

MEMO

To: Interested Parties
From: Jeff Gohringer, LCV Victory Fund
Re: Climate Change Plays a Key Role in Florida Special Election
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2014

The outcome in tonight's special election in Florida's 13th Congressional district is far from certain. But one thing is clear – by the time the polls close tonight, climate change will have played a leading role in the campaign, standing out in a crowded race with unprecedented spending and national attention. It builds on a shift in the politics of climate change that [started in 2012](#) and continued to [gain momentum in 2013](#).

If we want Congress to take action, we have to change the politics of climate change and call out the deniers. That's why we launched the Flat Earth Five program in 2012 to defeat five climate change deniers. We quickly built a track record of success, spending roughly \$3 million on the program and defeating [four of the five](#) climate change deniers we targeted for defeat - Rep. Ann Marie Buerkle (NY-24), Rep. Francisco Canseco (TX-23), Rep. Joe Walsh (IL-08) and Rep. Dan Lungren (CA-07).

In February, LCV announced that David Jolly would be the first candidate named to the 2014 Flat Earth Five. LCV Victory Fund followed up the announcement by teaming up with the Sierra Club Political Committee to launch a \$350,000 television [ad campaign](#) hitting David Jolly's [recent comments](#) denying that climate change is a significant enough problem to require action.

Despite the fact that the scientific views on climate change are as solid as any public policy question will ever get, Jolly told the *Tampa Bay Times*, "I don't think the impact that humans have had on our climate is so dramatic that it requires a significant shift in federal policy." His comments fly in the face of the facts, and show how dangerously out-of-step he is with his own district. The *Times* then [editorialized](#) that Jolly was "wrong on climate change," and that he and Libertarian candidate Lucas Overby "need to go back to their science books and learn some facts, not just talking points. And then they need to sign up to do something about it for the people they say they want to represent in Congress."

The investment by LCV Victory Fund and Sierra Club Political Committee was among the biggest of the campaign. In fact, while the final spending numbers have yet to be tallied, the most recent figures indicate that our investment was nearly half of what David Jolly's campaign spent during the entire campaign. It was the most any outside group spent supporting Alex Sink other than the DCCC and House Majority PAC, and was comparable to the amount invested by conservative groups like American Crossroads. And our spending helped raise the issue of climate change, which also played a key role in a [debate](#) between the candidates.

Jolly wasn't just on the wrong side of science throughout this campaign, he was on the wrong side of his constituents. LCV Victory Fund released a [poll](#) yesterday not only showing Alex Sink in the lead, but [most trusted](#) to deal with the issue of climate change by an overwhelming 17 point margin. In fact, 69% of voters in the poll said that it's important for their new member in Congress to address climate change, including 44% that said it's "very important."

The public's views on climate change have been confirmed in [poll](#) after [poll](#) after [poll](#). But David Jolly ignored climate science every step of the way and defended his Big Oil allies over the people of Florida. Every vote counts in a close race like this, and David Jolly's climate change denial has the potential to cost him votes he couldn't afford to lose.

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