

MARK SCHAUER: HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA

I managed to get some of Blue America-endorsed candidate Mark Schauer's (candidate for MI-07, just west of Ann Arbor) time on Wednesday. We talked about the crummy auto industry, what he hopes to accomplish when we elect him to Congress next year, and his wife's recipe for Pasty Pie—some of which I'll write up at more length in the coming days. But for now, I wanted to share what Mark had to say, on Wednesday, as he looked forward to the July Fourth weekend.

emptywheel: The question is, as we go into the July Fourth weekend, and there's lots of people feeling very frustrated about the status of our Constitution and the values that went into that original Fourth of July, what can you, Mark Schauer do, when you get to DC, to restore the Constitution and to restore those values that are all about Fourth of July?

Schauer: I think our country has been steered off a cliff by this Administration, they've compromised our Constitution in lots of ways. I've spoken out against the FISA issue and I've also talked with my constituents about basic things like signing statements that this President has abused. And a Vice President, Dick Cheney, on one hand insists he's a member of the Executive Branch, and on the other hand, insists he's a member of the legislative branch. I think one of the ways we restore our reputation abroad is by restoring our commitment to our Constitution. I will defend people's privacy, I will defend people's protection under the Constitution at every opportunity. I will take that oath of office seriously—frankly, as I have

as a member of the Michigan legislature. And I think that that's part of the change that this country is ready for and I look forward to helping to bring that about.

emptywheel: What do you think Congress can do moving forward—because so far Congress hasn't been successful at bringing the Administration in check, even though we all admit that there are these problems and we've got a terrible reputation abroad. What do you think one Congressperson can do to help restore the Consitution?

Schauer: I think actively uphold that oath. I think one of the roles of a legislature is oversight over the Executive Branch. Now, I'm going to be enthusiastically campaigning for Barack Obama and I hope he's our President. But let me be clear—my job is not to work for a future President Obama, my job is to work for the people of my district. And so part of our job is to hold that President accountable to the Constitution, to provide legislative oversight that's in the law, whether it's from a budgetary or a War Powers standpoint. I think that's what the people will be electing me to do.

emptywheel: Anything else you want to say as we go into the July Fourth weekend?

Schauer: Happy Birthday America!

I hope our candidates around the country are reflecting on these questions, too, this weekend.