

Rich Aucoin was a great friend and an extraordinary political activist. He was principled, practical, tireless, friendly, and always fun to be around. He became one of the most effective spokesperson I've ever known, and yet was always the humble guy, never looking for the limelight.

He quickly learned and excelled at every task he took on - whether collecting signatures, processing petitions, writing, or public speaking. Where many volunteers would peter out, he thirsted for more, and jumped in, enthusiastically, to take on the next task at hand.

Rich was my Lt. Governor running mate when I ran for Governor in 2002. He also headed a volunteer outreach project called Liberty Direct for our ballot initiative to end the income tax that year. He was a key volunteer in our efforts to gather and certify over 170,000 signatures to get our candidacies and the initiative on the ballot.

Then in 2003, he headed a local ballot initiative to cut Waltham's property tax by 25%. It was the boldest local property tax cut I know of in modern American history. He did this while running for city council, personally walking the neighborhoods of Waltham to gather thousands of signatures, dealing with the press, and even fielding death threats left on his answering machine. Nothing could stop his determination. Jeannette McCarthy, Waltham's Mayor, called him fearless. And, Rich was indeed fearless. I don't think it's possible to execute on such ambitious plans any better than did Rich Aucoin.

In 2008 and 2010, he was again a key player in our statewide initiatives to cut taxes. I was so pleased and inspired by his passion and effectiveness in debating and making the case for cutting taxes. His public appearances, as well as his volunteer work - petitioning and writing content for our web sites - was pivotal to our success.

And then there was Rich, my friend. So kind. So positive. So *musical*. For years I'd known that he played guitar, but discovered too late how good he'd become and the breadth of his repertoire (he wasn't going to brag about it!). In the summer of 2016, I spent an incredible afternoon with him and some friends singing and playing every song we could think of. How I wish I could have many more afternoons like that one.

Rich's life was a huge gift to me, and to the cause of liberty. I will miss him forever.

Carla Howell