

## **GOP'S TOP GUN**

If Republicans in the state assembly are to have any chance whatsoever of gaining the majority before the 2011 legislative session when districts will once again be redrawn, they'll need to pick up at least two or three seats in 2008 – then pick up another four or five in 2010 when ten Democrat incumbents will be term-limited out of office, including Speaker Barbara Buckley.

It's all those open seats which makes it at least theoretically possible for the GOP in Nevada's lower house to “pull a Gingrich” and emerge from the political wilderness the way House Republicans did in 2004. To pull it off, they're going to need to recruit superior candidates and raise enough money to defeat a couple of vulnerable Democrat incumbents next year. And they appear to have gotten off to a good start with the recruitment of Sean Fellows to run against Assemblywoman Susan Gerhardt in Clark County.

They also seem to be taking seriously the need to raise Fellows some serious money for his run, as [this list](#) of co-hosts for an upcoming fundraiser indicates. If each member of the host committee contributes just the minimum requested donation of \$500, that would start the Republican challenger off with well over \$25,000. And that doesn't even include the money that'll be raised from the guests who will attend.

That alone will immediately make Fellows a serious, credible candidate. And running against a vulnerable opponent in a district with only a slight Democrat advantage makes this race potentially the best chance for a GOP pickup a year from now.

But here's the big question: Will the Assembly Republican Caucus **ENDORSE** Fellows prior to the GOP primary next August – or will it stay neutral, as it has historically done in the past, should some other Republican jump into this race? If they're serious about winning the majority, they better start endorsing their top candidates...or they're going to have a lot of trouble recruiting other high-quality candidates like Sean Fellows.