



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact: Andrew Cole**  
**(303)-300-2010**

## **Statement from Sen. Josh Penry**

**Littleton** – Senate Republican Leader Josh Penry released the following statement today in an email to supporters:

The Fight Still Matters, The Cause Remains....

As you have no doubt heard, I made the difficult choice to leave the race for Governor - a race that me, my family, my team and so many supporters poured our hearts and souls into for nearly 6 months. Politics being what it is, some yahoo got word of my decision and decided to tell the Washington Post before I could tell many of my closest friends -- or even my employer at Home Loan and Investment, Company. Needless to say, I'll be on the phone all day for a couple days saying, with all the sincerity of a grateful heart, thank you to those who stood with us.

Word jumped out quick yesterday; that's politics I guess. And that's OK. Truth is, it is a tough business. I know that. In fact, one of the reasons our campaign was making such fantastic progress is I relish the fight. Maybe it's the old quarterback in me - I live for the fray, for the arena. You don't run for Governor at 33 by being bashful or timid.

But I'm also a person who keeps his eyes wide open - a good pilot is always looking at the instruments. And in the aftermath of last Tuesday's crushing Republican victories in New Jersey and Virginia, this much became certain: Republicans stand poised to make-up much of the ground we've lost, as the American people are being reminded in a profound way of the perils of big government once more.

In Colorado the chances for Republican recovery are real. Quite literally, if Republicans are strong and smart, we can make up the ground we've lost in this State in the last 6 years.

And the opportunity for a resurgence for our Grand Old Party in America and in Colorado posed a predicament for me: do I spend the next 9 months engaging in a \$5 million battle of attrition against Scott McInnis -- believing that I'd be a better Governor than Scott, but knowing just as surely that Scott would be far superior to 4 more years of Bill Ritter? Or do I step back, wait to charge the Gubernatorial hill another day, and instead put my energy, focus and network to use helping to beat Bill Ritter and make sure Republicans running for other offices can ride the tidal wave too?

On this much let me be clear: I think I'm the right guy for the job, and I've never walked away from a fight in my life. And the thought of building a team of smart and innovative conservatives to fix the mess that Bill Ritter has made kept me motivated every day. Like I said, I live for the fray, and I was eager to serve as Governor - to get this state moving in the right direction again.

But I'm not the only candidate who can beat Bill Ritter, and the fact is that the road to the nomination is long and expensive -- a diversion of resources at a time when the fight should be focused on defeating Bill Ritter and those who have supported his agenda. And other facts are just as apparent: Scott McInnis' tenure in Congress gave him a built-in advantage coming into this race. And rather than spending the next several months and millions fighting to close that gap, we decided to step back and live to fight another day.

There's an old saying: discretion is the better part of valor. In this case, it is true – disappointing, but true.

In the last two days I have had two meetings with Scott McInnis. No deals, no job offers, no promises, no endorsements. The conversation was meaningful. We don't agree on everything, but he's ready for the job. But before I make any decision to endorse, I want to know more about the agenda that he's going to bring to the office. I want to know how he will govern. Republicans are hungry for reform-minded leadership – a conservative agenda that addresses the challenges of our day -- and I've encouraged Scott to embrace just that.

That's what ran Democrats out of the Governor's mansions in New Jersey and Virginia. That's the message that will defeat Bill Ritter too.

In the coming days, after we've had more time to talk in a detailed way about his governing vision, I'll have an announcement about who I am going to endorse. From there it will be the job of the voters to decide. For my part, I will do everything to ensure that conservatives have a meaningful choice – to ensure that the agenda projected by the Republican nominee is limited, disciplined, focused government. A government that doesn't aspire to be all things to all people, and a government that does what it should do well.

As a reminder of the stakes of the contest ahead, the Ritter attack machine is already coming after Scott. When my son Chase and I were leaving the Broncos game Monday night, I saw a fundraising email from Team Ritter calling McInnis a candidate from the "Old".

Attention Bill Ritter's spin meisters: raising taxes and fees by a billion dollars in a recession is a lot of things, but it isn't smart and it isn't new. Expanding the reach and influence of union bosses in state government isn't fresh and it isn't new. Releasing prisoners from prison rather than cutting the bureaucracy - that may seem new down at Democratic Party headquarters on Santa Fe, but to all the rest of Colorado it seems like a plain bad idea. And new it is not.

Bill Ritter is an honorable man, but his policies are the living, breathing embodiment of the failed big government philosophies of yesterday. These are the same failed policies that were run out of Trenton and Richmond last Tuesday. And next November, they will be run out of Denver too.

In any case, Bill Ritter accusing anyone of embracing the old is the absurd equivalent of me attacking Josh McDaniels for being too young.

Governor, that dog don't hunt.

But that's a debate for the coming months. As you can see, it is a debate that I'm not walking away from.

Because the fight still matters. The cause remains.

And while I am disappointed that I won't be the candidate who carries the fight to Bill Ritter, I am heartened by the amazing outpouring of support Jamie, Chase, Emme and I have received from the four corners of Colorado. Like you, we will stay in the fight, even if in a different role than we envisioned when we announced in Grand Junction earlier this summer.

It's a fight we can win. Together, it's a fight we will win.

So let's go make it happen.

With gratitude,

Josh Penry

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