



## **RESTORING THE SOUL OF AMERICA**

Eight years ago, I stood before you for the first time to ask for your nomination as the Democratic candidate for Colorado's First Congressional District. I sought your support so that I could help carry on the fight begun by Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. and continued by President Bill Clinton for the soul of our nation. Like you and me, they saw an America where everyone had the economic and educational opportunities necessary to build their own American dreams, where every man, woman and child had health care, and where people around the world truly viewed our nation as a beacon of freedom and peace.

Over the past eight years, we have shared in some important victories in this struggle. As the Democratic Floor Whip, I have worked arm in arm with Nancy Pelosi to lead a revitalized and united Democratic Party to stand up to the ill-conceived Republican agenda. As co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Choice Caucus, I have worked with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to expose the true anti-women agenda of the Republican Party and to protect women's reproductive rights. We expanded government health insurance programs to cover thousands more children. We restored critical funding to Denver's safety net hospitals, so they can continue to provide care for the uninsured and underinsured. After a long struggle, we won a significant environmental justice victory with the ongoing cleanup of neighborhoods in Northwest Denver. Thanks to federal funding, light rail is thriving in Denver.

This is only the start. For, we are still engaged in a battle for the soul of America.

That is why today, I am honored and privileged to stand before you and ask for the Democratic nomination to continue this fight as the representative of the First Congressional District of Colorado.

Over the next two years and beyond, we can restore the hope to our government and nation that have too long been absent. Whether it is the economy, health care, the environment, or foreign policy, we can have a government that helps us solve our problems, not create new ones.

First, we must restore some commonsense Colorado values to our nation's economic policies. This means spending only the money the government has in its coffers and suspending the massive, debt-fueling tax giveaways to the ultra-wealthy so beloved by President George W. Bush.

Getting our financial house in order will enable us to begin building a health care system that covers every American regardless of age, health or employment status. This is a long-term project, but as first steps, we must find a way to ensure that small businesses are able to provide all of their employees affordable, quality health care and that no patient is turned away from a hospital because he or she is uninsured or underinsured.

We must stop the assault on our public lands by the Bush Administration. As Coloradans, we know that our few remaining wild lands provide a lasting link to our Western heritage and are critical for ranching and outfitting as well as wildlife habitat. The time is long gone when our nation could abandon despoiled land for greener pastures farther west. That is why I remain committed to protecting, once and for all, the last wild lands in Colorado for our children and grandchildren and for generations of Americans not yet born.

Finally -- we must restore accountability to our government and our foreign policy. It is wholly unacceptable -- fundamentally un-American -- for our leaders to blame their failure on a handful of enlisted soldiers. Let me be clear, the horrific acts of torture in Iraq are a symptom of a much larger problem -- a foreign policy corrupted by lies, arrogance and ignorance. The buck must stop with the White House -- George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld must account for the irreparable damage they have done to our country's national security and international prestige.

I am so proud to have represented the First Congressional District of Colorado for the past eight years. During that period, we have accomplished an enormous amount. But, there is much left to accomplish. That is why I ask for your nomination to continue the battle as your representative in Congress. With the same help and support you have given so generously, we will succeed and restore the soul of America.