

Ron Johnson Quibbles about Visiting with Wisconsinites

Written by Russ for Wisconsin
Monday, 22 August 2016 09:59 -



MADISON - Trailing in the polls and increasingly desperate, Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson has grown increasingly negative in his attacks on his Democratic challenger, popular former U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold.

The Republican has a long history of taking the low road, so this does not come as much of a surprise. So what is Johnson really complaining about?

Perhaps he is bothered by the fact that, after he spent millions of dollars to promote his political ambitions, and after he has occupied a U.S. Senate seat for almost six years, huge numbers of Wisconsinites have little idea who he is.

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Ron Johnson really should not quibble about visiting with Wisconsinites

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Trailing in the polls and increasingly desperate, Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson has grown increasingly negative in his attacks on his Democratic challenger, popular former U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold.

The Republican has a long history of taking the low road, so this does not come as much of a surprise.

But the focus of the griping is weird, even for Johnson. He's complaining about the fact that Feingold makes a big deal of visiting every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

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Throughout his Senate tenure, Feingold visited all the state's counties annually — spending substantial amounts of time in urban, suburban and rural areas; holding listening sessions; letting Wisconsinites know how they could communicate with him about issues and legislation. That deep connection with the state influenced Feingold's approach as a senator who was hailed for his ability to see across lines of partisan and ideological difference.

Now, as he seeks to replace Johnson, Feingold is back on the road, spending time in every county from Douglas in the northwest to Door in the northeast to Grant in the southwest to Kenosha in the southeast. It's a demanding schedule, but the Janesville native relishes it.

Johnson, however, is unimpressed.

"I'm not quite sure why Senator Feingold constantly brags about doing it," Johnson complained last week. Noting Feingold's record of hometown visits, Johnson grumbled: "What else did he accomplish?"

In fact, Feingold was regarded as an able and highly responsible legislator who, even in times of intense division in Washington, found ways to build coalitions and enact groundbreaking ethics and campaign finance legislation.

So what is Johnson really complaining about?

Perhaps he is bothered by the fact that, after he spent millions of dollars to promote his political ambitions, and after he has occupied a U.S. Senate seat for almost six years, huge numbers of Wisconsinites have little idea who he is. In the most recent Marquette University Law School poll, when potential voters from across Wisconsin were asked what they thought of Johnson, 31 percent said they did not know enough about the senator to form an opinion.