



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on January 20, 2010

Constitution Candidates Expand Across States

The 2008 presidential campaign of Congressman Ron Paul has spawned successive aftershocks that have progressively magnified in intensity over the original “failed” presidential run of the “Constitution candidate.”

Since 2008, Ron Paul has authored two national best-selling books and has garnered a wide bipartisan consensus in favor of auditing the Federal Reserve (not to mention polling numbers of voters supporting the audit at 75 percent) that includes more than two-thirds of the U.S. House of Representatives. His presidential bid has also provided the catalyst for a well-funded national grass-roots Campaign for Liberty and sparked a wide-ranging “Tea Party” movement that has excited new activists across the nation. And it has generated a wave of congressional candidacies across the country pledging support for the Constitution’s limits.



This wave of congressional candidates now includes Ron Paul’s son, Rand Paul — also a medical doctor — who has emerged as a frontrunner in the open Kentucky U.S. Senate race.

One gauge of the growing strength of the Ron Paul “Constitution” movement is that voters have indicated they are more likely to vote for a Tea Party candidate than a Republican. “Running under the Tea Party brand may be better in congressional races than being a Republican.” A December 7 Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey found “Democrats attracting 36% of the vote. The Tea Party candidate picks up 23%, and Republicans finish third at 18%. Another 22% are undecided.”

Voters clearly distrust the Republican “brand,” as Rasmussen calls it, because under the Bush administration the GOP-controlled Congress increased the size of the federal government at a faster pace than at any time since the 1960s. Even after accounting for only non-defense spending, the Bush-era Republican Congress increased spending faster than either the Clinton or the Carter administration Congresses.

The polling numbers suggest that Constitution candidates — those pledging to vote for smaller government that adheres to the limits of the U.S. Constitution — will enjoy a distinct advantage over their big-government establishment neoconservative rivals during the upcoming 2010 election cycle.

A few establishment neoconservatives like Texas Governor Rick Perry have recognized that most big-government GOP candidates will lose in November, and have already made overtures to Tea Party organizations in an attempt to fool voters.



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The latest wave of the “Constitution” movement under the umbrella of the Tea Party insurgency is the spawning of a growing slate of candidates for Governors’ offices as well as congressional offices (see [“Constitutional Candidates for Congress”](#)).

Texas Governor: Debra Medina

Prime among these gubernatorial candidates is Debra Medina, a Ron Paul activist who is running in the Republican primary for Governor in Ron Paul’s home state of Texas. Medina is the former Wharton County Republican Party chairman (in the Gulf Coast-area district of Rep. Ron Paul) and the former state coordinator for Dr. Paul’s Campaign for Liberty. A registered nurse, business owner, and home-schooling mother, Medina is campaigning to end the state property tax and “standing hard against the federal government, using nullification and interposition.”

A key part of Medina’s campaign is to restore state sovereignty and restore the federal government to its constitutional limits. “The U.S. Constitution not only protects citizens’ freedoms in the Bill of Rights, it also divides power between the federal and state governments and ultimately reserves final authority for the people themselves,” Medina says. “Texas must stop the over reaching federal government and nullify federal mandates in agriculture, energy, education, healthcare, industry, and any other areas D.C. is not granted authority by the Constitution.”

Medina will have to best two establishment Republican primary opponents, incumbent Governor Rick Perry and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, and several other lesser-known candidates to advance from the primary. And she is an underdog in the race. Medina placed only seven percent in a University of Texas poll released on November 1. Medina Campaign Manager Penny Langford-Freeman tells The New American that internal polling had Medina at 10 percent back in -mid-November.

However, the primary race is wide open and much can change between now and the March 2 primary election. Perry has been in office since 2000, and many political observers see the longtime incumbent as damaged goods. This explains the crowded primary that includes Senator Hutchison (Freedom Index rating: 67 percent). Perry is a big-government “conservative” who believes government programs stimulate the economy. He pioneered the style of “stimulus” programs being peddled by the Obama administration today, doling out hundreds of millions of state taxpayer dollars through his highly touted “Texas Enterprise Fund” to firms in exchange for a pledge to create jobs in Texas. In a December 14, 2004 speech, Perry crowed:

Today we are not only building upon the Enterprise Fund’s tremendous rec-ord of creating jobs, we are unveiling its crowning jewel. I am proud to announce that the state of Texas is investing \$20 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund to help Countrywide Financial bring 7,500 additional jobs to Texas over the next 6 years.

Countrywide served as the primary national engine for the housing subprime crisis, and the former financial giant joined the housing market in its subsequent crash. Bank of America purchased the failing subprime firm in 2008 in order to forestall a looming bankruptcy filing, and nearly went bankrupt itself. The bailed-out Countrywide, under Bank of America’s direction, never fulfilled its jobs promises, and the taxpayer dollars were gone. Meanwhile, Countrywide made risky loans that are now going bad and — with the help of Perry’s Texas state government — increased the pain from the housing bust. Perry’s Texas Enterprise Fund also invested \$15 million in taxpayer dollars in the subprime bubble with Washington Mutual, a firm that declared bankruptcy in 2008. Again, the firm failed to deliver the promised jobs but succeeded in devouring state tax dollars.



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Perhaps sensing political damage from his record, Perry has recently made a habit of attending Tea Party rallies, and made headlines earlier this year when he publicly talked about Texas seceding from the union. But all it got him was derisive laughter from the Left and a larger slate of challengers from the Democratic Party. "I'll be a Governor who challenges Texans to lead, not leave, the United States," Houston Mayor and Democratic opponent Bill White quipped as he switched from running for the Senate seat to a race for the Governor's office.

With unnamed "Tea Party" candidates rating so highly in polls, a Tea Party-veteran candidate like Medina has a good chance of picking up that support and translating it into a Republican primary victory.

Oklahoma Governor: Randy Brogdon

Oklahoma's two-term state Senator Randy Brogdon first won election in 2002 and has made a career of campaigning for lower taxes. In May of this year, he pushed a 10th Amendment state sovereignty bill through the Oklahoma State Senate. "With its passage today, it will go straight to President Obama and Congress," Brogdon said upon passage of the bill. "We are telling them loud and clear to end all federal mandates that are beyond the scope of powers specifically outlined in the Constitution."

Among the first targets in the cross hairs of a Brogdon governorship would be "federal aid" and all the mandates attached to it. "Washington politicians have gone too far. They use the promise of money, or the threats of withholding it, to coerce states into giving up their sovereignty," Brogdon said, attacking the current Democratic Governor Brad Henry. "Governor Henry praised the federal stimulus package saying it would help our state, but it's only put us in further financial trouble because the feds dictate how that money can be spent."

Brogdon will face current two-term U.S. Congressman and former Lieutenant Governor Mary Fallin in the Republican primary. While Fallin has scored well in recent Freedom Index ratings from The New American (90 percent for the current Congress) and poses as a "conservative," her rhetoric echoes that of the big-government Republicans of the Bush era. "My Administration's first priority will be to create more and better jobs and lead this state towards long term economic recovery and growth," Fallin says on her campaign website, as if government can create jobs. No polling data has been released on the Oklahoma Governor's race as of this writing, but Fallin is presumed to be the frontrunner because of wider name recognition.

Georgia Governor: Ray McBerry

Georgia native and gubernatorial candidate Ray McBerry says, "I consider myself a 'constitutionalist' — that is, I strongly support a return to the original principles of our Founding Fathers. Although I am a life-long Republican, I do not support the globalist, socialist policies of either the Democrat or Republican parties at the national level." McBerry adds that "the grand constitutional republic that was given to us by the Founding Fathers to preserve our ancient liberty stands on the brink of being transformed into a tyrannical empire, just as the Roman Republic of old."

McBerry pledges to work against attacks on both economic and civil liberties of Georgia voters. On taxes, he says, "I support the abolition of both income and property taxes and the replacement of them with a state sales tax. It is my belief that any graduated tax based upon income is Marxist and should be repudiated." And he differs from many establishment Republicans in pledging to work against the federal surveillance state: "Federal intrusions, both present and planned, are a greater threat to our liberty and privacy than any threat of foreign invasion or terrorist attack has ever been. As Governor, I



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will work with our General Assembly, state court system, and fellow Governors to rein in this invasion of privacy and liberty by the federal government and will seek to ensure that Georgia is a refuge for privacy and liberty to all of her citizens.”

McBerry is making his second run at the Georgia governorship after losing as an unknown to incumbent Sonny Purdue in the 2006 Republican primary by an 88-12 margin. This time Purdue is ineligible for reelection because of Georgia’s term-limit laws, and McBerry is running in a crowded field of seven candidates in the Republican primary.

McBerry polled just three percent in an October Rasmussen poll, trailing Georgia’s fire and insurance commissioner John Oxendine, who has 27 percent. Georgia Secretary of State Karen Handel (12 percent) and Congressman Nathan Deal (nine percent) also lead McBerry. The eloquent McBerry still has some time before the July 2010 primary to gather supporters. McBerry may be the perfect man to sell the constitutional message; he owns an advertising firm that produces radio and television commercials in the Atlanta market. And because the Republican primary field is wide open right now, he may pick up those Tea Party voters to win the GOP primary.

Other State Legislative Candidates

These are only a few of the more prominent gubernatorial candidates inspired — or reinvigorated — by the Ron Paul presidential race. The Constitution/Tea Party movement has inspired dozens of others to seek office for a variety of other state offices to rein in runaway government, including Bill Connor (South Carolina Lt. Governor), Glen Bradley (North Carolina House of Representatives), Rick Richards (Wisconsin State Senate), Tim Utz (Minnesota House of Representatives), and Karl Dickey (Florida’s Palm Beach County Commission). Since these offices are often steppingstones to congressional races, the pool of Constitution candidates available to run for Congress can only increase over time. And that may mean a restoration of the U.S. Constitution over time.

Photo: Oklahoma State Senator Randy Brogdon

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