

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REP. BYRON RUSHING, LEADING HOUSE PROGRESSIVE, ENDORSES WALZ IN THE 8TH
Says struggles for equality need the talent and commitment Walz demonstrates

BOSTON – State Representative Byron Rushing, a noted champion for human and civil rights, issued a ringing endorsement of Marty Walz in the race to fill the 8th Suffolk District seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. In 2003, progressive legislators backed Rushing in a bid to unseat conservative House Speaker Thomas Finneran.

“As the recent votes on gay marriage have demonstrated, we need people in the Legislature who want to achieve true equality in our commonwealth,” Rushing observed. “Of the contenders in the race to fill the shoes of Paul Demakis, I view Marty as the best potential ally for the debates ahead on gay rights, equality and fairness. I look forward to the same close working relationship with Marty that I have had with Paul.”

Incumbent 8th Suffolk Representative Demakis is himself a leader on civil rights and an ardent advocate for making the House more open and democratic. Last month, he endorsed Walz’s bid to become his successor. Walz is an accomplished neighborhood activist who works for Jumpstart, a non-profit that provides mentors for at-risk pre-schoolers.

“I am honored by Byron’s support,” Walz said. “Gay rights leaders -- and progressives in general -- look to him to lead their causes on the House floor. I look to him as a mentor and as a model for my own potential service in the House.”

Rushing stressed the importance of this election. He urged Democrats to come out in force to support Marty Walz in the September 14 primary.

“Progressives can’t afford to skip these state races,” he said. “In the legislature next year, we will be casting historic votes to decide whether or not our gay friends, neighbors and relatives can remain recognized participants in all the rights, privileges and responsibilities conferred through government and society. These will be crucial and historic debates.”

Rushing said current challenges had raised the bar for future legislators. “In these times, casting the right votes is not enough. We need more leaders who can act and think both locally and globally. Marty Walz is one of those leaders.”

For her part, Walz noted the leadership on progressive issues provided by Demakis and Rushing both. “The qualities Bryon Rushing talks about and embodies have been the hallmark of the service of Paul Demakis. As I seek to carry on an 8th Suffolk tradition of progressive leadership, I am proud to carry the support of both Paul Demakis and Byron Rushing,” she said.