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Howdy. Thank you, Erick (Erickson, editor of RedState). It is great to be at RedState. And I'll tell you what, it's even better to be governor of the largest red state in America.

It's sure good to be back in the Palmetto State, in South Carolina. I enjoy coming to places where people elect folks like Nikki Haley, true conservatives. And also where they love the greatest fighting force on the face of the earth...the United States Military.

And I want to take a moment and ask you to just take a silence, think about those young Navy SEALs and the other special operators who gave it all in the service of their country. Just take a moment to say Thank you, Lord, that we have those kind of selfless, sacrificial men and women. Their sacrifice was immeasurable, their dedication profound, and we will never, ever forget them.

I stand before you today as the governor of Texas. But I also stand before you the son of two tenant farmers, Ray Perry, who came home after 35 bombing missions over Europe to work his little corner of land out there, and Amelia who made sure my sister Milla and I had everything that we needed, including hand-sewing my clothes until I went off to college.

I am also the product of a place called Paint Creek. Doesn't have a zip code. It's too small to be called a town along the rolling plains of Texas. We grew dryland cotton and wheat, and when I wasn't farming or attending Paint Creek Rural School, I was generally over at Troop 48 working on my Eagle Scout award.

Around the age of 8, I was blessed – didn't realize it, but I was blessed to meet my future wife, Anita Thigpen, at a piano recital. We had our first date eight years later. And she finally agreed to marry me 16 years after that. Nobody says I am not persistent.

There is no greater way to live life than with someone you love, and my first love is with us today, my lovely wife Anita. We're also blessed to have two incredible children, Griffin and Sydney, and they are also with us today, and our wonderful daughter-in-law Meredith. I'd just like to introduce those two. Thank you.

What I learned growing up on the farm was a way of life that was centered on hard work, and on faith and on thrift. Those values have stuck with me my whole life. But it wasn't until I graduated from Texas A&M University and joined the United States Air Force, flying C-130's all around the globe, that I truly appreciated the blessings of freedom.

To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan, I realized that the United States of America really is the last great hope of mankind. What I saw was systems of government that elevated rulers at the expense of the people. Socialist systems cloaked maybe in good intentions but were delivering misery and stagnation. And I learned that not everyone values life like we do in America, or the rights that are endowed to every human being by a loving God.

You see, as Americans we're not defined by class, and we will never be told our place. What makes our nation exceptional is that anyone, from any background, can climb the highest of heights. As Americans, we don't see the role of government as guaranteeing outcomes, but allowing free men and women to flourish based on their own vision, their hard work and their personal responsibility. And as Americans, we realize there is no taxpayer money that wasn't first earned by the sweat and toil of one of our citizens.

That's why we reject this President's unbridled fixation on taking more money out of the wallets and pocketbooks of American families and employers and giving it to a central government. "Spreading the wealth" punishes success while setting America on course to greater dependency on government. Washington's insatiable desire to spend our children's inheritance on failed "stimulus" plans and other misguided economic theories have given us record debt and left us with far too many unemployed.

But of course, now we're told we are in recovery. Yeah.

But this sure doesn't feel like a recovery to more than nine percent of Americans out there who are unemployed, or the sixteen percent of African Americans and 11 percent of Hispanics in the same position, or the millions more who can only find part-time work, or those who have stopped even looking for a job.

One in six work-eligible Americans cannot find a full-time job. That is not a recovery. That is an economic disaster.

If you think about it, for those Americans who do have full-time jobs, they aren't experiencing economic recovery with the rising fuel costs and the food prices that are going up. Recovery is a meaningless word if the bank has foreclosed on your home, if you are under water on your mortgage, or if you are up to the max on your credit card debt. Those Americans know that this President and his big-spending, big-government policies have prolonged our national misery, not alleviated it.

And what do we say to our children? Y'all figure it out? Don't worry, Washington's created 17 debt and entitlement commissions in 30 years, but the fact of the matter is they just didn't have the courage to make the decisions to allow you to have the future that you actually deserve? That Washington wouldn't even make modest entitlement program reforms in this last debate? And the President even refused to lay out a plan, for fear of the next election? How can the wealthiest nation in the history of civilization fail so miserably to pay its bills? How does that happen?

Well, Mr. President, let us tell you something: you can't win the future by selling America off to foreign creditors.

We cannot afford four more years of this rudderless leadership. Last week, that leadership failed, and the tax and spend and borrow agenda of this President led to the first ever downgrade of the credit rating of the United States of America.

In reality though, this is just the most recent downgrade. The fact is for nearly three years President Obama has been downgrading American jobs. He's been downgrading our standing in the world. He's been downgrading our financial stability. He's been downgrading our confidence, and downgrading the hope for a better future for our children. That's a fact.

His policies are not only a threat to this economy, so are his appointees – a threat. You see he stacked the National Labor Relations Board with anti-business cronies who want to dictate to a private company, Boeing, where they can build a plant. No president, no president should kill jobs in South Carolina, or any other state for that matter, simply because they choose to go to a right-to-work state.

You see, when the Obama Administration is not stifling economic growth with over-regulation, they are achieving the same through their reckless spending. Debt is not only a threat to our economy, but also to our security.

America's standing in the world is in peril, not only because of disastrous economic policies, but from the incoherent muddle that they call foreign policy. Our president has insulted our friends and he's encouraged our enemies, thumbing his nose at traditional allies like Israel. He seeks to dictate new borders for the Middle East and the oldest democracy there, Israel, while he is an abject failure in his constitutional duty to protect our borders in the United States.

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His foreign policy seems to be based on alienating our traditional allies, while basing our domestic agenda on importing those failed Western European social values. We don't need a president who apologizes for America. We need a president who protects and projects those values.

Look, it's pretty simple: we're going to stand with those who stand with us, and we will vigorously defend our interests. And those who threaten our interests, harm our citizens – we will simply not be scolding you, we will defeat you.

Our nation cannot and it must not endure four more years of aimless foreign policy. We cannot and must not endure four more years of rising unemployment, rising taxes, rising debt, rising energy dependence on nations that intend us harm.

It is time to get America working again. To get citizens – to get our citizens working in good jobs and getting the government to working for the people again.

Page one of any economic plan to get America working is to give a pink slip to the current resident in the White House.

Listen, we just got to get back to the basic truths of economic success. As Governor, I've had to deal with the consequences of this national recession. In 2003, and again this year, my state faced billions of dollars in budget shortfalls. But we worked hard, we made tough decisions, we balanced our budget. Not by raising taxes, but by setting priorities and cutting government spending. It can and it must be done in Washington, DC.

Dr. Schwertner (State Representative, R-Williamson County, TX), we have led Texas based on some just really pretty simple guiding principles. One is don't spend all of the money. Two is keeping the taxes low and under control. Three is you have your regulatory climate fair and predictable. Four is reform the legal system so frivolous lawsuits don't paralyze employers that are trying to create jobs.

Over the years, we have followed this recipe to produce the strongest economy in the nation. Since June of 2009, Texas is responsible for more than 40 percent of all of the new jobs created in America.

Now think about that. We're home to less than 10 percent of the population in America, but forty percent of all the new jobs were created in that state.

I've cut taxes. I have delivered historic property tax reductions. I was the first governor since World War II to cut general revenue spending in our state budget. We passed lawsuit reform, including just this last session a "loser pays" law to stop the frivolous lawsuits that were happening.

And I know I've talked a lot about Texas here in the last little bit. I'm a Texan and proud of it. But first, and foremost, I'm an incredibly proud American.

And I know something: America is not broken. Washington, D.C., is broken!

We need balanced budgets. We need lower taxes. We need less regulation. And we need civil justice reform – those same four principles. Our country's most urgent need is to revitalize our economy, stop the generational theft that is going on with this record debt.

I come to South Carolina because I will not sit back and accept the path that America is on. Because a great country requires a better direction. Because a renewed nation needs a new president.

It is time to get America working again. And that's why, with the support of my family, and an unwavering belief in the goodness of America, I declare to you today as a candidate for President of the United States.

It's time for America to believe again. It's time to believe that the promise of our future is far greater than even our best days behind us. It's time to believe again in the potential of private enterprise, set free from the shackles of overbearing federal government. And it's time to truly restore our standing in the world, and renew our faith in freedom as the best hope for peace in this world that's beset with strife.

The change we seek will never emanate out of Washington, D.C. It will come from the windswept prairies of Middle America, the farms and factories across this great land, from the hearts and minds of the goodhearted Americans who will accept not a future that is less than our past, patriots – patriots who will not be consigned to a fate of less freedom in exchange for more government.

We do not have to accept our current circumstances. We will change them. We are Americans. That's what we do. We roll up our sleeves. We go to work. We fix things.

We stand up and proudly proclaim that Washington is not our caretaker and we reject the state that, in Margaret Thatcher's words, she said a state that takes too much from us in order to do too much for us. We will not stand for that any longer.

We're dismayed at the injustice that nearly half of all Americans don't even pay any income tax. And you know the liberals out there are saying that we need to pay more. We are indignant about leaders who do not listen and spend money faster than they can print it.

In America, the people are not subjects of government. The government is subject to the people. And it is up to us, to this present generation of Americans, to take a stand for freedom, to send a message to Washington that we're taking our future back from the grips of central planners who would control our healthcare, who would spend our treasure, who downgrade our future and micro-manage our lives.

It is time to limit and simplify the taxes in this country. We have to quit spending money we don't have. We need to get our fiscal house in order and restore our good credit. And we will repeal this President's misguided, one-size-fits-all government healthcare plan immediately.

We'll create jobs. We'll get America working again. We'll create jobs and we'll build wealth, we'll truly educate and innovate in science, and in technology, engineering and math. We'll create the jobs and the progress needed to get America working again.

And I'll promise you this: I'll work every day to make Washington, D.C. as inconsequential in your life as I can. And at the same time, we'll be freeing our families and small businesses and states from the burdensome and costly federal government so those groups can create, innovate and succeed.

I believe in America. I believe in Her purpose and Her promise. I believe Her best days have not yet been lived. I believe Her greatest deeds are reserved for the generations to come. With the help and the courage of the American people, we will get our country working again. God bless you and God bless the United States of America.

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