



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 28, 2017

## Texas Grows 3.9 Percent in First Quarter. California? 0.1 Percent

Melissa, a resident of San Diego with degrees in psychology and Spanish, could find work only at a fast-food restaurant, recounted an [article](#) in (of all places) the *Los Angeles Times* about how some conservatives fed up with California are looking to Texas for greener pastures — and not just economically. The final straw for Melissa was when her daughter came home from public school one day with a young adult novel as homework. The book celebrated the use of cigarettes and pills to cope with stress, and Melissa decided it was time to leave the Golden State.



She found Conservative Move, a website just launched to help Californians find a home in north Texas. She was one of the first of more than 3,700 visits to the website, which just started in May. Paul Chabot, a family man with four children who runs the website, explained: “It began shortly after my wife and I decided to leave California in January of this year. We wanted a better life for our four young children and we found it in Texas. Our only regret was not doing it sooner.”

Appropriately, his company’s slogan is “Helping families move Right.”

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Chabot connected Melissa with a realtor in Collin County, in north Texas. She sold her home in San Diego for \$500,000, bought a new one in McKinney for \$340,000, and loves it: “I’m so over California, I can’t see straight,” she said. “You can get more land [here] than I’ve ever seen. What was I thinking to stay [in San Diego] so long as I did? I feel like I’ve stepped into another world.”

Melissa may not be aware of it, but in the latest skirmish between California, the nation’s most populous state, and Texas, with the nation’s second-largest population, Texas won going away. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), which just released its study of how all the states are performing economically, Texas came in first. California? 41st. In the first quarter of this year, the economy of the Lone Star State grew at an annual rate of 3.9 percent. Growth in the quarter in California was barely perceptible: 0.1 percent.

Activities in real estate, mining, and durable goods manufacturing explained the difference. The Texas economy, according to the BEA, was driven by the boom taking place in the mining sector as well as a large increase in manufacturing. On the other hand, California’s economy was dragged down by lackluster performance in arts, entertainment, recreation, retailing, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting. The contributions to California’s economy by construction, mining, and durable goods manufacturing in the first quarter were minimal.

Said Chabot, the difference is the politics, which feeds into the economy: “California is a train wreck.... In California, it’s like liberals can do no wrong. No matter what we do (Chabot ran for Congress last fall



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but was trounced by a liberal Democrat), we're beating our heads against the wall."

The litany of complaints about California by conservatives was listed in the above-referenced *Los Angeles Times* article: economic hardship, rising crime, gun restrictions, homeschooling regulations, mandatory vaccinations for children, sanctuary city proclamations, high taxes, high housing costs, and declining standards of education in public schools.

To Chabot, the contrast between California and Texas is staggering. He lives not far from Melissa, and told the *Times*: "It's like living a dream. You don't see graffiti, you don't see gang members, or police helicopters circling the neighborhood."

Jenny Jarvie, the *Times* writer who interviewed both Chabot and Melissa, said the difference is all about worldview and the role of government:

Texas and California ... have long offered competing versions of how to achieve the American Dream. California has higher taxes to fund stronger social services and public universities, while Texas prides itself on lower taxes, less regulation and a more limited social safety net.

Jarvie said nothing about the freedom in Texas to breathe without having to worry about someone noticing and calling the air police.

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