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Last Updated: 5:31 pm | Friday, October 17, 2008



Davis passes on appearances with foe

By Patrick Crowley • pcrowley@nky.com • October 17, 2008

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Republican Congressman Geoff Davis is skipping another chance to appear on television to discuss issues and platforms with his Democratic opponent, Dr. Michael Kelley of Oldham County.

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Davis, a two-term incumbent from Hebron, refused to tape a joint appearance with Kelley Friday morning for Newsmakers, a program produced by WKRC television in Cincinnati that airs 11 a.m. Sunday. Davis also failed to show Oct. 6 for a debate with Kelley that was broadcast statewide on Kentucky Educational Television (KET).

As he did for the KET debate, Kelley will appear alone on Newsmakers.

"I would expect a public servant to take an opportunity like the one you have offered to explain their decisions over the last few years to the voters," said Kelley, a medical doctor

making his first run for office. "It is a shame Congressman Davis refuses to show."

Davis' spokesman Jeremy Hughes said the Congressman isn't appearing on Newsmakers for the same reason he didn't appear on KET; Kelley is not running a credible campaign.

Quoting the Kentucky Enquirer's endorsement of Davis, Hughes compared Kelley's run for Congress to "running a lemonade stand and then complaining that you aren't being treated like a real restaurant."

"Congressman Davis is taking this campaign seriously, and he is focused on the very serious issues facing our country," Hughes said in an e-mail. "Congressman Davis will be spending the month of October campaigning throughout the district talking directly with voters about the steps we need to take to change the direction of our country and our economy."

Davis has raised nearly \$2 million for his re-election campaign; Kelley has raised less than \$20,000.

Newsmaker host Dan Hurley said that he had difficulty getting an answer from the Davis campaign after requesting that the congressman appear on the program.

"It was really frustrating because I was getting no response at all," Hurley said. "Then I was told he would be on the road. Finally, Jeremy Hughes sent me a statement that he would not appear. I'll read the statement ... but I'm going to proceed with Michael Kelley."

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Kelley suggested Davis was originally looking for excuses not to appear.

"Congressman Davis was notified of this event far in advance and therefore his 'scheduling conflict' seems further evidence of an 'honesty deficit' on Davis' part," Kelley said, "the same honesty deficit that allowed Davis to use the power of his House Financial Services Committee seat to shake down Wall Street lobbyists rather than protect the citizens of Kentucky from Wall Street's gambles.

"His response seems like a thinly veiled excuse to 'play it safe' rather than play it straight," he said.

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XmasCurtain wrote:

Geoff Davis treats his political opponents the same way he treats his constituents - he doesn't care to even acknowledge you unless you have lots of money.

10/18/2008 4:49:13 PM

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antitax wrote:

kyburgoo,
Anyone who will be on the ballot is a legitimate candidate. Just because Geoff won't recognize an opponent doesn't disqualify that person. Let's be honest, Geoff is just doing this in order to play it safe. I like Geoff Davis and voted for him but I do think that citizens want and deserve to hear what the candidates have to say in an open and honest debate.

10/17/2008 10:58:14 PM

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noahmeeks wrote:

This is the same Geoff Davis that repeatedly chided the 'safe' Ken Lucas in 2002 for not being willing to debate him; although even Rep Lucas eventually agreed to the KET debate (http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2002/10/28/loc_kydebate28.html). So while I know it's a common political move if you're the underdog to rip your opponent for not debating; and it's a common move if you're the 'safe' incumbent not to debate; Geoff these times are too serious and the issues too important for you not to answer to them, and also force your opponent to also produce answers which he has not even begun to do.

Only by discarding the political playbooks of the past, and emphasizing transparency and accountability for your votes (which I agree with 99% of them), will you ever be a better leader than the Ken Lucas that you criticized so heavily 6 years ago.

10/17/2008 8:32:29 PM

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MrPugsley wrote:

If I were Geoff, I would not want to debate anyone. How could he defend his party's miserable failure as leadership of our country? He could not defend the Republican failure. This is why he will not debate anyone.

10/17/2008 8:24:50 PM

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Jellypuddin wrote:

So what if Kelly is credible or not - he is his opponent and Davis has shown his true character. He is a coward, in the very worst sense of the word. He is hiding behind his campaign hired guns and won't stand up and be a man. I am disgusted that I live in Kentucky with these type of people as my representatives in congress.

10/17/2008 8:21:19 PM

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