



Flashback To Obama's 2000 Debate

Highlights From Obama's 2000 Congressional Debate



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Then-State Senator Obama Boasted About Bringing Two Million Dollars To His District. REP. BOBBY RUSH (D-IL): "I'd just like to say this. I really have a lot of respect for both of my challengers. That's why I'm working so hard. But, you know, they have a record. Senator Barack, he represents a part of Englewood. His district has always been in Englewood. Englewood has always been in his district. What has he done? They have records in the State Senate. What have they done?" OBAMA: "I brought two million dollars back to the district last year." RUSH: "They want to – of course because they're running for Congress now they all of a sudden can do a better job. Maybe they can, maybe they can't. I don't believe that they can." ([2000 Congressional Debate](#), Chicago, IL, 3/13/00)



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Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL): Obama “Knocked His Predecessor ... Off The Ballot” When He Ran For The State Senate. OBAMA: “Let me respond to your initial question, the issue of Congressman’s Rush perceived weakness, which I saw on the tape as well. I actually thought Congressman Rush did a good thing running against the Mayor, because I don’t think anybody should have a pass. I don’t think Congressman Rush in this instance should have a pass. I don’t think the Mayor should have a pass. I don’t get a pass for my State Senate seat. What I was concerned about in the race was the inability, I think, to focus attention on the issues that really matter in this city. And part of what’s important about this historic district – ” Q: “You mean candidate Rush did not focus on it?” OBAMA: “Candidate Rush. And so, but the reason I say that is to give credit where credit is due. I think that Congressman Rush did a brave thing running and I don’t want it perceived that somehow he’s being punished for that race. I think what’s important is that we have a chance now to raise expectations of voters in terms of what the Congressman can accomplish in this district.” RUSH: “I certainly disagree with the Senator, Senator Obama. He did get a pass in his first effort out, in terms of running for the Senate. He and others knocked his predecessor Senator Alice Palmer off the ballot. So, he got a free pass on his first time around.” ([2000 Congressional Debate](#), Chicago, IL, 3/13/00)