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Biden, McCain to speak at Inglis' issues forum  
*Greenville congressman plans three days of programs for Upstate Chamber members*

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By Ellyn Ferguson  
WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON -- Upstate business and community leaders will hear from two presidential hopefuls and a former Bush aide next week at an issues forum hosted in the nation's capital by Rep. Bob Inglis.

Sens. Joe Biden, D-Del., and John McCain, R-Ariz., are scheduled to speak to members of the the Chambers of Commerce for Greer, Greenville and Spartanburg.



Inglis, R-Travelers Rest, called South Carolina's first-in-the-South Republican and Democratic presidential primaries "a great help" in getting McCain and Biden. The South is a critical region for both parties.

It'll be a return visit for McCain, who spoke at last year's forum. It's a rain check for Biden, who canceled last year because of a last-minute scheduling conflict.

**Advertisement** The business "fly-in" will be held Monday through Wednesday, with most of the speakers to appear Tuesday morning, according to Inglis' Web site. McCain and Biden visited South Carolina in August, with Biden making a stop in Greenville.

Chamber members also will hear from Tucker Eskew, a former aide to the late Gov. Carroll Campbell, who served as an adviser to the Bush-Cheney campaign in 2004 and as White House global communications director until 2003. Eskew is the son of former Greenville News publisher Rhea Eskew.

"He's the quintessential local boy made good. He's somewhat of a rock star in what he was able to do," Inglis said of Eskew.

In addition to hearing from Eskew, Biden and McCain, the chamber members will share lunch with Ed Foulke, a Greenville attorney who serves as the head of the U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Majority leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, whom Inglis backed in his bid to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Texas, is also scheduled to speak.

The forum kicks off Monday with speakers from the National Association of Manufacturers and the Congressional Research Service, the public policy study arm of Congress.

Dan Rice, a now retired Army officer Inglis met on his first trip to Iraq in 2005, will discuss his experiences in Iraq and his thoughts about the future of Iraq. Inglis expects Rice to draw on his background as an economic development officer in making suggestions about rebuilding and governing Iraq.

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