
Brown rallies with Middletown steelworkers

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By Michael D. Pitman

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MIDDLETOWN — In his first campaign appearance in Butler County, Sen. Sherrod Brown told scores of union workers and supporters that jobs are the storyline in his re-election campaign against challenger Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel.

Brown told supporters Wednesday at the IAM Local 1943 Hall that because of trade enforcement, 500,000 manufacturing jobs have been created in the past two years.

“We’re fighting for American workers, we’re fighting for American businesses and manufacturers. We will bring this economy back, but you don’t do that by going back to Bush-Romney policies,” Brown said. “You do it by going forward with Clinton-Obama policies.”

The Brown-Mandel race is one of 33 U.S. Senate races this November. With only a six-seat Democrat lead, a shift of political power is possible, because a third of the incumbents (six Democrats, four Republicans and one independent) will not be on the November ballot.

Several local political candidates, union members and elected officials warmed up the crowd huddled behind the union hall near AK Steel’s coke plant.

Standing in front of a black Chevy Cruze, Brown said the steel in that vehicle was manufactured just across the street at AK Steel.

“This Chevy Cruze is really the story of Ohio 2012,” he said. “The engine comes from Defiance, Ohio; the transmission comes from Toledo; the wheels from Cleveland; the brackets come from Brunswick; the seat clamps come from Lorain, Ohio; the seats come from Warren, Ohio; the sound system comes from Springboro, Ohio; and some of the steel comes from a place called Middletown. And all of this is assembled in Lordstown, Ohio, on three shifts by 4,500 workers.”

He said this Chevy Cruze was possible because of the auto bailout, which loaned billions of tax payer dollars to Chrysler and General Motors, and hundreds of jobs were created in Ohio — the country’s the third-leading manufacturing state — because of the bailout.

Neil Douglas, president of IAM Local 1943, said there’s a lot of support for the senator in Middletown.

“He’s been a champion of labor, and that’s one thing we won’t see from his opponent,” Douglas said.

Nicole Sizemore, press secretary for Mandel’s campaign, said much was left out of Brown’s campaign speech.

“What Sen. Brown left out was his vote to use tax dollars to bail out Wall Street and Fannie and Freddie while middle class families and small businesses in Ohio weathered the recession on their own,” Sizemore said.

“With record unemployment and debt, Sherrod Brown still cast a decisive vote for a government takeover of health care that hits the middle class and manufacturers with higher taxes. Four hundred thousand unemployed Ohioans are still waiting to know when and how they’ll get Sherrod Brown’s help to find a job and steady income.”

Two recent polls show Brown leading Mandel by double digits. A Quinnipiac University poll has Brown leading Mandel by 10 percent, and a Washington Post poll has Brown leading Mandel by 12 percent.
