

Fellow Idaho Republicans,

Today, a good friend of mine - Michael Steele - was elected as the new Chairman of the Republican National Committee. As an early supporter, and part of his leadership team -- one of his twelve whips nationwide - - I couldn't be happier or more proud of where our party is headed.

Michael Steele has the perfect combination of skills -- charisma, optimism and common sense conservative values -- to lead a national resurgence of the Republican Party among the rank-and-file grassroots, as well as everyday Americans.

Michael and I have known each other for almost 20 years, since we went to law school together at Georgetown. In fact we ran against each other for vice president of the evening division in 1990 -- a race I won by a scant 3 votes. I am glad today's race was not that close!

Michael called me soon after the November elections and I told him that I would be proud to support him. He later asked me to be on his leadership team as one of a dozen whips across the country, helping to garner votes among the 168 members of the RNC.

Michael came to Boise to visit and strategize with me over breakfast at the Grove Hotel on January 18. We discussed the success that Republicans enjoy in Idaho and how to make that happen in other states. Now that vision is set to become a reality.

On behalf of Idaho Republicans, I have already thanked former RNC Chairman Mike Duncan for his service to our party, He visited our great state this fall, prior to the general election, and I also had the opportunity to sit down with him again in Boise earlier this month. In my email communication this afternoon, I also thanked him for the class and dignity that he has shown during this important transition for the party.

Michael Steele is scheduled to come to Idaho next month -- he is the featured speaker and guest of honor at the Ada County Lincoln Day Banquet on February 18 -- something I also was also proud to play a role in arranging. I look forward to having the opportunity to introduce our new Republican Chairman -- and my good friend -- to Idahoans.

Norm Semanko, Chairman
Idaho Republican Party