



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on March 1, 2010

Gov. Rick Perry: Conservative When It Counts?

Tomorrow Republicans in the Lone Star State will go to the polls to select their party's representative in the gubernatorial contest to be decided on November 2. All three of the principal candidates — incumbent Governor Rick Perry, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, and Debra Medina — have staked their claim to the conservative base of the GOP.



Rhetoric appealing to the conservative band of the Republican spectrum is nothing new in primary politics; it happens in every state and is a generally successful gambit for as the candidates and their teams know very well, it is the right-wing activists that make up the majority of primary voters.

With that in mind, it is vital for the future of Texas (and by extension, the future of the United States) that Republicans headed to the polls on Tuesday study the Constitutionalist bona fides of the three candidates. The virtues of Mrs. Medina's campaign have been highlighted by [The New American](#) (see these [companion articles](#), as well) and will not be rehearsed here. The Ron Paul protégé has demonstrated her dedication to the timeless principles of liberty and her fealty to the cause of freedom and to the sovereignty of the state of Texas (and all her sister states) is well documented. As for Senator Hutchison, the proof is in the pudding. She has been a card-carrying country club Republican for decades and skews to the right only when politically expedient. Her fair-weather conservatism has been observed by Texas Republicans and will most likely cost her in tomorrow's election.

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As for Governor Perry, as the hour of his judgment draws nigh, the self-styled conservative is galloping as fast as he can toward the right wing of his party. In a move that should surprise no one, Governor Perry has even [hinted at his sympathy](#) with those who view secession as an option. Obvious pandering to the Tea Party activists aside, it is crucial that Governor Perry's positions when he isn't under the electoral microscope be recalled. One particularly unpalatable example of the incumbent's unvarnished values regards NAFTA, the border, and his belief that the former should be bolstered and the latter should be obliterated.

The following is a speech delivered by Governor Perry at a "Border Summit" in Edinburg, Texas in 2001. While the [official transcript](#) of the speech carries the disclaimer, "Governor Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks," there is little doubt that even in light of the Governor's "frequent" deviations, the bulk of his remarks, when weighed in the balance of conservatism, will be found wanting — severely wanting. Here are pertinent parts of the speech:

- *"The Rio Grande does not separate two nations, it joins two peoples. Mexico and the United States have a shared history, and a common future."*



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America's future should have no more in common with Mexico than with any other nation of the world. Unfortunately, the porous border between the two countries and Governor Perry's refusal to staunch the flow of illegals onto the private property of his constituents, guarantees that if Perry is re-elected there will be more of the same disregard for law in Texas's future.

- *"The fruits of NAFTA have just begun to ripen. At the same time, we must not allow the roots of the tree to become poisoned. The NAFTA agreement not only signaled a new era of economic possibility, but a new era of bi-national cooperation. That is why it is wrong, and inherently detrimental to our relationship with Mexico for the U.S. Congress to pursue a protectionist policy that forbids Mexican trucks from U.S. roadways. It is bad public policy, and it violates the terms of the NAFTA agreement we agreed to. Mexican trucks that meet our safety standards should be given the same access to U.S. roads as our Canadian neighbors to the north."*

Praise for NAFTA is hardly the position of a true conservative. Governor Perry boldly refers to America's attempt to manage the flow of goods into its sovereign territory as "protectionism." Others would disagree with the Governor's assessment and would encourage greater diligence on the part of the state and national government at avoiding regional entanglements that would serve as stepping-stones for further regional and global integration and the concomitant destruction of sovereignty and self-determination.

- *"I urged legislators to pass a telemedicine pilot program that will enable, through technology, a sick border resident of limited financial means to receive care from a specialist hundreds of miles away. But the effort to combat disease and illness requires greater cooperative efforts between our two nations. It is a simple truth that disease knows no boundaries. An outbreak of drug-resistant tuberculosis, for example, endangers citizens of both our nations. We have much to gain if we work together to expand preventative care, and treat maladies unique to this region."*

"Legislation authored by border legislators Pat Haggerty and Eddie Lucio establishes an important study that will look at the feasibility of bi-national health insurance. This study recognizes that the Mexican and U.S. sides of the border compose one region, and we must address health care problems throughout that region. That's why I am also excited that Texas Secretary of State Henry Cuellar is working on an initiative that could extend the benefits of telemedicine to individuals living on the Mexican side of the border."

It isn't enough that emergency rooms on the American side of the southern border are filled to capacity with Mexican nationals without insurance. The bill for this treatment will be sent to the taxpayers of Texas, the people always called upon to finance the governor's grandiose globalist charity causes.

Furthermore, where in the Constitution of the state of Texas is the executive empowered to extend healthcare benefits to or create "bi-national health insurance" programs with a foreign nation? A true conservative would insist that legislators, jurists, and the Governor confine their activity to the boundaries drawn in the founding document of the state. The powers of the Governor and the executive agencies under his control are enumerated and citizens should insist on the strict adherence thereto. The Constitution of Texas (and the United States, for that matter) is either the law of the land or it isn't. Governor Perry wears his conservative mask when it's time to court the Constitutionals of his party, then removes it when the polls close.

- *"As a compassionate state, we know that for our children to succeed, they must not only be healthy, but educated. The future leaders of our two nations are learning their fractions and their ABC's in*



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classrooms all along this border. Immigrants from around the world are being taught in Texas classrooms, and our history is rich with examples of new citizens who have made great contributions. We must say to every Texas child learning in a Texas classroom, 'we don't care where you come from, but where you are going, and we are going to do everything we can to help you get there.' And that vision must include the children of undocumented workers. That's why Texas took the national lead in allowing such deserving young minds to attend a Texas college at a resident rate. Those young minds are a part of a new generation of leaders, the doors of higher education must be open to them. The message is simple: educacion es el futuro, y si se puede."

It seems Governor Perry isn't satisfied with eliminating the border between Mexico and the United States and passing the cost of the medical treatment of illegal aliens and their families on to the citizens of Texas, but apparently he believes that cost of educating the children of illegals, no matter "where you come from," should be borne by the already overburdened taxpayers in Texas, as well. Governor Perry's "vision" of an educated electorate includes the "children of undocumented workers." There's so much in that one phrase that it is difficult to know what to highlight first. Education is a privilege and is financed by the taxes of Texas. There is nothing humanitarian in the fiduciary malfeasance of Texas's chief executive that would rob Texas's public schools of resources that are already overstretched.

Second, the word "undocumented" is just a euphemism for illegal. Should those who flout the laws of the United States be encouraged by the governor of a border state to enjoy the advantages created by those laws? That is the question that Texas Republicans must now answer.

On Tuesday, Republicans will gather in schools and churches throughout the state and cast a ballot for their party's nominee for Governor. This exercise of the sacred right of the franchise is not to be taken lightly. Constitutionlists must boldly disregard rhetoric and the momentary masquerade of conservatism and nominate a candidate with proven fealty to the timeless principles of liberty, sovereignty, and respect of borders: the borders of constitutional powers and the borders between nations.

Photo of Rick Perry: AP Images



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