

Senators Inhofe, Coburn and Kyl,

As a longtime supporter of your courageous championing of core conservative principals in Washington, I am saddened by your recent letter in support of Carly Fiorina.

As I'm sure you've seen over the past year, voters don't like Senators who don't read bills before they vote on them. Voters (and donors) also don't like Senators who get involved in contested primaries, especially without having done their homework. I would respectfully suggest that in the future you conduct more detailed research on candidates before endorsing them.

Senator Inhofe, like the global warming fear mongers you so admirably excoriate, you are taking action without verifying the facts. The only explanation that comes to mind for this is the fact that your nephew works for Fiorina's campaign. At a minimum, this conflict should be disclosed before you ask the voters of California to take your word that Ms. Fiorina is the conservative she claims to be.

I know a little bit about Carly Fiorina, having watched her almost destroy the company my grandfather founded. So, allow me to disillusion you of a few of your stated reasons for supporting her.

You write that she is a "proven business leader." This may be how she spins her career, but most business commentators consider Fiorina's tenure at HP to be a disaster. The stock price dropped by 50% only to rally 10% on the announcement of her firing. She fired 28,000 people before she herself was fired, departing with the 21 million dollar golden parachute that is financing her campaign. Thankfully, HP survived Fiorina and is again a flourishing company. This is largely due to the leadership of Mark Hurd, the man who replaced her. Prior to HP, she escaped from Lucent (where she ran their largest division) in the nick of time, leaving months before problems became evident, eventually leading to Lucent and nine executives being charged with securities law violations.

You say that Democrats fear Fiorina and use her name in fundraising. There is another explanation: her name is widely reviled in California - invoking her paints all Republicans as greedy out of touch CEOs. This is why Boxer uses her name as a fundraising tool.

All of this might be forgivable if Ms. Fiorina had the proven record of conservatism on the issues that you attribute to her. Sadly she doesn't. She can't even say that she's participated, having voted in only five of the last 18 elections in California, never voted in New Jersey and never even registered in Maryland. In 2008, she went so far as to say, "I've not been politically active before. Never had an affiliation before. Didn't even know the key issues."

If Ms. Fiorina is what passes for conservative in Washington today, then the establishment has veered sadly to the left, chasing after the progressive liberal agenda that has fared so well in Virginia, New Jersey and even Massachusetts. Now that she is beginning to focus on the issues, Ms. Fiorina is, if not still undecided, at best misguided. Let's look at a couple of her positions:

- **Taxation-** While she claims to be against tax increases she has repeatedly called for taxation of the internet
- **Cap and tax-** While she claims to be against this assault on America's competitive edge and tax on its working class, she is in favor of the "climate legislation" sponsored by Senators Kerry and Graham and has repeatedly advocated for government sponsored green jobs
- **Education-** You say she will oppose "radical 'government takeover' policies," but she wrote a thesis advocating for just such a federal takeover of the education system from individual states. While she wrote this 20 years ago, she today reaffirmed her belief in big government education policy standing behind her thesis and asking that all voters read it for themselves
- **Judicial nominees-** When asked her position on Justice Sonia Sotomayor's confirmation, Ms. Fiorina stated "I probably would have voted for Sotomayor. She seemed qualified." Had Fiorina been in the Senate, she would have disagreed with all but 9 members of the Republican caucus
- **Affirmative action-** Ms. Fiorina has gone so far as to state that there will be no ""truly representative democracy unless women make up half at least of our elected representatives." She is a longtime associate and cheerleader for Jesse Jackson. In your collective wisdom, has outcome-based equality become a tenet of conservatism today?

More disturbingly, by referring to Ms. Fiorina's "liberal opponents," you imply that her competition is to the left of her and these progressive positions. While Tom Campbell is certainly a social liberal, he has (at least until very recently) a strong conservative record on fiscal matters. You also completely neglect to mention that there is a real conservative in the race: Assemblyman Chuck DeVore, who has a long and clear record on every issue.

Finally, no one who watched the Compaq battle and, more recently, the "Demon Sheep" ad campaign led by your nephew, could call her mud-slinging tactics whenever she is challenged principled.

Luckily, in California, unlike Washington, a golden parachute alone won't buy a nomination and voters, unlike Senators, will look at Ms. Fiorina's views on the issues and her record.

With all due respect,
Arianna Packard