



# SPEECH

*Transcript*

## Speakers:

- Tim Kubik, Chair of the Larimer County Democrats
- Betsy Markey, Former Congresswoman, Colorado's 4th Congressional District

## Larimer County's Road to Blue | Introducing Anne Caprara

Now, before she comes up to this stage, I want to say something else about Congresswoman Markey. In 2010, I had the good luck to be on the campaign trail with her. Some of you will remember Karen Stockley running for House District 49 in 2010.

We all had the fuel of Obama 2008 in our tanks, and we really thought something wonderful was going to happen in 2010. And we were going to be able to push the boundaries of what was blue in Larimer County out into rural House District 49. And Betsy was running for reelection.

And sometime about July, I think it became clear to all of us that it wasn't going to happen. And I remember seeing Betsy at parades and events and I was dumbfounded by her ability to keep a smile on her face when we knew that the Tea Party wave was rising and it was rising hard and fast in Larimer County.

Betsy didn't complain. She never would have, should have, could have, right? At least not publicly and I don't think probably privately either.

She ran as Betsy Markey. It's something I tell every candidate I ever talk to anymore. You need to be yourself when you run for office because if you win, you won't want to be any different. And if you lose, you're going to be glad you didn't compromise anything for the loss.

I'm deeply grateful to have learned that lesson from Betsy Markey when she was running in 2010. I'm deeply grateful for all the work that she has done to support the Larimer County Democrats over the last two decades, including a long time ago being my predecessor as Larimer County Chair.

So, Betsy Markey, please come take the stage and get our program going.

Well, thank you, Tim. Such a kind introduction and oh my goodness, it's so good to see this many people at a Larimer County Democratic Party event. So, I'm happy to be here and so excited to be able to introduce Anne Caprara, who is the Chief of Staff to Governor JB Pritsker,

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and my former Chief of Staff. And thank you to Kim and all of the dedicated Democrats who work to put on this wonderful dinner and who work hard every single day to elect all of the great Democrats that we have in this room. So, thank you so much. Tim's doing a fantastic job bringing everyone in the party together, isn't he?

And yes, as Tim mentioned, I had his role 25 years ago. But the Larimer County Party looked a lot different then. Larimer County was pretty conservative. The county party was small. In fact, there was no precinct organization.

All of the county commissioners rep were Republicans. All of the county elected officials were Republican. The state legislature was a mix; there were a few Dems. I see State Senator Peggy Reeves is here. She was one of the great Democrats from Larimer County back in the day.

And in 2000, there was not a Democrat who ran for Congress in the 4th Congressional District. Now, prior to 2010, Larimer County was part of the 4th Congressional District, which included Larimer County, Weld County, and 24 other counties on the Eastern Plains. I think it's a lot better being in the 2nd Congressional District now and having Joe Neguse, but it was a pretty tough district back in the day. So, in 2000 Bob Schaefer the Republican opponent incumbent rather had absolutely no Democratic opposition.

In 2001, I was elected county party chair. I wasn't at the executive committee meeting. I got a call later that night from my friend Linda who said, "Hey Betsy, we just elected you county party chair." I mean, that's how big the county party was. And I said, "Sure, I'll do it, but let's make sure that we find Democrats to run for every single seat in the county, including US Congress."

And so in 2002 and 2004 and 2006, we did have great candidates running for the 4th Congressional District. They all ran good campaigns, but they were all missing one thing and that was Anne Caprara.

And when I decided to run for Congress in 2007, Emily's List put me in touch with one of their young rising star campaign managers. I talked on the phone with Anne for about five minutes and said, "When can you get to Colorado?"

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She came and we clicked immediately and she put together a campaign that the 4th Congressional District, any campaign in Colorado, had never seen. She had a field campaign that blanketed all 26 counties in the district, enlisted hundreds of new volunteers to work on the campaign, and we had a first-rate comms strategy.

And I remember on occasion coming to Anne and saying, "Oh my gosh, Anne, I'm panicked. Why did I ever think I could win this seat? Why am I running for Congress?" And Anne would say, "Betsy, just take a deep breath. We got this."

And ultimately, we did.

And then Anne became not only my Chief of Staff, but a part of my family. My husband Jim and all of my children adore her.

And in the intervening years, Anne has had an incredible career. She has been the political director for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. She was Vice President for Campaigns for Emily's List and was the Executive Director and Senior Adviser for Priorities USA. Anne also ran Governor Pritsker's first campaign for governor and subsequently became his Chief of Staff.

And I remember visiting Anne soon after the governor was elected and it was the first time I'd met Governor Pritsker. And the thing that struck me at the time was how present he was. He listened to what I had to say and was truly interested and asked questions. And I think that is a very rare and special gift for any person. And I knew right then why Anne was so committed to her job.

And with that, I would like to have you help us welcome Anne Caprara back to Larimer County.