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Election 2022: Tammy Duckworth's war chest dwarfs rivals in U.S. Senate campaign

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As incumbent U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Illinois, seeks a second term in the Nov. 8 midterm election, she will face challenges from a Republican political newcomer and a Libertarian who says he is "fed up with the two-party system."

Mundelein attorney Kathy Salvi defeated a crowded primary field to win the Republican nomination. Also challenging Duckworth for her Illinois Senate seat is Libertarian candidate Bill Redpath.

They face an up-hill battle to unseat the incumbent.

Duckworth's campaign has a war chest that dwarfs her opponents. She's raised \$11.5 million since 2021 and had nearly \$8 million in cash on hand as of June 30, according to information from the Federal Election Commission.

In contrast, Salvi's campaign has \$65,692 in cash on hand after spending \$369,051, and Redpath had \$8,054 in cash on hand after spending \$21,716 as of June 30, the latest available data showed.

An Emerson College Polling/The Hill Illinois poll of 1,000 likely voters conducted Sept. 21-23 found half of Illinois voters plan to vote for Duckworth while 31% support Salvi. Sixteen percent are undecided and 4% plan to vote for someone else. The poll carried a 3% margin of error.

In addition to the three candidates who will appear on the ballot, there are also a pair of write-in candidates. They are Constant "Connor" VlaKancic, who is a member of the "Abraham Lincoln 1864 National Union party," and Lowell Martin Seida who is an independent write-in candidate.

Here is a closer look at the candidates.

Tammy Duckworth

Age: 54

City of Residence: Hoffman Estates

Occupation: U.S. Senator

Family: Husband, Bryan, and two daughters, Abigail, 7, and Maile, 4.

Education: Bachelor of Arts, University of Hawaii at Manoa—Political Science (1989); Master's degree, George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs—International Affairs (1992); and PhD, Capella University—Human Services (2015). **Political Experience/Work Experience:** U.S. Senate (2017-present); U.S. House of Representatives (2013-2017); Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (2009-2011); Director of Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (2006-2009); Rotary International (2003-2004); Illinois Army National Guard (1992-2014).

Major Endorsements: Cook County Democratic Party; Senator Dick Durbin and many other Senate Democratic colleagues; Planned Parenthood of Illinois Action; NARAL Pro-Choice America; Illinois AFL-CIO; VoteVets; JStreet PAC; League of Conservation Voters; Vote Mama; End Citizens United | Let America Vote; National Resources Defense Council; and Everytown for Guns Safety/Moms Demand Action.

Why are you running? I've dedicated my entire life to service and I'm honored to work on behalf of Illinoisans. Whether in Iraq or in the Senate, I've worked to expand our rights and protect our freedoms. I'm a combat veteran who served and defended our nation, and I'm a mom of two young daughters hoping to raise my girls in a better world than the one I grew up in.

From working to get lead out of our drinking water for our kids to helping veterans get the benefits they deserve and helping working families keep more of their hard-earned money, I've worked to pass bipartisan, commonsense laws to make life better for Illinoisans, and it's what I'll keep working to do if re-elected.

What are the three most pressing issues you will face in the Senate and how would you address them?

Abortion: I did not leave parts of my body in Iraq to watch women's freedoms get taken away at home or for my daughters to grow up in a country with fewer rights than I had. I will do everything in my power to enshrine a woman's right to abortion into law at the federal level. We should be letting women and their doctors, not the government, decide what's best for our health and our bodies. But, in states across the country millions of women no longer have safe access to basic healthcare service, no longer have the freedom to make decisions about their healthcare and are no longer able to decide what is best for themselves, their family and their futures. Republicans have made it clear they want a national ban on abortion, something that would affect even a state like Illinois that's done what it can to protect reproductive freedom.

Bringing down costs for working families: I'm proud of my work to pass the Inflation Reduction Act earlier this year because it will help Illinoisans keep more of their hard-earned money. For the nearly 60,000 seniors in Illinois on Medicare this will bring a new \$2,000 annual cap on prescription drugs and a \$35 monthly cap on insulin for Medicare beneficiaries. But I know families are still hurting and we need to do more. It's why I'm working to pass my Gas Price Gouging Prevention Act to stop Big Oil from excessively increasing the price of gas just to

put more profits in the pockets of executives. And it's why I will continue working to bring down costs on everyday essentials like groceries.

Improving infrastructure: It's critical that we work to rebuild our state's crumbling infrastructure, and I'm proud we're making great progress thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This law is supporting projects all around Illinois, from improving our roads and bridges to make our roads safer and save folks time and money, to improving our locks and dams to help prevent supply chain disruptions that can cause higher prices for working families. I'm particularly proud of my *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act* that passed the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support and is now law as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This law will help Illinois repair its neglected water infrastructure, remove dangerous lead pipes and protect our children from drinking contaminated water. Because no family should have to worry about their kids drinking contaminated water or sewage backing up in their front yard.

Kathy Salvi

Age: 63

City of Residence: Mundelein

Occupation: Attorney

Family: Husband, Al, and six children

Education: Bachelor of Arts from Loyola University and law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Political Experience: None

Work Experience: Judicial Clerk for Justice Harry Strouse; Assistant Public Defender—Lake County Public Defender's Office; and Partner—Salvi & Maher, LLC.

Major Endorsements: Illinois Fraternal Order of Police; Former 2022 Republican governor candidates Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin and Jesse Sullivan.

Why are you running? For the past two years we have seen Sen. Duckworth vote with President Biden's agenda nearly 100% of the time. Their spending spree and radical agenda have caused record inflation, pain at the gas pump and kitchen tables throughout Illinois and our entire nation, and weakness across the globe. Illinois needs an independent voice representing the interests of everyday Illinoisans in Washington, D.C., not a rubberstamp for the failed Biden Agenda. I have committed my life to working in our community as an advocate for women and children and those with mental illness and as a fighter for small businesses across the state. As your next U.S. Senator, I will take that experience and commitment with me to represent all Illinoisans in Washington.

What are the three most pressing issues you will face in the Senate and how would you address them?

- **Economy, job creation and inflation:** As a result of the reckless, out-of-control spending under the failed Biden-Duckworth economic agenda, Illinois families and businesses are hurting. While President Biden and Sen. Duckworth continue to spend trillions of our tax dollars and attack the American energy sector, we have seen 40-year high inflation and record prices at the gas pump. Our government needs to return to fiscal responsibility that does not waste the hard-earned money of the American people, reduce regulation and eliminate the red-tape, empowering people and businesses to grow and prosper by reducing the tax burden, and increase energy production here in the United States.

Bill Redpath

Age: 64

City of Residence: West Dundee

Occupation: Business appraiser, specializing in media & telecommunications

Family: Fiancée, Julie Fox

Political Experience: Member, Libertarian National Committee (LNC), 1989-1993 and 2003-2020; Chairman of the LNC, 2006-2010. Candidate for public office seven times, including for Governor of Virginia, 2001; U.S. Senate, Virginia, 2008; and U.S. House, Illinois, 6th District, 2020.

Work Experience: Experienced Staff Auditor, Arthur Andersen & Co., Cincinnati, 1980-82; Assistant Financial Manager, WISH-TV, Indianapolis, 1982-1983; Internal Auditor, American Broadcasting Companies, New York, 1983-1984; Senior Financial Analyst, National Broadcasting Company, New York, 1984-1985; Vice President, BIA Advisory Services, LLC, Chantilly, VA, 1985-2020; Managing Director, Summit Ridge Group, LLC, 2020-present.

Major Endorsements: None.

Why are you running for this office? I am a US Senate candidate because I am fed up with the two-party system in this nation that too often gives us two unappealing candidate choices. Most established democracies in this world have a multiparty system. The U.S. could do the same if we changed from single member to multimember legislative districts. I wanted there to be a Libertarian voice in this election. I usually take conservative positions on economic issues and generally liberal positions on social issues.

What are the three most pressing issues you will face in the Senate and how would you address them?

Free trade and open immigration: The U.S. should unilaterally end trade restrictions and tariffs in order to improve the standard of living for US consumers (which we all are) and to set an example to other nations by bolstering free trade around the world. Free trade is extremely important in the cause of international peace. I think we should have open, but regulated, immigration into the United States. If someone does not have a criminal background, does not

have a serious communicable disease or cannot be reasonably deemed a security threat, they should be able to immigrate to the U.S., with a short path to citizenship, although that is not as important as allowing immigrants work visas. There should be no federal welfare benefits for immigrants. The states may, and should, have the same policy. Immigration is the most effective anti-poverty program ever known.

Taxes: The U.S. tax code has been long been a source of derision and frustration. According to the Tax Foundation, tax code complexity will cost the U.S. economy over \$313 billion in 2022, which is 1.25% of Gross Domestic Product, while Republican and Democratic politicians continue to make it worse. I support ditching the Internal Revenue Code and replacing it with the Hall-Rabushka Flat Tax. But, not just to drastically lower compliance costs. We need people to work, save and invest for economic prosperity, and the flat tax, by lowering the tax rate on business and personal income would stimulate that. In their most recent book titled “The Flat Tax,” Hall and Rabushka call for a single 19% tax rate. Having one tax rate makes it less likely that there would be future changes to again complicate the tax code. I would support whatever tax rate is necessary to balance the federal budget.

Entitlement reform: With our aging society, it is now imperative to reform entitlements. If we don't, federal debt will continue to grow faster than GDP, which will inevitably lead to a future federal debt crisis. I support the Cato Institute's “6.2% Solution” for Social Security, which would allow people under 55 to opt out of Social Security and invest their employee FICA taxes in private accounts, if they waive future Social Security benefits. Medicare should allow enrollees to opt out without losing Social Security benefits, switch to cash payments to enrollees instead of paying service providers, and focus on poorer and sicker enrollees. Federal Medicaid spending should be changed to block grants to the states and phased out over ten years to allow states to experiment and see what policies work best. Overall, we need to get back to a situation where if you can afford to pay for something, you do.