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Kirk \$2.8 million; Seals \$1.25 million

By John Roszkowski Staff Writer

U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-10th, of Highland Park, has raised more than \$2.8 million for his re-election effort, more than double the nearly \$1.25 million raised by his Democratic challenger Dan Seals, according to newly released campaign disclosure reports. But Seals said he is pleased with his campaign's fund-raising success so far and believes it's another indication the race is becoming more competitive.

"He still has a financial advantage but we've got enough to get our message out," said Seals. "At the end of the day, people want change and that's not what he represents."

Kirk said the money his campaign has raised shows "our support is substantially stronger than his (Seals) and that's a good sign for us."

Candidates running for federal office were required to file updated campaign disclosure reports with the Federal Elections Commission as of Sept. 30 regarding the total contributions they've received during the 2005-2006 election cycle, including a breakdown of contributions to their campaigns.

FEC reports indicate Kirk's campaign raised \$2.819 million during the 2005-2006 election cycle as of Sept. 30, including \$2.24 million in individual contributions and \$532,148 from Political Action Committees or other sources. Kirk has spent more than \$1.6 million on the campaign so far, reports indicate. Kirk's campaign ended the reporting period with approximately \$1.625 million cash on hand.

"We feel good. We've raised almost \$3 million, 90 percent of that from Illinois," said Kirk. "I'm thrilled we've got almost 5,000 donors and volunteers for the campaign."

Seals had raised a total of \$1.244 million as of Sept. 30, including \$1.15 million in individual contributions and \$94,275 from PACs or other sources. His campaign has spent \$686,139 and had \$558,757 of cash on hand at the end of the reporting period.

"I think if you break it down we're still over 90 percent of contributions from individuals and I'm very proud of that," he said.

Seals said his campaign started airing new television ads, which are helping to get their message out to voters.

"The mood of the country and the mood of this district suggests why Mark is working to raise so much money," said Seals. "He only out-raised us by \$8,000 in the last quarter."