

## CAPITOL HILL STAFFERS SEARCHING FOR NEW AVENUES AS OLD DOORS CLOSE



Capitol Hill workers, in the wake of retiring bosses and foreseeing that voters may push a few others out of their jobs, have begun an exodus, to be a step ahead of fellow Senate workers, who prefer to adopt a policy of wait and watch. Quite a few workers stand to lose their jobs if the Democrats lose control of the Senate. Sen. Lieberman, along with Democrats Daniel Akaka of Hawaii, Ben Nelson of Nebraska, Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico and Herb Kohl of Wisconsin are due to retire and other senators could face enforced retirement if they fail to win keenly contested re-elections in November. Normally, this job-jumping ritual starts post-November, but given the high number of senators retiring this year, staffers are entering the job hunt race much ahead of normal times. To evade, jostling for the few available spaces, staffers are looking for jobs now, rather than wait till the results of the election are known. One senior aide said, "Of course, everyone would like to stay until the end. People have families and mortgages, and that can make things more difficult." Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) since announcing in January that this would be his last year in the senate and that he would be retiring has lost ten employees, three staffers in one month and at least seven in his Washington office. Moreover, staffers are openly seeking time-off from work for job interviews and other job search related activities. To assist staffers, who will be left jobless owing to retiring bosses, Bryan DeAngelis, former Sen. Chris Dodd's communications director was invited to speak to them and guide them in what to expect and how to go about facing their new predicament. DeAngelis said, "I just offered my own advice on what they'll need, as staffers with institutional knowledge start to leave. You've got all these competing interests, national and local press who want to do retrospective pieces, the day-to-day work and then there's just the logistical process of actually physically closing the office." DeAngelis's remarks brought home the stark reality to the attending staffers, that their time on Capitol Hill could be nearing its end. Another staffer said that she started looking for a job early, because this is the second time that she has had look for a new job, since her earlier boss was ousted in the 2010 election. She said that her last experience was enough to teach her that this time she's "not wasting time looking around." "There were 5,000 Democrats looking for a job at that point, and it was near impossible to find work then," she said. "I love this job, but I've just started looking for work because I have this PTSD vision of the last election." "But even this early, a great job is hard to come by," she concluded. However, many senators, don't even interview job-seekers, out of loyalty towards their friends, saying that they will hire when the time comes. One staffer, searching for a job said, "It's really frustrating. I'd like to find work with someone who's been around but is more moderate. I'd obviously like to stay on the Hill, and I guess beggars can't be choosers."

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