

Capuano for Dems

The reality is that as smart — and committed — as the Democratic contenders for U.S. Senate are, no flesh-and-blood human being can duplicate the four decades of experience the late Sen. Ted Kennedy brought to the job.

And while this newspaper often clashed with the senior senator on issues, what we admired most about him was his steadfastness to the causes in which he believed and his unparalleled devotion to this state, its people and the institutions which make it so special.

Those should be benchmarks by which voters choose his successor. And by that standard it's **U.S. Rep. Michael Capuano** who stands out as the best qualified of the Democratic candidates to fill that seat at a critical juncture in this nation's history.

As Capuano is fond of pointing out himself, he is ready to do the job, because he has *done* the job. These aren't theoretical issues to Capuano. He has already voted on the health care bill in the House. He has made clear his opposition to increasing military troop strength in Afghanistan, even if it means opposing a president of his own party.

"We have accomplished our mission in Afghanistan," he said during a debate yesterday co-sponsored by the Boston Herald and Suffolk University. The mis-

sion was to rid Afghanistan of al-Qaeda, he added, and not to "protect a corrupt regime."

And in 2002 he was one of only 19 House members voting to reinstitute a pay-as-you-go system aimed at cutting deficit spending, something he insisted, "was not a new issue to me."

As congressman from the 8th District Capuano has among his "constituents" 34 colleges and universities and the lion's share of the state's health care facilities. Not surprisingly the 8th District gets more National Institutes of Health grants than just about any other district in the nation. And while Capuano has not tended to their needs single-handedly (Kennedy and Sen. John Kerry were always leaders on such things), he can claim some of the credit.

Capuano has also demonstrated throughout his decade of service in the House that he — and his staff — can deal with the nitty-gritty of constituent services the way Kennedy and his office were so good at.

But what we like best about Capuano is what others find so off-putting — his fire, his passion, his take-no-prisoners way of dealing with issues. It's, well, Kennedyesque.

The Herald is pleased to endorse Michael Capuano for the Democratic Senate nomination.

Scott Brown for the GOP

Oh and by the way, there is a race on the Republican side, too.

Of the two candidates seeking the GOP nomination in the special Senate election there is one very clear choice. That is **Scott Brown**, the three-term Republican state senator from Wrentham.

Brown bills himself as an independent thinker, which a Republican in Massachusetts surely must be to win over independents and Democrats, but his reasoned views on health care reform, government spending and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are also well within the Republican mainstream.

He acknowledges the need to reform the nation's health care system, but is troubled by bills under consideration

in Washington. (He has plenty of company in that view.) Brown has particularly questioned the wisdom of a costly public option that could quickly become the *only* option — and he has raised legitimate questions about the impact of proposed cuts to Medicare on Massachusetts health care providers.

Brown also brings to the race a perspective that no other candidate in either party can claim: As a member of the Massachusetts National Guard he has a unique understanding of every decision the Congress will make on troop deployments.

The Herald is pleased to endorse Scott Brown for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate.



LETTERS

Send your opinion to Letters, Boston Herald, P.O. Box 55843, Boston, MA 02205-5843 or via e-mail to letterstoeditor@bostonherald.com. All must be typewritten; some may be edited.

Thanks due to Eagan

I thank Margery Eagan for having the courage to keep telling the truth about the clergy abuse crisis ("He who cast the first stone lives in glass house," Nov. 26). Bishop Thomas Tobin has acknowledged 125 accused pedophile priests in his diocese, but refuses to let the people of his diocese know their whereabouts. He continues to put innocent children at risk and enables the pedophiles to continue to rape and molest the most vulnerable members of our society. He should have made sure his skirts were clean before attacking Rep. Patrick Kennedy for doing his job.

— **Stephen A. Sheehan**,
Publisher, NSAC News
National Survivor Advocates
Coalition

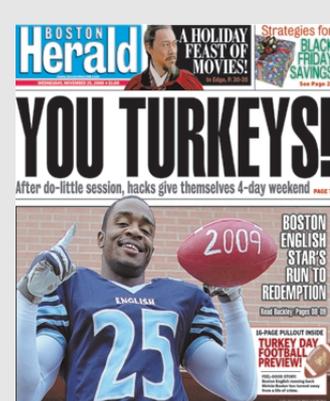
Party's over

Putting phony pardons aside and with troops dying in Afghanistan, the recent intruders at the White House only point out the absurdity of state dinners ("White House: State dinner crashers met Obama," Nov. 28). Our new cry for this season should be: Pardon the troops and kill the turkey!

— **Bill Pruyn, Franklin**

A shining light

As a friend and co-worker of Merna Van I can say without hesitation that she is a shining light in our industry ("Bigwigs leave career dreams on the ground," Nov. 30). While most of our Bos-



Your reps at work

Nothing in state law says that legislators have formal sessions until the third Wednesday in November (Nov. 25).

It is a joint committee of senators and representatives that sets the meeting schedule and if you think this is early, in 2010 the formal sessions end on July 30 so they can campaign for re-election from August to November while collecting their full-time salary.

— **Gerry Nutter, Lowell**

ton-based crew members are sitting around feeling blindsided and betrayed (myself included) Merna has taken a different path. A path that includes enlightening the public to the plight of our industry. Thank you Merna; although your efforts may fall on deaf ears within USAirway's management team, your co-workers, pilots and flight atten-

dants alike appreciate your standing up for not just us but our industry as a whole. Way to go!

— **Elizabeth O'Brien**,
Hampton Falls, N.H.

Save the stripers

Every species that is prohibited from commercial sale at market ends up surviving and doing much better than those that are targeted ("Mass. weighs tougher protections for striped bass," Nov. 29).

Fact: Making striped bass a game fish will keep it from being destroyed like our other ocean fish already have been decimated. More jobs will be created than will be lost, the commonwealth will reap greater revenue from the net increase in economic activity and we will be protecting the stripers for our grandchildren just as we have already protected deer, ducks, trout and fresh water bass.

— **Dean Clark, Shrewsbury**

It's fans' trophy too

The 1912 World Series cup belongs to the Red Sox and their fans ("Museum hopes to show Red Sox trophy," Nov. 28). It should go to Fenway Park or to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

This is not just another piece for a collector to hold onto for his personal satisfaction. Let's display it where it really belongs — not in the Garden where the Bruins and Celtics play or in a home like a collection of baseball cards.

— **Donald E. Kelly Sr.**,
Newburyport