\$231,622
Total receipts	\$3,376,992	\$4,792,295
Total expenditures	\$3,318,638	\$4,659,365
Cash on hand (as of 11/27/04)	\$62,571	\$201,258

Source: Federal Election Commission, "2005-06 U.S. House and U.S. Senate Candidate Info," November 27, 2006. At <http://fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_candidate.exe?DoFn=&YR=2006>, 14 December 2006.

TABLE X-3
 The Air War: Television and Radio Advertising Expenditures, New Mexico¹ Congressional District Race, 2006²

Type and Organization ^b	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
Democratic allies^c				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Madrid For Congress	\$1,540,012	\$19,636	\$1,559,648	\$1,511,396
<i>Political parties</i>				
DCCC	\$1,800,200	\$26,720	\$1,826,920	\$985,517
DNC	...	\$4,000	\$4,000	...
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
National Education Association	\$186,935	\$74,464	\$261,399	\$113,520
AFSCME	...	\$44,945	\$44,945	\$81,164
EMILY's List	...	\$18,350	\$18,350	...
Humane Society of the United States	...	\$8,830	\$8,830	...
League of Conservation Voters	...	\$8,800	\$8,800	...
NARAL	...	\$8,269	\$8,269	...
Republican allies^d				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Heather Wilson for Congress	\$2,456,158	\$114,081	\$2,570,239	\$2,610,976
<i>Political parties</i>				
NRCC	...	...	...	\$819,580
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
National Association of Realtors	\$525,455	...	\$525,455	\$189,699
Americans for Honesty on Issues	\$248,395	...	\$248,395	\$48,637
Alliance for Quality Nursing and Home Care	\$233,610	...	\$233,610	\$155,517
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	\$176,775	...	\$176,775	\$91,769
American Medical Association PAC	...	\$32,200	\$32,200	...
America's PAC	...	\$15,532	\$15,532	...
National Right to Life PAC	...	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$21,270
Nonpartisan				
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
September Fund	\$376,640	...	\$376,640	...
American Trial Lawyers Association	\$147,340	\$6,820	\$154,160	\$67,784
New Mexico Citizens for Change	...	\$2,760	\$2,760	...
American Heart Association	...	\$2,400	\$2,400	...
Institute for Social Policies Studies	...	\$1,600	\$1,600	...

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby, Kelly D. Patterson, and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2006 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2006), and Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG) data.

¹ Please see appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. The ad-buy data collected for this study may contain extraneous data because of the difficulty in determining the content of the ads. The parties or interest groups that purchased the ad buys possibly ran some ads promoting House or Senatorial candidates or ballot propositions not in the study's sample but still within that media market. Unless the participating academics were able to determine the exact content of the ad buy from the limited information given by the station, the data may contain observations that do not pertain to the study's relevant House or Senate battleground races. For comparison purposes the CMAG data is included in the table. Because of the sheer volume of television and radio stations and varying degrees of compliance in providing ad-buy information, data on spending by various groups might be incomplete. This data does not include every station in the state. This table is not intended to represent comprehensive organization spending or activity within the sample races. Television ads purchased from national cable stations that aired in this state are not reflected in this table. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table with table X-X.

² All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliates to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, Right to Life of New Mexico data have been included in the National Right to Life PAC totals.

³ Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro-conservative or liberal.

In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

TABLE X-4
Number of Unique Campaign Communications by Organizations,
New Mexico 1st Congressional District Race, 2006^a

Type and Organization	Email	Mail	Newspaper/ Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Democratic allies^b								
<i>Candidates</i>								
Madrid For Congress	11	2	1	1	4	...	15	34
<i>Political parties</i>								
Democratic Party of New Mexico	...	15	...	...	...	...	...	15
DCCC	...	7	...	...	...	...	5	10
<i>Interest Groups</i>								
League of Conservation Voters	...	5	...	2	...	...	...	7
New Mexico Women Vote!	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	7
Human Rights Campaign	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	5
Communities Voting Together	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
National Education Association	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	4
Humane Society of the United States	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	3
Sierra Club State Committee on Civic Education	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
Conservation Voters New Mexico	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
NM Attorney General's Office	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
NM Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
AFSCME	1	1
AFT New Mexico	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
League of Independent Voters	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
NARAL	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
NM Families for Change in Congress	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Taxpayers for Change in Congress	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
We The People	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Republican allies^b								
<i>Candidates</i>								
Heather Wilson for Congress	...	9	...	...	...	...	19	28
Wilson - House of Representatives	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
<i>Political parties</i>								
Republican Party of New Mexico	...	33	...	...	...	...	...	33
RCC	5	5
RNC	1	...	...	1
<i>Interest Groups</i>								
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	...	6	...	...	...	...	3	9
National Association of Realtors	...	5	...	...	...	...	1	6
Seniors Coalition, The	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
American Medical Association PAC	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Alliance for Quality Nursing and Home Care	1	1
Americans for Honesty on Issues	1	1
DaVita	1	...	...	...	...	1
Kenneth Klement	1	...	...	1
National Rifle Association	1	...	...	...	...	1
Nonpartisan								

<i>Interest Groups</i>								
Quality of Life PAC	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
AARP	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
American Trial Lawyers Association	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Venture Data	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1

Source: Data compiled from David B. Magleby, Kelly D. Patterson, and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy, 2006 Monitoring Campaign Spending and Trends in Electioneering Database (Brigham Young University, 2006).

^a See appendix A for a more detailed data explanation. Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table X-X.

^b Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro-conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.