



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on September 5, 2011

Romney Touts Business Credentials at Tea Party Express Rally

"Limited government's the only solution/ Our only foundation should be our Constitution, " a rap singer insisted.

"Our children and our grandchildren, they never will forget," lamented a country singer, "how we sold out for a little change and left them all in debt."

But through most of the evening singing the blues gave way to shouts of optimism and predictions of another change at the polls in November.

"We're going to fire President Obama," Tea Party Express Co-Chairman Amy Kremer assured the crowd. "I think he has a better chance of becoming a champion golfer than being a good president." Obama-bashing was the order of the evening, but Kremer insisted the Tea Party movement was not ready to accept any Republican the party leaders choose to anoint.

"We have Washington on the run, not only the Democrats but the Republican establishment, too. Just because you're a Republican doesn't mean you're conservative. We've seen that, haven't we?" Kremer said. "The Republican Party is not going to hand us the next Republican nominee. We are going to choose the next Republican nominee," she said.

A group of about 25 demonstrators quietly protested Romney's appearance at the rally. "It's time for Mitt to quit," one of the signs said. The rest of the crowd focused its opposition on the man in the White House, both with placards and spoken words. A Redwood City, California, resident, wishing to be identified only as Felix the Contractor, held a sign saying, "I created 10 Jobs Obama destroyed. Let's Get Them Back." He was one of about 20 to 30 activists traveling in the two large buses the Tea Party Express chartered for a cross-country trip with stops in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina before ending in Tampa, Florida, where CNN and the Tea Party will sponsor a nationally televised debate among the Republican presidential candidates.

Sharron Angle, a Tea Party favorite from Nevada who nearly defeated Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid last fall, is also traveling with the group and addressed the Concord crowd while promoting her book, appropriately titled *The Right Angle*. Former Louisiana Governor and Congressman Charles "Buddy" Roemer took the stage to promote his long-shot candidacy for President and to rally opposition to what he described as the nation's unfair trade practices. "I'll start with unfair trade that comes from China," Roemer said. "They manipulate their currency, they use child labor, they use prison labor. They have no standards for the environment or health." He also blamed the provision of the U.S. tax code





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that allows American-based multinational corporations to write off taxes paid to foreign countries against their tax liability here. "We're the only country on earth that pays companies to send jobs overseas," Roemer said. "It's not right and it ought to be stopped."

Roemer, 67, has been involved in a number of business ventures since leaving the Governor's office in 1992. He was founder and president of Business First Bank, a lending institution with \$650 million in assets. His campaign biography notes the bank "took no bailout money from the federal government."

"I'm the only guy running that hasn't been in politics all his life," Roemer said. But when Romney arrived a short while later, he claimed to be the candidate who has spent the least amount of time in political office, having served a single term as Governor of Massachusetts. "You may know about that state next door," he said. Hearing a couple of cheers, the former governor feigned surprise.

"You're from Massachusetts? The people of New Hampshire are concerned about border security," he joked. "I'm surprised they let you in." Romney is a part-time resident of New Hampshire, with a lakefront summer home in the resort town of Wolfeboro. He finished second to Arizona Senator and eventual nominee John McCain in the New Hampshire primary in 2008, but polls this year have thus far shown him to be the front runner in the state that holds the first presidential primary every four years. With his wife Ann at his side, he mentioned the couple's five sons and 16 grandchildren before warming to his argument of how his business career with a private equity firm along with his experience as Governor and as chairman of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City make him better qualified than Barack Obama to lead the country and revive the stagnant economy.

"We elected a person who never worked in the private sector, who's never been a leader anywhere," Romney said. "I have the experience of helping small businesses, sometimes helping small businesses that were in trouble. I learned how we create jobs and how we lose jobs." The latest labor report showed there were no new jobs created in August, he said adding that a shutout may be all right in baseball, but it's a poor economic record.

"That's something I know. That's in my wheelhouse. I'll get America jobs again." Massachusetts had an unemployment rate lower than the national average for three out of the four years he was Governor, Romney said. In the Obama presidency, "the heavy hand of government of government into the lives of our people" has created more uncertainty for businesses and investors, he said, citing as examples the President's "cap and trade" proposal on greenhouse emissions and the healthcare program informally known as "ObamaCare." The former Governor made no mention of the healthcare plan he implemented as Governor of Massachusetts, often called "RomneyCare." But in other forums, he has defended RomneyCare as a better alternative to what he has called the "one size fits all" approach of the national plan pushed by Obama and passed by a Democratic Congress in 2010.

"I believe in our Constitution and all the amendments," he said. "Most governors love the Tenth Amendment" that reserves powers not delegated to the federal government to the states or the people. "That allows the states to compete with each other and try new ideas," he said. Obama gets his ideas from contrary sources, Romney suggested.

"In some ways I think he took his cue from the Social Democrats in Europe. I believe in America," Romney said, drawing cheers from the crowd. "I believe we got it right and they got it wrong."

Romney left right after his speech and part of the crowd, wearing blue Romney campaign jerseys, left at the same time. One of them, Ron Farina of Keene, New Hampshire, said he liked the ability Romney demonstrated as Governor of the Bay State to work with Democrats to get things done. "It's his being



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not all the way to the right," Farina said. "I think he's a moderate Republican." Reminded that Tea Party activists do not often rally behind moderate Republicans, Farina said, "I know they don't. That's their problem."

Howard Kaloogian, chairman of the Tea Party Express Political Action Committee, said the organization is interested in hearing and providing forums for any and all candidates. Candidates like Roemer, lacking the name recognition and fundraising ability of the better-known contenders, find audiences wherever they can. Roemer told the crowd his best week of fundraising brought in \$35,100. "Enough to buy one ticket to an Obama fundraiser," he said. While only four percent of the people know who he is, according to a recent poll, three percent were ready to vote for him, he said.

"So watch out Mitt Romney. Watch out, Rick Perry. Let me get a toe hold in these debates and I'll tear your britches off!"

Photo of Mitt Romney: AP Images



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