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Perry Values Voter Summit Transcript



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Remarks by Texas Governor Rick Perry

GOVERNOR RICK PERRY: Ah, thank you. Oh, my goodness. Thank you all for that very powerful welcome.

And Pastor Jeffers (sp), I want to thank you for a rousing introduction. He – he knocked it out of the park, as we – we like to say. And – and a fellow who on any given Sunday is working with 10,000 Texans in his – in his church. So I just again want to say thank you to quite a leader.

I'm also proud to be joined today by my best friend, someone who has done more to enrich my life than any other person, an individual who will be a fabulous first lady for the United States of America, my wife, Anita. (Cheers, applause.)

And it is good to be with all of you. I want to thank Tony Perkins for the invitation to speak at the – at the event today and – and – and for his work in advancing the conservative constitutional principles that have built the greatest nation in the history of civilization. Tony, thank you. (Applause.)

You know, so many of you have come – so many have come to this gathering of value voters, you know, and it really strikes me as – as interesting. There is no voter in America who is not a value voter. It's just a question of whose values that they share. (Laughter.)

(Chuckles.) You know, you think about that. You know, some hold this worldview that government must be central in our – in our lives and serve as our caretaker. They seek more than equal opportunity, they seek equal outcomes. And you know, those in the White House today don't believe – they don't believe in American exceptionalism. They'd rather emulate the failed policies of Europe.

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But we see what their policies have led to: 14 million Americans out of work, 45 million Americans on food stamps. And according to Wednesday's Wall Street Journal, Bob (sp), nearly half of Americans now receive government benefits.

You know, in response to this economic misery, you know, liberals are now pointing the finger of blame at successful employers under the guise of fairness. But when they utter phrases like "fair share," you just know – (chuckles) – they're once again playing fast and furious with the truth. (Laughter.) (Chuckles.) And the truth is you can't rev up the engine of an economic growth by heaping higher taxes on job creators. You can't spread success by punishing it. You can't unite our country by dividing it.

The answer to our troubles lies in a positive, optimistic vision, with policies rooted in American exceptionalism. See, American exceptionalism is the product of unlimited freedom. And there is nothing troubling our nation today that cannot be solved by the rebirth of freedom – nothing. (Cheers, applause.)

I happen to believe in this great country of ours. I believe in the capacity of our people to create prosperity through private ingenuity. I believe in the values of the American people. Americans know anything worth achieving in life requires hard work, not government's handouts. And this present generation of Americans, they're not looking for government to lead the way. They're looking for America to get out of the way so that they can make the most of the freedom for their families.

But you can't live free if you can't find a job. You can't live free if you inherit \$46,000 bill in the federal debt. You can't live free when the government gets between you and your doctor.

I believe it's time to revive freedom for our families and our employers. If we're going to get entrepreneurs and small businesses off the mat and on their feet again, we need to freeze all of the pending federal regulations that are out there for the next six months – freeze them all. (Cheers, applause.) We need to cut taxes for families and employers because the only kind of stimulus that will work is the kind that puts more money in your pocket, not government's. (Applause.)

We – we need to repeal the job-killing bureaucratic nightmare that's known as "Obamacare."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah! (Cheers, applause.)

GOV. PERRY: You know, there are three pillars that serve as the foundation of our country: strong economy, strong families and a strong military.

In my home state, we have created about 40 percent of all American jobs since June of 2009. Our success is based on four rather simple principles. One is, don't spend all the money.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah~!

GOV. PERRY: And number two is, keep the taxes low. Three is, provide a fair and predictable regulatory climate, and four, stop the frivolous lawsuits. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Amen ?)!

GOV. PERRY: They kill jobs.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah~!

GOV. PERRY: So that we passed the most sweeping tort reform in the nation and – which, I might add, includes a new loser pay law in the state of Texas. (Applause.)

You know, at the same time as the Fed chairman warns that the recovery is close to faltering, just yesterday the Texas comptroller's office said our tax revenues have rebounded to pre-recession levels. (Applause.)

Our August – our August home sales rose. Our employment expanded. Our exports



The King and the Texas Topper



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increased. Manufacturing activity started climbing again.

And yet there was President Obama, standing in front of the White House press corps, doubling down on the same failed strategy that had worsened our economic crisis and doubled our deficits. It just goes to show you that those blinded by tax-and-spend big-government ideology will never see the truth.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.

GOV. PERRY: Every day – every day – it is clear that the United States economy, for it to grow and to succeed, we need new leadership. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah!

GOV. PERRY: President Obama's commitment to the same old pro-tax, pro-government, pro-regulation policies – they failed our nation. America needs a new leader, with a proven record of job creation and sound economic policies.

You know, Texas is not immune to the effects of the national economic environment, but recent reports show that low, flat and fair taxes; reasonable and predictable regulations; restrained government spending is a proven recipe for job creation. The key to prosperity is liberty. Yet the larger government grows, the smaller our circle of freedoms. The most basic unit of government is family. And as a conservative, I believe with all my heart that the government closest to the people is the best for the people. There should not be a single policy coming out of Washington, D.C., that interferes with decisions best made by the family.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah! (Applause.)

GOV. PERRY: I'm proud to be the son of two tenant farmers. Where I grew up, we didn't have much in the way of material goods, but we were sure rich. We were rich in spirit. We were abundant in faith. And we were devoted to family. Happiness wasn't a product of what we had but what we believed.

And we believed we were blessed to live in the freest nation on this earth, that were fortunate to grow up where there was a strong sense of community, that there was nothing that we couldn't achieve in "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

In fact, my little country school where I grew up and graduated had a motto. It said: No dream too tall for a school so small. (Laughter.)

(Chuckles.) You know, there are millions of Americans that are born into less than ideal circumstances. Maybe they were born into poverty, born without a parent. But as a society, we must stand for the principle that every life – every life – is worth living, regardless of the circumstance. In America – (applause) – in America it's not where you come from that matters, but where you're going. As Americans, we must affirm the value of life, not just in our Declaration of Independence, but in the way that we live.

For some candidates, pro-life is an election-year slogan to follow the prevailing political winds. To me it's about the absolute principle that every human being is entitled to life. All human life – all human life – is made in the image of our creator. (Cheers, applause.) And every innocent life must be protected, from the most frail, who are elderly, to the most vulnerable, who are unborn.

That's why as governor I have consistently worked for pro-life legislation, policies such as parental consent for minors seeking an abortion, a ban on third tri-semester (sic) abortions, an informed consent law. And I'm proud to fight for and was proud to sign a budget that defunded Planned Parenthood in Texas. (Cheers, applause.)

Our obligation is not only to protect life and bestow freedom on future generations, but it's also to instill character. Young Americans must never be taught about rights without also learning about responsibilities. We must not – (applause) – we must not proclaim the responsibilities of a free society and ignore the responsibilities of free individuals. We must never mistake liberty for license. One's a right; the other leads to bondage.

For more than a generation, our culture has emphasized a message of self-indulgence at the expense of social obligation. We have reaped the consequences

– in the form of teen pregnancies, divorced and broken families, the cycle of incarceration that joins young men with their fathers behind bars. The fabric of our society is not government, or individual freedom; it is the family. And the demise of the family is the demise of any great society. (Applause.)

This great country of ours has never been steered off-course when we have advocated policies that expand freedom and promote strong families. But neither can it be preserved without an unwavering commitment to our national security. You know, as Americans, we're blessed to have the greatest fighting force for freedom in this entire world: our men and women of the United States military. (Applause.)

You know, there are some out there, some misguided souls that just say you can't find heroes anymore. My, my, are they ever wrong. We have heroes today. They're fighting in the mountains of Afghanistan and sands of Iraq. They're those on covert missions, in places we don't even know about, to find and destroy the enemies of this country. They put their lives on the line every day so that we don't have to.

Over the years I've been so honored to have met a great many of those American heroes as I've traveled to their outposts in Iraq and Afghanistan. And I've signed letters to their loved ones who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

I consider myself so fortunate to have been able to wear the uniform of our country. And that experience, it informs my perspective about our defense policies. Specifically, I believe we must never put the military on a chopping block for arbitrary budget cuts as part of some political horse trade. (Cheers, applause.) Never.

The question we must ask is not what we can afford to spend on our military, but what it costs to remain secure and free. You see, a real key component of keeping America secure is keeping Israel secure. (Cheers, applause.) We can never forget – we can never forget that it was Israel that took out the nuclear capability of Iraq in 1981, and of Syria in 2007. Israel is our ally. They're our friend. And when I'm president of the United States, America will again stand with our friend. (Cheers, applause.)

We're not going to compromise when it comes to our national security, and that is true when it comes to defense spending, and it is also true when it comes to border security. And let me say this about border security. I have lived and breathed this issue for over a decade as a border governor. I've signed budgets that contain a total of \$400 million of state security operations along that border. I've dealt with the carnage caused by those who traffic in drugs and weapons and people. As a border governor, I know firsthand the failures of our federal border policies. And I know the answers to those failures is not to grant amnesty to those who broke the laws to come into this country. (Cheers, applause.)

I was proud to sign legislation requiring a photo ID to vote in order to protect the integrity of our elections. (Applause.) And for the obvious security reasons, I vetoed legislation to give drivers licenses to illegal aliens. (Applause.) There is no homeland security without border security. Let me repeat that. There is no security without border security.

And make no mistake about it. What we are seeing south of our border is nothing short of a war being waged by these narcoterrorists. They represent a clear and a present danger to our country. They are spreading violence to American cities. They are peddling poisons to our children.

In the face of this threat, we shouldn't take any options off the table, including security operations in cooperation with the Mexican government, as we did with Colombia some years ago. You can't have liberty, you can't have opportunity, you can't have prosperity without security. The issue before our leaders of both parties is securing a better future for all Americans.

You see, economic security is a topic of discussion at millions of dinner tables all across this country of ours. In the past two months I've had the great privilege to travel across this country. And I've listened to thousands of Americans, and they're not under any illusions about the current state of our country.

They've never mistaken hope for a handout because they want to earn their keep. They aren't looking for soaring speeches. They're looking for common-sense solutions. And they know our first order of business to getting America working again is sending our current president to the private sector. (Laughter, cheers, applause.)

You know, like all of you in here, I still believe in the exceptionalism of America. And

to paraphrase both Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan, America remains the last best hope of mankind. We must never forget that the exceptionalism of America can be traced right into our founding principles, the fact that the framers of our Constitution were the first in the history to declare that all men are created equal, endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights.

The hand of providence has guided America throughout our history, from those first colonists to arrive in the New World to the courage of George Washington during those darkest hours of Valley Forge to the defeat of tyranny during two world wars and the Cold War. Time and time again America has been the source of – of light in a world that's been beset by darkness.

And like a lighthouse perched on the shore, we have provided this safe harbor to millions who have been adrift in a sea of economic misery. We can still be the country we aspire to, a source of light and hope to all who live here and those who come here. Anchored by our – our ideals, we can rebuild on the solid foundation of truth instead of the shifting sands of moral relativism. We can restore hope at home while projecting our values abroad. We can be the freest, most prosperous people to ever occupy the planet if we remain one nation under God.

God bless you, and thank you all for coming and allowing me to participate today. God bless you. (Cheers, applause.)

(Music.)

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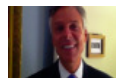
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