



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, Oct. 24, 2011

Rod Blum Launches Campaign before Enthusiastic Overflow Crowd

DUBUQUE – Rod Blum today formally announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination in Iowa's new First Congressional District.

Before an overflow crowd at The Best Western Hotel, Blum said, “I’m not a career politician... Overall, I’m just an average American who loves this country and believes we’ve lost sight of the principles that made this the greatest country on the face of the Earth. I want to do my part to remind Washington of those principles before we pass this country on to our children.”

Iowa's new First Congressional District covers 20 counties in northeast Iowa, including Allamakee, Benton, Bremer, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Howard, Iowa, Jackson, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Mitchell, Poweshiek, Tama, Winneshiek and Worth counties.

The full text of Blum's announcement speech follows:

Thank everyone for taking time out of your day to be here. I SINCERELY appreciate it.

For those who may not know me, my name is Rod Blum and I’m running for the Republican nomination to represent you in Iowa’s new First District.

I don’t really like talking about myself but I’m going to tell you a little bit about myself, what I believe in and why I’m running.

I was born and raised in Dubuque.

My father quit school in the 10th grade, and lied about his age so he could join the Navy to fight in World War II. After the war he worked as a laborer at Dubuque’s meat packing plant.

My mother also quit school in the 10th grade to marry my father before he shipped out. With 4 boys in the house, she had to clean other people’s houses to buy groceries.

Mom just turned 82 last month, lives in her own home, and is 100% dependent on Social Security and Medicare. Needless to say those programs are very important to her.

We didn't have much money. When I begged my parents for something, most of the time the answer was "N...O....we can't afford it". I didn't like to hear that answer but my parents knew they couldn't spend more than they made. If my parents, with their 10th grade educations, could figure that out . . .
WHY CAN'T WASHINGTON POLITICIANS?

Like so many other people in this great country, I worked to pay my way through college, earned a Masters Degree in Business, landed a job in the computer industry and started working on my own version of the American Dream.

I was one of the owners of a software company that grew from 5 to 325 employees in just five years. Our payroll grew from about \$100,000 a year to over \$10,000,000 a year. That company went public on the NASDAQ stock exchange. As the Chief Executive Officer, I was honored to receive an Iowa Entrepreneur of the Year award.

Today I am an owner of Digital Canal Software, based in Dubuque. We develop and design and sell software for the Home Building and Structural Engineering markets worldwide.

- I've met a payroll every week for 21 YEARS.
- I've balanced a budget for 21 YEARS.
- I've created jobs in the private sector.
- I've taken risks - and sometimes failed. But I've have NEVER expected a government bailout.
- I've have to deal, EVERY DAY, with the burdens that Washington DC puts on the backs of business.

I'm also a real estate developer. I've experienced, **FIRSTHAND**, the frustration dealing with government agencies, such as the E.P.A.

Recently my development partnership was looking at developing 100 acres of land and building around 250 homes on that land – a total investment of over \$50 million.

Things were going fine until the government entered the picture. We were faced with Endangered Plant Studies, Endangered Species Studies, and Indian Artifact Studies.

But the straw that broke the camel's back was a Wetlands Mitigation Study. A small valley – that we wanted to fill in - was classified as a "wetlands" because when it rained, the valley collected water and had water runoff . . . imagine that?

We were told that we had to purchase "offsetting man-made wetlands" in Council Bluffs Iowa. Needless to say our \$50 million investment ended up being ZERO.

And get this: if I were a farmer, the federal government would **PAY ME** to de-water that same valley. And Bruce Braley wonders why our economy is on life support.

I was also a boys basketball coach at Dubuque Senior High School. I always taught my players that **SUCCESS** was a 3-legged stool – one leg was **HARD WORK**, the second leg was **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** and the third leg was **BELIEF IN YOURSELF**. I am praying that "hard work", "personal responsibility" and "belief in the individual" are going to make a comeback in Washington DC November of next year!

I'm also a student pilot. I was always a fearful flyer on the airlines so my wife Karen suggested I learn to fly to conquer my fears. And it's worked!

But I'll never forget the training flight when we covered "emergency" procedures. We had climbed to 7000 ft when my flight instructor pulled the engine.

Sam said to me "Ok Rod you just lost your only engine. What is the first thing you would do"? I said to him, "Before or after I clean up my pants"!

Also in my spare time I've written a conservative political newspaper column for the Telegraph Herald over the last ten years. So my conservative stands on the issues are well documented.

And most importantly I am a husband to Karen, and a father to Trevor Taylor, Tanner and Sophie, a stepfather to Autumn, who is enlisted in the United States Navy stationed in Utah, and surrogate father to Malcolm, a former basketball player of mine from Chicago, who was orphaned at the age of 19.

I believe everyone here would agree: FAMILY is the backbone of our society. And it's the breakdown of the family that is contributing to many of our problems in America.

I've coached quite a few inner city kids from Chicago. Those kids didn't need another government program. They need to grow up in a household that has a father in it.

And they need to know that bad choices will be punished and good choices will be rewarded. My friends, WASHINGTON DC has turned that equation upside down: bad choices are now rewarded and good choices are penalized. And that's just plain wrong.

Overall, I'm just an average American who:

- loves this country
- But I believe that under the leadership of Barack Obama, Nancy Pelosi and Bruce Braley we have lost sight of those principles that made this the greatest country on the face of the Earth

Democrats are the party of government because they don't have faith in the American people. What was once a system of LIMITED government has evolved into a government with NO limits at all.

Democrats always want to raise taxes – because they trust government to spend the money more wisely than the people who earned it. They want the national debate to pit one citizen against another citizen . . . arguing about who is or isn't paying their "fair share".

The debate should be: what is the proper role of government and what should the government's "fair share" of your paycheck be?

We don't need the federal government telling us what kind of light bulbs to use, what kind of cars to drive and what kind of toilets to flush!

I BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL PERSON. As Ronald Reagan said: government isn't the solution to the problem – government IS the problem!

NANCY PELOSI AND BRUCE BRALEY BELIEVE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PICK THE WINNERS AND THE LOSERS.

- Democrats picked solar manufacturer Solyndra as a winner and we, the taxpayers, were the losers ... we lost \$500 million on that pick.
- The big banks that were bailed out. They won. The losers? Taxpayers – we're going to lose \$25 billion.
- General Motors and Chrysler were bailed out. The losers? Taxpayers – we're down \$15 billion on that deal so far.
- And then there's Cash for Clunkers. If your car "qualified", Bruce Braley gave you cash for your clunker. You won. If your car didn't qualify, you lose.

I BELIEVE CONSUMERS SHOULD DETERMINE THE WINNERS AND LOSERS IN A FREE MARKET SYSTEM.

- I don't believe in bailouts.
- I don't believe in corporate welfare
- and I don't believe in "too big to fail".

BOTH parties have been guilty of crony capitalism but THIS Republican believes companies should rise or fall WITHOUT taxpayer money.

NANCY PELOSI AND BRUCE BRALEY ARE SADDLING OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WITH MOUNTAINS OF DEBT.

Since Barack Obama has taken office, he and Bruce Braley have racked up \$4 TRILLION DOLLARS in deficits. Our national debt stands at \$15 trillion. Our GDP this year will be \$15 trillion so our debt equals 100% our GDP. That's not good. Leading economists agree that as a country's debt grows its economic growth rates shrinks.

Their conclusion is that when debt exceeds 90% of GDP, bad things ultimately happen. Today our debt stands at 100% of GDP. If we don't start living within our means, Greece's future will be our future.

Bruce Braley has stuck his finger in the wind to see which way the political breezes are blowing. He has travelled around Iowa holding "deficit town-hall meetings".

Bruce says he's concerned about the debt but votes with Nancy Pelosi 98% of the time to spend record amounts of your hard-earned money. You can't have it both ways Bruce.

I BELIEVE IN FISCAL COMMON SENSE.

Revenues to the government have grown by 24% since 2001, the last time we had a balanced budget. But expenditures have skyrocketed by 81%.

We don't have a revenue problem – we have a spending addiction. We need to send people to Washington who believe NO is an acceptable answer sometimes. My parents had it right – we need to live within our means.

NANCY PELOSI AND BRUCE BRALEY BELIEVE THAT ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT AND A WOMAN'S CHOICE. I believe in the sanctity of life from conception to cradle to the grave. I believe that human life has a natural right to be protected – consistent with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The older I get the less attention I pay to what people say and more attention to what they actually do. Quite frankly, people are sick and tired of hearing one thing from politicians on the campaign trail and seeing a different thing once they're in office. And Republicans are just as guilty as Democrats of forgetting whose money they're spending and who they're supposed to be representing.

After spending trillions of dollars on Washington DC solutions, most of the problems have gotten worse.

- Educational scores have declined.
- Out-of-wedlock births are commonplace.
- Class envy and wealth redistribution is replacing the American Dream.
- The middle class in America is treading water.
- Their wages have gone backwards in real terms.
- At the same time, their food, energy and healthcare costs have increased.
- The cost of a college education for their children has skyrocketed.

But in our effort to build a great society centered on government, we have lost sight of the principles that made us great . . . a greatness that was achieved through freedom and personal struggle.

But I am optimistic about our future because I am witnessing an increasing number of citizens in this country who are willing to stand up to Washington DC.

For example, the phenomenon of the Tea Party movement is the greatest example of grassroots citizenship I have seen in this country in my lifetime.

- I stand with every Patriot who believes Washington DC is out of control.
- I stand with every Patriot who believes the proper role of government should be limited.
- I stand with every Patriot who wants to hold Washington accountable.
- I stand with every Patriot who believes America's greatness comes from its citizens, who are free to pursue their happiness.

I believe the American people now realize that the welfare state has failed. Going forward our collective challenge is to replace it with a government based on those principles that made America a gift to the world.

I'm looking forward to the challenge – I SINCERELY hope you'll join with me!