

Pro-Life Senate Candidate Narrowly Defeated in Pennsylvania

By Bill Fancher and Jody Brown
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(AgapePress) - Conservatives are expressing disappointment with the results of Tuesday's Republican primary in Pennsylvania. Despite his liberal voting record, Senator Arlen Specter beat out challenger Pat Toomey, who had the support of many pro-family people.

The final tally was very close -- 51 percent to 49 percent. After more than a million ballots had been counted, Specter won by a little more than 16,000 votes statewide. But he won in 47 of the state's 67 counties, including most of the central part of Pennsylvania, by a margin of 70,000 votes.

During the bruising primary, Specter's negative television advertising repeated the slogan endlessly when describing Toomey: "He's not far right; he's far out." The incumbent also portrayed Toomey as a zealot out of step with today's GOP. Pro-family activist Gary Bauer says he was not impressed.

"I'm surprised that Senator Specter would judge anyone else's Republicanism given that on virtually every major area of concern to the Republican Party, unfortunately, he's voted more like a Democrat than a Republican," Bauer says.



Gary Bauer

Specter's liberalism has angered GOP leadership on many occasions. Bauer describes the four-term senator as "the ultimate RINO -- Republican In Name Only." Still, Specter garnered the endorsement of the GOP establishment, including President Bush and the other Pennsylvania senator, Rick Santorum -- a staunch defender of traditional values who has a lifetime rating of 86 (out of 100) from the American Conservative Union. Such backing disturbed Bauer.

"Specter was getting his money from people that hate the president,

oppose everything the administration stands for -- and yet they [the GOP leadership] blindly went in and supported this extreme liberal at the expense of a loyal pro-family, pro-life conservative," Bauer states.

President Bush narrowly lost Pennsylvania to Al Gore in the 2000 election. Observers believe Bush and Santorum see Specter's appeal to moderate Republicans in the Philadelphia area as a better tactical alliance for the president in November.

On Wednesday morning, Specter thanked Bush and Santorum for their "unwavering support" and for "solidly being in my corner." Then he went back to his standard mantra of trimming tax cuts, resisting school vouchers, and continuing embryonic stem-cell research -- all of which are in direct opposition to the White House.

Toomey was not without his own high-profile conservative supporters. Foremost among them was well-known Christian author and commentator Dr. James Dobson, who lauded Toomey for his pro-family and pro-life voting record in the U.S. House. Specter, Dobson said, opposes "nearly everything we hold dear"; Toomey, on the other hand, he said would be "a splendid pro-family, pro-life voice" in the Senate.

The challenger also had the backing of the conservative economic group Club for Growth which, according to the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, poured \$2 million dollars into the race. That report quoted Club for Growth head Stephen Moore as saying Specter's "scalp on the wall would be a cautionary lesson" to other Republican moderates who might be tempted to stray from conservative thinking.

While many say the president's support pushed Specter over the top, [Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania is taking credit for Toomey's defeat](#). The pro-abortion group claims that during the final week of the campaign it contacted almost 40,000 pro-choice Republicans, urging them to protect abortion rights by voting against Toomey.

Specter's opponent in November will be Democrat Joe Hoeffel, a three-term U.S. congressman from the state's 13th District. Hoeffel has been quoted as saying Specter moved too far to the right in the Republican primary to be successful in November. There are almost 400,000 more registered Democrats than Republicans in the Keystone State.