

Biennial Report Republican Party Of Texas

A Grassroots Perspective

Prepared by Texas Republicans for Texas Republicans

Acknowledgement

In the midst of hectic and busy schedules, several patriots from across our great state graciously consented to provide research, reporting and editorial assistance to produce this document. I am most grateful for their assistance and hope that their work and mine will be of benefit to you as you prepare for the 2008 Texas Republican Party State Convention.

Sincerely,

Debra Medina

Chairman

Wharton County Republican Party

And Compiler of this Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report is being shared with you as a Delegate/Alternate to the 2008 **Statewide** Convention to be held in Houston. This may be the most important Republican event you ever attend. Throughout the United States three Republican Congressional seats were lost in the last two weeks in Special Elections in Illinois, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The report provides you with a wealth of information, which you may not have considered as you prepare to represent all Texas Republicans and keep the “*Grand Old Party*” alive and well in this great state. Contained in it are facts, figures, and history to keep Republican officeholders and candidates in leadership roles as the state faces redistricting in 2011.

Those of us who have participated in putting this document together are the “*grassroots*” on which this party has achieved in the past and can achieve in the future. See information on office holders gains and loses on pages 10 -12.

U.S. Senator John Cornyn is facing a bid for re-election and many candidates in the State and your county are running for the first time or hopefully seeking re-election – and winning. Please read (pages 4 - 9) to recall in your memory the history of achieving the Republican statewide winning elections in Texas.

If you have heard stories about possible irregularities at County conventions, read (pages 24 - 29) and view the website for more information; www.fairconvention.org

As strong, courageous countrymen and women (some of them your relatives or friends), are serving our country fighting terrorists across the globe, please fight for them by keeping the Party strong and true to the principles by which we live and cherish the United States of America and Texas.

Are lobbyists buying the elected officials of this state? See article on **pages 17 - 19**.

Please use some of your valuable time to read this material. It was prepared for you to make your election count.

Introduction

This document is meant to serve as a tool to help prepare delegates to the Texas Republican Party state convention. Every effort has been made to document elements critical to the party's success in an objective fashion. The report may err on the side of negative assessments of our party's condition. Given Republican losses during the 2006 general elections, especially on a national scale, more recent losses in formerly Republican strongholds, high Democrat turnout in the Texas Democrat primary and continuing low poll numbers, it seemed prudent to not paint too rosy a picture.

While the media would like to make the state conventions about the presidential nominees, Texas Republicans realize that the job before us is much broader than that. Over 5000 delegates will attend the Texas State Convention, only 140 of those will travel to the national convention and the large majority of those will be bound to presumptive nominee John McCain.

This convention then is primarily about what it has always been about: writing the rules, writing the platform and electing the leadership of the biggest political party in the country. It is an opportunity for Texas Republicans to have a conversation about the principles that most Americans hold dear and to chart a course for returning those principles to our legislative agendas and the public square.

Why a Fair Convention?

Because the State Convention of the Republican Party of Texas is the largest political convention in the United States and it provides opportunity like no other for Texas Republicans to step up and set a course the rest of the country can follow, this opportunity should not be squandered on political posturing and power plays. Our party and our Nation face serious threats, and these threats demand that all of us, as those honored enough to be duly elected representative of the Republican Party of Texas, treat them with the respect and seriousness they deserve. We must not bow to fear or intimidation or the siren song of power – we must instead maintain the freedom to assemble and act as a deliberative body, “to determine, in full and free discussion, courses of action to be taken in the name of the entire group..” We must do the business of the Republican Party of Texas, and we must demand fairness and respect for the Republican Form of Government. If we do not, we will have allowed the game of politics to replace the Rule of Law in the one place where it should be the most

protected, and we will have no means left to determine how best to continue to promote and defend our lives, our liberty and our families.

So What Can We Do?

Come together at the State Convention by voting for a Permanent Convention Chair who will ensure a Fair Convention, and, more importantly, by voting for an RPT Chair who will ensure the kind of meaningful change that will ensure that the Grassroots Republicans have the influence that they rightly deserve.

Make this State Convention meaningful and not just about social networking. We owe the 10th largest economy in the world our full attention. You owe it to your neighbors to do everything that you can to ensure that the integrity that the Republicans portend to value returns to the Republican Party.

In addition to the information provided here, please visit www.fairconvention.org for additional information pertaining to the 2008 Texas Republican Party State Convention



The Party: Then and Now

Thirty-six years ago, in 1972, Texas had only 17 Republican Congressmen and 3 Republican State Senators. Republicans in Texas were practically non-existent and were politically *irrelevant*. Today, Republicans have majorities in 73 counties that encompass nearly two-thirds of the state's population. Thanks to grassroots efforts, Republicans went from only 4 office holders in the entire state to well over 1200 county offices and over 1800 total offices. In 1978, Texas elected the first Republican governor in over 100 years and by 1986, after a small setback, the Party enjoyed a net gain of 127 local seats and four more state representative seats. The GOP continued to make gains in the early 1990's and in 2002 it swept all statewide elections for the 4th consecutive time. Republicans gained 16 seats in the State House and three seats in the State Senate and 210 local seats.

However, if we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it. As you can see, Republican control in Texas has a relatively short history and should not be taken for granted. If we don't attend to the power bestowed upon us with great caution and humility, these may easily be a day when the Republican Party in Texas will again be *irrelevant*.

The most recent Texas Primaries should have been a wakeup call when across the State Democratic voters out-numbered Republican voters 2 to 1.¹

But even prior to that, the 2006 governor's race should have gotten our attention. The incumbent Republican Governor was not only challenged by a Democrat opponent, but by an opponent who actually withdrew from the Republican Party to challenge him, as well as another Independent candidate and several minor party candidates. The Republican governor retained his seat with only 39% of the votes. This means 61% of the voters of Texas did not want him to continue in office.

Governor			
Rick Perry(I)	REP	1,716,792	39.02%

Chris Bell	DEM	1,310,337	29.78%
James Werner	LIB	26,749	0.60%
Richard "Kinky" Friedman	IND	547,674	12.44%
Carole Keeton Strayhorn	IND	796,851	18.11%
James "Patriot" Dillon	W-I	713	0.01%
Race Total		4,399,116	

Source: <http://elections.sos.state.tx.us/elchist.exe>

The governor is but one example of an elected official whose actions in office often deviate dramatically from campaign promises and from the platform of the Republican Party. Is it any wonder then that voters seem to be flocking to the party and the candidates who are offering "change?"

We certainly understand the "change" offered by the Democratic Party is not the answer to the problems facing Texans, but unless we are willing to admit that corruption and failed promises exist within our own Party and are willing to demand a "true change of course," voters will accept the *only* change they feel they are being offered and Republicans and Republican ideals will lose in November and beyond!

There is a saying "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." That is what has happened to the Republican Party. How did we fall from such a lofty position to a place where Democrats could again control all three branches in this election cycle and perhaps Texas in the next? It's quite simple really: we made promises we didn't keep.

The Party courted the grassroots and told us we were the backbone of the Party. We were allowed to pass Resolutions and help build our Platform. **This made us feel ownership for the process and captured our loyalty.** However, the elected officials totally ignored the Platform and party leadership let them get away with it! (Remember Dole's "I never read the platform" comment?) Then there was the promise in the Reagan years that if elected, he would do away with the Department of Education. Instead we got an "Education Czar," and the department, and its influence and intrusion have steadily increased to the present-day "No Child Left Behind"

disaster. George H.W. Bush promised, "Read my lips, no new taxes," yet in the end he gave us a major tax increase.

Do we really need the Democrats and the media constantly pointing out our faults or our Party leadership constantly defending the indefensible? No, it's time we stand strong as a political party. It's time we promote Party leadership that will step up to the plate and denounce and remove support from our own elected leaders who participate in the corruption of selling out the principles of our Party.

Now is the time to turn to the positive lessons we can learn from the history of the Texas Republican Party. We need to examine the principles and actions that brought us from obscurity to prominence. We must commit as a Party to return to those principles. This is the "change" the American people are eager to embrace – not only Republicans and Democrats, but even the largest number of citizens who are non voters, those who have felt so disenfranchised with both parties that they do not even participate in the election process.

If we clean our own house and offer change that respects the "God-given rights of the individual" as documented in our Constitution and Bill of Rights and articulated in our Party platform, we can again become the Party *"of the people, by the people and for the people."*

Perhaps we should examine the 1994 "Contract with America" and reinstate the principles that gave us a resounding Republican victory as we took control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years. Every Republican candidate should be committed to these historical Republican principles if we ever hope to regain the confidence of the voting public, and we as individuals and through our Party leadership **MUST** hold our elected officials accountable to these ideas.

Today we are faced with important questions. Will our Party leadership seek their own agenda and ignore the pleas of their grassroots workers, effectively signing the death notice of the Republican Party in Texas? Will we tolerate the blatant disregard for our Constitution, the rule of law, our Platform or our principles? Or will we embark on that change voters are clamoring for?

This is a decisive moment and it will mark a new day for Texas Republicans! Whether it begins the end of prominence or the beginning of a renewed commitment to the principles upon which this great nation was founded will in large part depend on the work we do in Houston.

"If you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly, you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance for survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves." -- Winston Churchill

The Republican Convention in Houston June 12 -14 will be time for major decision making for the Republican Party of Texas. Please be there. You can make a difference, but only if you are present!

Law Matters: Why the Rule of Law?

Content date: 10/14/2005

Text in brackets [] has been added to the original.

*The following reflections of Missouri Chief Justice Michael A. Wolff make up his October 2005 **Law Matters** column.*

Political leaders, pundits and civic teachers talk frequently about "the rule of law." And we who listen nod our heads and think, "I agree with that." We all have some notion that the rule of law is central to our democratic system, but why is that so?

I recently have had the privilege of talking with lawyers and judges from around the state and have had the opportunity to reflect on why this concept is so central to our American idea of democracy. I'd like to share those thoughts with you.

We are a nation first and foremost of laws. We have no common national origin or ethnicity that currently forms our shared identity as Americans. Instead, our identity has been forged by the rule of law and by our common experience that faithfulness to the law guarantees liberty, equality of opportunity and a functioning civil society even in the face of those who, through ambition for power or wealth, would seek to impose their will on the less powerful. But to understand the "rule of law" and why we have it more completely, we need to look back into our history as a nation.

The signers of the Declaration of Independence understood the oppression that occurs when those in power control the law for their own purposes. The signers understood that it was necessary to have a stable justice system – to have rules and laws based on certain fundamental principles and not the arbitrary whims of those holding government power at any moment. Only in this way could we protect ourselves from tyranny.

We all remember learning about "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," the most memorable phrase of the Declaration of Independence. It has been not only part of our civics or social studies classes but also part of the popular culture. For some, school lessons might not have done the trick, but many remember television shows such as ABC's Saturday morning cartoon show, "Schoolhouse Rock." Those cartoons taught us the meaning of the Declaration of Independence: "if a government won't give you your basic rights, you better get another government;" that our constitution is a "list of

principles for keeping people free;" that, in the preamble to the constitution, our Founding Fathers set out "to form a more perfect union" and "establish justice." "Schoolhouse Rock" showed us, as well, that in the three-ring circus known as our government (remember, this was for children), the courts in "ring three ... take the law and ... tame the crimes, balancing the wrongs with your rights" and that, through the system of checks and balances, "no one part can be more powerful than any other is."

Our school lessons and popular culture show us that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution reflect a profound feeling for due process – for fair and impartial application of the law – that is part of the American soul. This feeling is embodied in the Constitution's Bill of Rights and, following the Civil War, by the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee that no state should deprive any person of due process or equal protection of the law.

To be a bit more specific, we might consider some of the grievances listed in 1776 in the Declaration of Independence against King George III, who deprived us "in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury" and transported us "beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses. ... [H]e ... obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers. He ... made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries."

Our founders were wary of the tyranny not only of a king but also of political majorities. They realized in creating our constitution that a government system needs checks and balances to ensure that the most fundamental principle of our nation – the law – would be protected for the generations to follow. The varying factions should be kept in check, as one of the Founding Fathers, James Madison, argued in Federalist Paper No. 10, so that no particular group in society or any branch of government should hold limitless power. For the same reason, we have states in control of some matters and the federal government in charge of others. This is the same reason Congress consists of two bodies, with membership of the House of Representatives based on population and membership of the Senate equal to all states. The former represents the will of the majority while the latter tempers that will by reflecting the desires of all equally. The constitutions of the United States and the state of Missouri [Texas] exist for the protection of all – majority and minority interests, executive and legislative branches, state and federal governments – with the judiciary serving as arbiter of disputes between factions and the instruments of government.

This concept of checks and balances is, I believe, engrained in the souls of the American people. Our system of checks and balances, needed to protect basic human liberties, has

been with us since the start of the republic. Another of our founders, Alexander Hamilton, noted in Federalist 78 that "the complete independence of the courts of justice is peculiarly essential in a limited Constitution." If certain rights are reserved for the people, or even to the states, then who is supposed to preserve those rights? Are we just to hope that the legislative and executive branches don't enact laws that infringe on those reserved rights and that they will simply choose not to adopt such laws? Politicians occasionally suggest that is so, but Alexander Hamilton certainly didn't agree. And, lest we think Alexander Hamilton was proposing something akin to "judicial tyranny," he disabuses us of that notion as well, stating: "this conclusion does not suppose a superiority of the judicial to the legislative power. It only supposes that the power of the people is superior to both" and, if a statute stands in opposition to the constitution, then "the judges ought to be governed by the latter rather than the former."

In Missouri [and Texas], where judges stand for retention or for election by the people, the duty is as clear as it is occasionally difficult: In each individual case, judges are accountable to the law and not to the popular will.

Adherence to the rule of law helps to preserve the rights of all people in a democratic society; the operative words being "the rights of ALL people." As reflected in our Declaration of Independence, in the Preamble to our Constitution, and in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg: in the United States, the power of government comes from all people, not from those in positions of power or those who control a majority of government posts.

The rule of law is what makes our nation so different, so resilient and so free. The human capacity for justice makes democracy possible, as the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr noted years ago. But the human inclination to do injustice to others makes democracy - and the rule of law - necessary.

That to secure these rights (life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness), Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form [RULES], as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness

RPT Financial Condition

Visit Texas Ethics Commission and Federal Elections Commission for copies of electronically filed finance reports.

The research is tedious and unenlightening even when reports are found. Consequently, an accurate assessment of the financial condition of the Republican Party of Texas remains elusive.

Republican Officeholder Gains/Losses

	1997		1999		2001		2003		2005		2007	
	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep
US Senators		2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2
Congressmen	17	13	17	13	17	13	17	15	11	21	13	19
Governor		1		1		1		1		1		1
Lt Gov	1			1		1		1		1		1
Speaker	1		1		1		1		1		1	
State Reps	82	68	78	72	78	72	62	88	63	86	68	81
State Senators	14	17	15	16	15	16	12	19	12	19	11	20

<http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legis/leaders/lrlhome.cfm>

Nationwide, many political observers have watched the Presidential Race for 2008 as Democratic candidates campaigned across the state of Texas. A question each Republican should have is, "Will 2008 be the beginning of the end for the GOP rule in Texas?"

Certainly shifts in our population require shifts in our strategies. One challenge facing Texas Republicans is crafting a strategy to encompass the state's growing Hispanic population. According to a study by the Center for Immigration Studies, "The returns from the 2006 election appear to have quelled hopes or fears among some strategists that Latinos were in the midst of a political realignment to the Republican Party. National exit polls indicated that House Republicans received about 30 percent of the Latino vote in 2006 – down 10 points from the 40 percent President Bush received in 2004, and the 38 percent GOP House members received in 2002. Reliable estimates place

the Latino support for Republican U.S. Senate candidates at 35 percent, and support for GOP gubernatorial candidates as high as 37 percent ... Practically speaking this means that to attract a steady stream of Latinos toward the GOP, continued economic prosperity and upward economic mobility will be important issues of concern. Republicans will make steady gains among Latinos through policies that facilitate Latino economic prosperity, business ownership, and secure employment.

There is no evidence that a more open immigration policy is one of those policies, as there is ample evidence from economics that unskilled immigrants compete in the same labor market niches as unskilled natives, lowering wages and living standards among all unskilled workers (Borjas 2001; 2003). The best course toward the long-term political realignment of the Latino vote may be a *less* open immigration policy. The share of Latinos voting Republican has remained largely unchanged across three decades, with fluctuations barely exceeding the error margin in most surveys. *If the path to Republican Party identification is paved by upward economic mobility, there would be many more Latino Republicans if these last 30 years had not witnessed record levels of unskilled immigration.*"ⁱⁱⁱ

The San Antonio Express News recently said it best when it reported that if there is not grassroots effort to counter the Democratic effort, GOP candidates up and down on statewide and local ballots could learn that a shift of a few seats by 2010 would put the next redistricting of Texas in the Democrat Party hands.

Texas Republican Senator John Cornyn is up for re-election this November. The May 5, 2008, the Rasmussen Report Poll shows his lead over his opponent only 4 percentage points – it is a long time until November.

In 2004, 232 members of Congress were Republican; in 2006, only 203 were Republican. Texas lost two Republican Congressman that year. The Democrats had 202 members in Congress in 2004 and gained the majority with 233 in 2006.

We have a Republican Governor and Lieutenant Governor (who leads the Texas Senate) and currently Republicans hold all statewide elected offices. The Texas Senate has 20 Republicans and 11 Democrats. Republicans lost 2 seats in 2004 and 5 seats in the Texas House in 2006.

Republican Speaker of the House Tom Craddick faced a major challenge during this session of the legislature. In the current 80th Legislature, Republicans still hold a majority, but much time was spent on rules and jockeying for leadership position.

Dallas County Republican judges were swept from office in 41 of 42 races in November 2006. In the most recent March primaries, Democrats outvoted Republicans 2:1 across the state^{iv}

The Texas Republican Party on the Issues

Where does the Republican Party of Texas stand on the issues that affect us?

A retrospective look at the party's stance on certain key issues should help guide our decisions today as we chart our course for 2008 and beyond. Over the past four years, some of the major issues facing Texans included the Texas Trans-Corridor, our border, public education, taxes and fiscal responsibility and ultimately, the war.

Peggy Noonan, Wall Street Journal columnist and former speechwriter for President Reagan, commented in the Journal on June 1, 2006: "The problem is not that the two parties are polarized. In many ways they're closer than ever. The problem is that the parties in Washington, and the people on the ground in America, are polarized. **There is an increasing and profound distance between the rulers of both parties and the people**--between the elites and the grunts, between those in power and those who put them there."

RPT on the TTC

[In 2004 the Republican Party of Texas adopted a platform](#) calling for the repeal of all authorization for the Trans Texas Corridor. Two years later the Party's grassroots met and again reaffirmed their Trans Texas Corridor objections. The 2006 Texas Republican platform also adds objections to the exercise of eminent domain to include seizing private property for public or private economic development or for increased tax revenues. Additionally, a new plank was added to oppose tolls charged for traversing previously toll-free roadways and continued collection of tolls on toll roads already paid for (excepting for maintenance).

http://www.corridorwatch.org/ttc_2007/CW00000034.htm

A giant, voracious subspecies of pork-barrel patronage and crony capitalism inhabiting the Lone Star State. Will thrive in a climate of apathy, or when ignored by citizens, who are unwittingly consumed.



Toll road opponent and Bexar County Commissioner Lyle Larson expressed concern that the Republican Party in Texas will become known as "the tolling party," and that image will damage the party's ability to win future elections. He says the vast majority of

Texans disapprove of the aggressive toll road building policy promoted by Governor Perry and Texas Department of Transportation Chairman Ric Williamson.^v

RPT on Our Border

In January 2007, Texas' representatives on the Republican National Committee, Denise McNamara, Bill Crocker and Tina Benkiser were united in their opposition to the appointment of Mel Martinez to head the RNC. Texas Republican Party Chair Tina Benkiser is expected to vote against President Bush's choice to head the national party Friday because of differences on solving the immigration problem.^{vi}

Tina Benkiser, state party chairman, issued a press release in April 2007, *A Healthy Immigration Debate is Vital to Our Security*: "Obviously, securing our borders is an issue that the federal government must address, but, to be blunt, the federal government is failing." <http://squawkboxnoise.com/?p=76>

RPT on Public Education

Just didn't find much information here - is that a problem? Should our party be out front on this issue?

RPT on Taxes and Fiscal Responsibility

On Texas new business tax, conservative commentator and former Harris County Republican Party chairman remarked, "Despite the state platform being violated by the business tax just instituted, the state party leadership was silent, except for RNC Committeewoman **Denise McNamara**, who stood tall." ^{vii} Following last year's convention, Mr. Polland summarized: "The party seems frozen in its role as cheerleader for our elected officials, as opposed to being a group that influences the direction of Texas."^{viii}

More recently, Tina Benkiser, Tx. Republican Party Chairman applauded Gov. Perry for his plan to give money back to the taxpayers of Texas, "Governor Perry has set out a road map that can help ensure that future property tax cuts are funded and that the taxpayers of this State get the tax relief they deserve." Benkiser concluded.

http://www.texasgop.org/site/News2?}ServSessionIdr001=ls8kq7ucz1.app1a&page=NewsArticle&id=6523&news_iv_ctrl=-1

RPT on the War

Try as we might, can't find anything in the news where the RPT has made a statement on the war.

RPT in the News

The Republican Party of Texas avoided prosecution ... by agreeing to stop using corporate money in several ways being investigated by Travis County Attorney David Escamilla.

State law generally prohibits corporate money being spent in connection with campaigns. The law allows political parties to spend corporate money to run their conventions and on administrative overhead... Under the agreement, called deferred prosecution, the Republican Party of Texas agreed not to use corporate money for so-called issue ads that mention a state candidate; to follow federal campaign finance restrictions against using corporate money in the final 60 days of an election to aid a federal candidate; to file the party's campaign finance reports electronically; and to specifically describe every transaction on its reports.

More recently, in the much publicized "Tom DeLay fiasco," The Republican Party of Texas' legal strategy was a series of blunders from beginning to end. This is an unfortunate reflection upon our state party and the leadership it provides, but it is also the reality.^{ix} While GOPUSA's Bobby Eberle remarked: "The congressional seat of former Majority Leader Tom DeLay is now in jeopardy thanks in part to a failure in leadership from party officials... While judges are denying Texas voters a fair choice this fall, the courts allowed the Democratic Party in New Jersey to withdraw Robert Torricelli and substitute Frank Lautenberg in a similar case just weeks before the 2002 U.S. Senate election." In 2002, we heard about this case all over the news. Senators were speaking out; local officials were holding press conferences. The case was being made both in the courts and in the media to justify why Torricelli should be replaced. Nary was a single press conference held by Texas Republican Party leaders stating what Republicans should be doing to support DeLay's decision and rally the grassroots. The DeLay congressional seat fiasco **should be a wake-up call to everyone that leadership matters. In this national political climate, we can't afford mistakes.** Every seat counts, and as we go forward, we must have our act together." ^x

By August 31, 2006, Polland was able to credit the Party: "Late last week the RPT united behind Shelley Sekula-Gibbs as their write-in choice for CD 22. Any write-in campaign still faces nearly insurmountable odds, (syndicated columnist Robert Novak concurs it's a likely Democratic takeover, one of only four in America), but the party deserves credit

for rallying the other candidates behind a single name - the first positive development after months of strategic blunders.”

RPT Executive Director Revolving Door

Since 2004, the Republican Party of Texas has come under the leadership of five different executive directors:

- Chad Wilbanks (Jan 1 2004 – Aug 2004?)
- Milton Rister (Sept 2004?- Dec 2004?)
- Jeff Fisher (Dec 2004? – July 2007)
- Talmadge Heflin (July 2007-April 2008)
- Eric Opiela (April 2008 – present)

Texas Monthly’s Paul Burka (certainly no conservative commentator had this to say)

Talmadge Heflin Update

posted by paulburka at [4:41 PM](#)

A staffer to a Democratic state rep sent me a gleeful e-mail today upon hearing of Talmadge Heflin’s appointment as executive director of the state Republican party:

It’s as if someone walked into the Texas Democratic Party HQ and said “Hey guys. Surprise! It’s your lucky day. You get to pick who is going to be the new director of the Republican Party of Texas. Have at it.”

Well, I hate to spoil the Democrats’ day, but I’m told that Heflin is just a temporary replacement for Jeff Fisher. Fisher was no prize as executive director, having been suspected by mainstream Republicans of running push polls against them before the 06 elections. There was also a bizarre arrangement at the party that made it impossible for a member of the media to contact anyone on short notice; the message was relayed to a spokeswoman in Houston who might or might not call you back. Anyway, Fisher “needed to be out” (as my source put it) and state chair Tina Benkiser “needed someone to keep the trains running on time while she looked for a permanent replacement.” Heflin and Benkiser have known each other for a long time, and there is a level of confidence that Heflin can keep things going until she can find a successor to Fisher. When that occurs, Heflin will reestablish his relationship with the Texas Public Policy Foundation. I was specifically told, “Contrary to popular sentiment, he does not need the money.” Heflin will be

acting executive director for a few months while the business of raising money and beating the bushes for candidates goes on.

Talmadge Heflin?????

posted by paulburka at [12:56 AM](#)

Can anyone explain why the Texas Republican party named Talmadge Heflin as its new executive director? Is it because the former chairman of the House appropriations committee is a brilliant electoral tactician? Apparently not, since the reason he's a *former* chairman is that he lost his race for reelection in 2004 to Democrat Hubert Vo, a political neophyte, by 33 votes—and lost again, by a much bigger margin, in 2006. Is it because he's a tireless worker? Apparently not, since the word I kept getting about the 04 race was that Heflin didn't work very hard; indeed, a couple of his Harris County colleagues blockwalked his district for him. Is it that he can take the party in a new direction by appealing to blacks and Hispanics? Not likely. One of the contributing factors to Heflin's first loss was his well publicized attempt to adopt his maid's young son, against her will. And Hispanics no doubt remember how he jerked them around on funding for the Texas Tech medical school in El Paso and the Irma Rangel pharmacy school at Texas A&M-Kingsville. Is it that he is popular with his former legislative colleagues? Nope. He had been a bully as chairman, even to the point that his committee rebelled against him when he brought up the appropriations bill for a vote without letting members know where the money had been allocated. When he decided to file an official election challenge at the start of the 05 session, few members on either side of the aisle were eager to see him return, and Will Hartnett crafted an exquisite brief that poured him out. Maybe the reason for Heflin's new assignment is as simple as he needed a job. He had talked about applying for executive director of the Texas Lottery, but he didn't have the college degree that was a prerequisite. He also worked part time for the Texas Public Policy Foundation.

This unkind assessment is directed not so much at Heflin as at the state GOP. The choice of Heflin indicates that its leaders are clueless about the threat to continued Republican domination of the state. This is not ground-breaking news in 2007. The president, the governor, the speaker, the war, the national Democratic resurgence, the glimmerings of a state Democratic resurgence—it's as if party leaders have never heard of these things. This is what happens when an extreme faction seizes control of a party. Ideologues on the right are still obsessed with ridding the world of RINOs, instead of adjusting to the new realities of Texas (and national)

politics. Here's an example of their thinking, from an article in Gary Polland's online [Texas Conservative Review](#). Polland was formerly Harris County Republican chairman. Here was his assessment of the legislative session in TCR's June 11 issue:

Promising Conservative Era In Texas Hijacked By Special Interests And RINO's

The great conservative era in Texas politics was to be an era where common sense conservative programs and principles would be followed and implemented. Instead, we have been disappointed, let down, and victimized by a political bait-and-switch.

This last Legislative session was by far the worst of the GOP Era.

What happened, what went wrong and what can we do about it?

In simple terms, the GOP era has been hijacked by the lobby in Austin with the cooperation of too many GOP legislators elected as conservatives, but voting otherwise in Austin. The loyal conservative legislators are there, but unfortunately they are in the minority in both houses. When you understand that, you know why we failed on a lower appraisal cap, the Governor's budget reform and spending controls, voter ID, reform of higher education admissions without "diversity" quotas, a pilot program for school choice (couldn't even get it for special needs children), and real reform of out of control state agencies.

Instead, we had the spectacle of a political brawl in the House over who should be Speaker for the last two weeks of the session, while critical bills were dying left and right.

So what to do? TCR feels we need to make sure we elect conservatives who will not wilt in Austin and stay true and weed out those GOP imposters now in office or who are candidates in the future.

You get that by accountability. The Republican Party of Texas can deliver this with a simple Compact with Texas for the 2008 election. The compact can be presented to candidates and officeholders seeking a pledge of support for the compact and down the line be reminded of their pledge, rated on their votes and defeated if they sell us out. Maybe then they will get the message from us.

Heflin is just about the worst choice I can think of to change the attitude in the GOP. He is a totally committed far-right conservative, blind to the big picture of Texas politics. To the extent that the job requires a lot of fielding complaints from party operatives with small problems and big egos, he's not the kind of person (judging from his performance as appropriations chairman) who suffers fools gladly and is eager to help them with their desire for a better seat at the state convention, or an appointment to a particular committee.

Some years ago, as the Texas Democratic party drifted inexorably leftward, a conservative Democrat told me, "Liberals have worked for years to kick the conservatives out and get control of the party, and when they finally get it, they'll find it isn't worth anything." He was right. The conservatives became Republicans, and the Democratic party, as an organization, became irrelevant. When that happens, the donors become the party. In the Democrats' case, that meant the trial lawyers, and that was disastrous for Democrats. In the Republicans case, that meant Bob Perry, Dick Weekley, Louis Beecherl, and James Leininger. They and other big donors are the de facto party leadership, and while they have been good for Rick Perry (and he has been good for them), they haven't been good for the way Republicans are perceived in this state. There is no chance, none, that Talmadge Heflin knows or cares how to turn this around.

RPT & 4th Amendment Protection

*RPT press release critical of Congress for failing to extend FISA authority to the president:
Consistent with republican ideals?*

Pelosi's Posse of Liberal Merry Pranksters Skip Town and Forget to Protect America's Vital Security Interests

Liberal Stalwarts Edwards, Lampson and Rodriguez Skip Town before Important FISA vote can be taken

Austin- After a continual blockade of the bipartisan FISA legislation this week Texas Congressmen Chet Edwards (TX-17), Nick Lampson (TX-22) and Ciro Rodriguez (TX-23) left town with their fellow liberal counterparts without reauthorizing the Protect America Act, stranding our law enforcement and potentially putting millions of American lives in danger.

House Republican leaders and the President of the United States said that they were committed to remaining in Washington until the people's business is done.

The premature departure from Washington, D.C. of Edwards, Lampson and Rodriguez from is a strong indicator of Nancy Pelosi's political muscle with these most liberal Texas members.

"Edwards, Lampson and Rodriguez all seem to be happy 'two-stepping' to the worst liberal tunes Nancy Pelosi puts on the jukebox. Unfortunately, these liberal merry pranksters in Congress have put the capabilities of our men and women in law enforcement in great jeopardy," RPT Communications Director Hans Klinger said.

Yesterday the National Review summarized the current situation:

"Here is the bottom line: The legal authority for the United States intelligence community to collect foreign intelligence – information that protects Americans from terrorist attacks and that our soldiers in harm's way rely on to do their duty – will expire at midnight on Friday. And Democrats are perfectly willing to allow that to happen." (National Review, February 14, 2008)

But Texas Republicans realize our platform addresses these issues thusly:

- **Electronic Privacy** – We believe all law-abiding citizens should be free from government surveillance of their electronic communications except in cases directly involving national security. This includes any government mandate of trap door encryption standards. Except for non-citizens, we further oppose any government effort to implement a national ID program, including federalization of driver's licenses.
- **Homeland Security**... not violate the constitutional rights of the citizens of the United States;

Bruce Fein is a constitutional and international lawyer with Bruce Fein & Associates and The Lichfield Group served as associate deputy attorney general under President Ronald Reagan and was a member of the ABA Task Force on presidential signing statements. He wrote in *Washington Monthly*, October 2006:

The most conservative principle of the Founding Fathers was distrust of unchecked power. Centuries of experience substantiated that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Men are not angels. Ambition must be made to counteract ambition to avert abuses or tyranny. The Constitution embraced a separation of powers to keep the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in equilibrium. As Edward Gibbon

wrote in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: “The principles of a free constitution are irrevocably lost, when the legislative power is nominated by the executive.”

But a Republican Congress has done nothing to thwart President George W. Bush’s alarming usurpations of legislative prerogatives. Instead, it has largely functioned as an echo chamber of the White House.

President Bush has flouted the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (FISA) for five years by directing the National Security Agency to target American citizens on American soil for electronic surveillance on his say-so alone. The president has defended his warrantless domestic spying with an imperial theory of inherent constitutional power that would empower him to open mail, break in and enter homes, or torture detainees, even in violation of federal criminal statutes. He has concealed details of the spying program indispensable to rational congressional oversight—for example, the number of Americans targeted, the earmarks employed to select the targets, or the intelligence yield of the spying. He has never explained to Congress why FISA could not have been amended to accommodate any unforeseen evasive tactics by al Qaeda in lieu of simply disregarding the law. Indeed, Congress has amended FISA six times since 9/11 at the request of the White House, and the Senate Intelligence Committee was informed by Bush’s Justice Department on July 31, 2002, that FISA was working impeccably. The president has also refused to disclose what legal advice he received to justify the NSA’s warrantless domestic spying at its inception. And Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez has confessed that President Bush is operating other intelligence collection programs that are unknown to Congress and the public and that will never be revealed, absent leaks to the media.

Republicans in Congress have bowed to the president’s scorn for the rule of law and craving for secret government. They have voted against Democratic Sen. Russell Feingold’s resolution to rebuke Bush for violating federal statutes and crippling checks and balances. They have resisted brandishing either the power of the purse or the contempt power (with which it can compel testimony) to end the president’s violation of FISA and to force full disclosure of his secret foreign-intelligence programs. Indeed, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Arlen Specter, is sponsoring a bill that in substance endorses President Bush’s FISA illegalities and authorizes an electronic-surveillance program warrant that would enable the NSA to spy on Americans indiscriminately without the particularized suspicion of wrongdoing required by the Fourth Amendment.

Republicans in the House and Senate have been equally invertebrate in the face of presidential signing statements that usurp the power to legislate. In approximately 800 cases, President Bush has both signed a bill and declared his intent to disregard provisions he believes are unconstitutional, the equivalent of a line-item veto. For instance, he signed the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005 prohibiting torture while issuing a signing statement declaring his intent to ignore the law in order to gather military or foreign intelligence.

The Presentment Clause of Article I, Section 7 gives the president but two options when presented with a bill passed by Congress: sign or veto the bill in its entirety. That was the holding of the Supreme Court when it found a line-item veto statute unconstitutional in 1998's *Clinton v. City of New York*. The president is obligated to veto a bill that he believes to be unconstitutional; Congress may override that judgment by two-thirds majorities. In the 217-year history of the United States under the present Constitution, Congress has overridden only 28 constitutionally based vetoes, and on only one occasion did the override engender a constitutional battle between the president and Congress. Presidential signing statements further usurp the legislative power by resulting in the enforcement of laws that Congress has not passed. Members vote on all the provisions of a law collectively in the expectation that all will be executed if the president approves.

Signing statements also flout the president's obligation in Article II of the Constitution to execute the laws faithfully. The Founding Fathers were acutely aware of the example of King James II, whose practice of suspending or dispensing with laws he believed encroached on royal prerogatives eventually occasioned his overthrow in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. With such precedents in mind, the framers of the United States Constitution directed the president to execute the laws without fail. The Republican Congress, however, has acted as a disinterested spectator while President Bush has stolen its legislative authority in plain view and exercised the tyrannical power of making, executing, and conclusively interpreting the law and the Constitution.

The most frightening claim made by Bush with congressional acquiescence is reminiscent of the *lettres de cachet* of prerevolutionary France. (Such letters, with which the king could order the arrest and imprisonment of subjects without trial, helped trigger the storming of the Bastille.) In the aftermath of 9/11, Mr. Bush maintained that he could pluck any American citizen out of his home or off of the sidewalk and detain him indefinitely on the president's finding that he was an illegal combatant. No court could second-guess the president. Bush soon employed such monarchical power to detain a few citizens and to frighten would-be dissenters, and Republicans in Congress either cheered or fiddled like Nero while the Constitution burned. The Supreme Court ultimately entered the breach and repudiated the president in 2004's *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*. Republicans similarly yawned as President Bush ordained military tribunals to try accused war criminals based on secret evidence and unreliable hearsay in violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the Geneva Convention. The Supreme Court again was forced to countervail the congressional dereliction by holding the tribunals illegal in 2006's *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*.

Republicans have shied from challenging Bush by placing party loyalty above institutional loyalty, contrary to the expectations of the Founding Fathers. They do so in the fear that embarrassing or discrediting a Republican president might reverberate to their political disadvantage in a reverse coat-tail effect.

Democrats, for their part, likewise place party above the Constitution, but their party

loyalty at least creates an incentive to frustrate Bush's super-imperial presidency. This could help to restore checks and balances. For the foreseeable future, divided government is the best bet for preserving both the letter and spirit of the Constitution. If Democrats capture the House or Senate in November 2006, the danger created by Bush with a Republican-controlled Congress would be mitigated or eliminated.

But that only applies to the next two years. If Hillary Clinton wins the White House in 2008, conservatives should be equally zealous for Republicans to recapture Congress.

The RPT on Integrity and the Rule of Law - Is Our House In Order?

Republicans around the state have reported a number of alleged rules violations at the county and senate district level.

Pursuant to Texas Republican Party rules, challenges have been filed with the state convention from the following counties: Brazoria, Dallas, Galveston, Hays, Midland, Nacogdoches, Nueces, Parker and Tarrant. Visit www.fairconvention.org for copies of these challenges.

Nueces Co. Republicans held a rump convention. You can listen to part of the original convention here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-fARjv3tFk>.

Galveston Co., home to state party vice chairman Robin Armstrong, failed to hold separate senate district conventions as is required under the party rules, "instead of a county convention, a **senatorial district convention shall be held** in each part of the county that is situated in a different senatorial district, provided, however, that shared facilities may be utilized for **separate senatorial district conventions** and may be held outside the geographical boundaries of the senatorial district, if party interests and public accessibility will be served..." Galveston Co. delegates met in one room with one chairman, one secretary and one parliamentarian thus violating a number of other party rules as well i.e., Rule 25, Persons Admitted and Who May Address; Rule 30 Convention Agenda.

Several of these challenges charge that Republican Party leadership around the state violated party rules and Texas Election Code. Perhaps the most serious of these charges comes from a challenge filed by delegates from Dallas County:

Republican Party of Texas
900 Congress, Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78701
Attn: Tina Benkiser

Ref: Challenge

Madam Chair:

Please deliver the following challenges to the Republican State Officials Committee as required in the bylaws of the SREC and to the Temporary Credentials Committee of the State Convention.

As the signers of this challenge, we have voted in the Republican General Primary and challenge the delegate status of the following person according to Republican Party of Texas (henceforth "RPT") Rule 11(b), which provides the remedy for violations related to this challenge, RPT Rule 27 (b), governing the filing of this challenge, and RPT Rule 5, authorizing Robert's Rules of Order and, therefore, the main motion to censure for abuse of authority as noted below:

**Tina Benkiser, Chair, Republican Party of Texas, 900 Congress, Suite 300,
Austin, Texas 78701**

During the week before the Senate District Conventions, the parties to this Challenge attempted to obtain the Dallas County Republican Party's (henceforth "DCRP") copies of the Precinct Convention Minutes for the Precincts that lie within Dallas County. In violation of Rule 22(b), as explained below, our attempts were repeatedly and summarily blocked by the representatives of the DCRP office. It is our contention that the Chair of the Republican Party of Texas was directly involved in the denial of our requests to view and copy the Precinct Convention Minutes by representatives of the DCRP. This involvement constitutes an intentional violation of the Rules of the Republican Party of Texas and Texas Election Code. Therefore, we ask that the Temporary Credentials Committee of the State Convention exercise the remedy proscribed by RPT Rule 11(b):

Challenge - **Any officer** or committee chairman of any convention, whether it be in temporary or permanent organization, **who intentionally violates the Rules of the Republican Party of Texas or the directives of the Texas Election Code, shall be subject to a challenge filed under the provisions of Rule 27; and if such challenge is upheld by the convention which hears the challenge, that officer** or committee chairman **shall be removed from serving as a delegate to any convention of the Party at any level throughout the year.**

We request that Tina Benkiser, Chair of the Republican Party of Texas, be removed from serving as a delegate to the Texas State Convention for violating Rule 22 b:

RPT Rule No. 22 - b. Transmittal of Precinct Convention Minutes: The Permanent Chairman of the Precinct Convention shall sign and safely transmit to the county chairman no later than the third day after the date of the precinct convention or deposit in the mail not later than the second day after the date of the precinct convention such record (minutes) and a copy thereof, and maintain a third copy for himself at least until the end of that year's biennial state convention. In

multidistrict counties, the County Chairman shall deliver the original record to the temporary chairmen of the Senatorial District conventions. **The copy shall be public record.**

After alarming news from other parts of Texas reached us, we determined that we should exercise our right to access the Precinct Convention Minutes as provided by RPT Rule 22(b). The purpose of our request was to ensure that all rules and laws, specifically Rules 20, 21, and 22(b), were followed. News of the Tarrant County Republican Party's violation of Party Rules and Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised by adding delegates to the Precinct Convention Minutes after the adjournment of a precinct convention had us and other Republicans concerned that a similar abuse might occur in Dallas County, though we had no specific knowledge that the DCRP was involved in such activities.

One of the first delegates who attempted to access those documents, Lev Shepelev, was allowed access to the Minutes of the Precinct Conventions in his Senate District on March 24, 2008. However, he was denied the privilege of using the Dallas County Republican Party's resources, i.e. copier and fax machine, because, according to Mr. Shepelev's recollection, the office's machines were suffering from overuse. He used his time at the DCRP office to review and transcribe the names of the Republicans elected as Delegates and Alternates at their respective Precinct Conventions.

Salvador Ayala and Jarrod Atkinson arrived at the DCRP Office with a copy machine and requested that we be allowed to make copies of the County Chair's copy of the Precinct Convention Minutes. That request was denied. According to Mirand Zepeda and Mike Walz, their instructions to not allow us to copy the Minutes came directly from the RPT legal counsel. The Chair of the Republican Party of Texas, Tina Benkiser, would have had direct involvement in this prohibition. Furthermore, considering that Ms. Benkiser has served as the Chair of the Rules Committee and is an attorney, her extensive knowledge of the wording, intent, and implementation of the Rules should provide her with a thorough understanding of RPT Rule 22(b) and Texas Election Code.

The "Written Request for Access and Duplication of Public Records," presented to the DCRP Executive Director on March 27, 2008, is included. After presenting this letter, we were informed that a list of the delegates and alternates could be provided, but only after the conclusion of the Senate District Conventions and at significant financial cost, as the list would have to be compiled and all personal information removed. However, this refined list would not have allowed us the opportunity to accomplish our stated goals, including verifying that the list of Delegates and Alternates had not been altered and would be in keeping with neither the intent nor the scope of the RPT Rules.

Regarding Rule 22(b), the 2006 State Convention considered and intentionally phrased the Party Rules to reflect the intent of TEC 174.027(f) below. If the intent of RPT Rule 22(b) was to restrain access to Precinct Convention Minutes and the information contained within, there would not be a provision making such records public information.

§ 174.027. Records of Convention

- (a) The convention chair shall prepare, sign, **and make a copy of a list of the names and residence addresses of the delegates and any alternates selected by the convention.**
- (b) The convention chair shall sign and **make a copy** of the list of precinct convention participants required by Section 174.025(c).
- (c) The convention chair shall deliver the **originals and copies of the lists to the county chair** not later than the third day after the date of the precinct convention, except that if delivered by mail, they shall be deposited in the mail not later than the second day after the date of the precinct convention.
- (d) **The county chair shall retain the copies of the lists** until the end of the voting year in which they are received.
- (e) If senatorial district conventions will be held in the county, the county chair shall deliver the originals of the lists to the temporary chairs of the senatorial district conventions before the conventions convene.
- (f) The original lists are not public information.

Texas Election Code, Section 163.004(c) below defines a "rule on electoral affairs" as "a rule or amendment of the class described by Subsection (a)" which is a reference to party rules.

Sec. 163.004. ADOPTING RULES. (a) A political party's rules, including amendments to rules, governing or affecting its general or runoff primary elections, conventions held under this code, or nominees may be adopted only by:

- (1) a state convention; or
 - (2) the state executive committee as a temporary rule, if adoption before the next state convention is necessary.
- (b) A temporary rule must be considered by the first state convention following its adoption. The state convention may rescind, modify, or ratify the temporary rule. If the state convention fails to act, the temporary rule expires on the day after the date the convention adjourns.

(c) In this chapter, "rule on electoral affairs" means a rule or amendment of the class described by Subsection (a).

Therefore, a rule on electoral affairs is a party rule. Texas Election Code, Sections 163.007 and 161.009 treats party rules "as if the rule were a statute," and party officers "as if [they] were a public officer."

Sec. 163.007. RULES ENFORCABLE BY MANDAMUS. A rule on electoral affairs is enforceable by writ of mandamus in the same manner as if the rule were a statute.

Sec. 161.009. PARTY OFFICER SUBJECT TO MANDAMUS. The performance of a duty placed by this code on an officer of a political party is enforceable by writ of mandamus in the same manner as if the party officer were a public officer.

Texas Election Code, Section 163.003 requires party rules to be consistent with state law.

Sec. 163.003. CONSISTENCY WITH STATE LAW. The rules adopted by a political party must be consistent with state law.

Since we treat party rules "as if they were a statute," to allow an interpretation of public records as "access but no duplication" would be inconsistent with the Texas Public Information Act, which provides for access AND DUPLICATION of such public information (Government Code, Sections 552.203, 552.221(a), 552.221(b)(1)).

§ 552.203. GENERAL DUTIES OF OFFICER FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION. Each officer for public information, subject to penalties provided in this chapter, shall:

- (1) make public information available for public inspection and copying;**
- (2) carefully protect public information from deterioration, alteration, mutilation, loss, or unlawful removal; and
- (3) repair, renovate, or rebind public information as necessary to maintain it properly.

§ 552.221. APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION; PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION.

(a) An officer for public information of a governmental body shall promptly produce public information for inspection, duplication, or both on application by any person to the officer. In this subsection, "promptly" means as soon as possible under the circumstances, that is, within a reasonable time, without delay.

(b) An officer for public information complies with Subsection (a) by:

(1) providing the public information for inspection or duplication in the offices of the governmental body; or

(2) sending copies of the public information by first class United States mail if the person requesting the information requests that copies be provided and pays the postage and any other applicable charges that the requestor has accrued under Subchapter F.

When presented with the relevant rules and laws, Ms. Benkiser instructed the DCRP to continue to obstruct our attempts to access to the Precinct Convention Minutes and, therefore, is subject to the penalties and remedies afforded by the State of Texas and the Republican Party of Texas.

We wish to ensure that the Rules are followed at all levels so that voters have confidence that the Republican Party of Texas acts in accordance with the law and the

ethical values that we, as Republicans, Texans and Americans, espouse. We also would like to avoid allowing a precedent to be set that the RPT can change or ignore the rules and law, as this precedent could lead to any number of conflicts with the Texas Election Code and the Attorney General's Office.

We respectfully ask that you include this challenge in the Credentials Committee Report to be presented to the floor of the State Convention Delegation. We also would like to remind the Committee that neither the RPT Chair nor Vice Chair is allowed a vote under Roberts' Rules of Order Newly Revised.

The above challenges have been sent via certified or registered mail not later than thirty (30) days following the date of the SD convention.

Signed,

Jarrold Atkinson
Dallas County Republican Precinct Chair - 1134
12219 Montego Plaza
Dallas, TX 75230

Sal Ayala
904 Green Cove Ln.
Dallas, TX 75232

2008 Convention Agenda

Texas Republicans hold a state convention in June of even numbered years. During presidential election years, as in this year, the convention is a three day affair (Thursday – Saturday); in other years, it lasts only two days (Friday-Saturday). Due to the size of the Texas Republican delegation, the convention is typically rotated between Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Dallas and Houston.

Legal action has been taken to insure that this year’s convention is conducted in a manner consistent with the Texas Election Code and Party Rules. Below is a table comparing the typical convention agenda along with that being sought.

Typical Agenda		Agenda Proposed by Fair Convention Advocates	
Thursday – June 12			
12:00	1st General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call to order by temporary chairman • Opening Ceremony • No convention business conducted 	12:00	1st General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call to order by temporary chairman • Opening Ceremony • Temporary roll of delegates (pursuant to Rule 33c) • Election of State Convention Permanent Chairman (TEC 174.094-174.095) • Credentials committee report
3:00	1st Senatorial District Caucus Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect Caucus permanent chair, permanent members to rules, platform and credentials and nominations committee (RPT Rule 34) 		
8:00	Permanent Committee Meetings		
Friday – June 13			
9:00	2nd Senatorial District Caucus Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect committeeman and committeewoman (RPT Rule 42) • Nominate State Chairman and Vice-Chairman (RPT Rule 41) 		
11:00	State Nominations Committee Meeting		
1:00	2nd General Session – Newt Gingrich slated to speak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Permanent Convention Chair • Report of Credentials Committee 	2nd General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credentials Report (updated) • Adopt Permanent Rules for the Party (RPT Rule 34b) • Adopt Resolutions/Platform (RPT 	

- Adopt Permanent Rules of the Party Rule 34c)
- Adopt Resolutions/Platform
- Elect Permanent State Party Officers (RPT Rule 41)

4:00 1st Congressional Dist. Caucus Meeting

- Elect Congressional Delegation Chairman
- Elect representative to the National Nominations Committee
- Elect the three (3) National Delegates and three (3) National Alternates. Those elected must "pledge" themselves to the winner of the primary, but anyone from the CD can be elected. RPT # 38 - Note: Nomination from the floor are OK

6:00 National Nominations Committee Meeting

Saturday - June 14

8:00 2nd Congressional Caucus Meeting

- **Nominate** one person from the congressional district to serve as the Presidential Elector in the Electoral College. Those elected must sign a "pledge" to vote for the Republican nominee, but anyone from the CD can be elected. (RPT # 39)
- **Nominate** National Committeeman and National Committeewoman. (RPT #40)

10:00 National Nominations Committee Meeting

1:00 3rd General Session

- Credentials Report - updated and in context to National/Congressional Organization
- Elect National Committeeman and National Committeewoman (RPT Rule 40)
- Ratify the slate of at-large national delegates and alternates (RPT Rule 38 Sec. 9a) No option to nominate but can reject.
- Elect presidential electors (RPT Rule 39)

Texas Election Code §174.094 Organizing the Convention

- The state chair is the temporary chair of the biennial state convention.
- The temporary chair shall call the convention to order.
- The temporary chair shall prepare a list of the names and residence addresses of the delegates and any alternate delegates to the convention and shall deliver the list to the convention.
- The convention shall select a convention chair and a convention secretary. The convention may select any other officers considered necessary to conduct the convention's business.

§174.095 Convention Business

After the convention is organized, the convention shall conduct its business.

**For More Information
Visit**

www.fairconvention.org

ⁱ <http://elections.sos.state.tx.us/elchist.exe> Office of the Secretary of State. Race Summary Reports March 4, 2008

ⁱⁱ "The Stealth Platform" The New York Times, August 13, 1996.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.cis.org/articles/2007/back307.html> Center for Immigration Studies: Latino Voting in the 2006 Election. Realignment to the GOP remains distant.

^{iv} <http://elections.sos.state.tx.us/elchist.exe> Office of the Secretary of State. Race Summary Reports March 4, 2008

^v TTC News Archives, Jim Forsyth, 1200 WOAI News Radio, Nov. 16, 2007

^{vi} Texas Politics, MySA.com, January 18, 2007

^{vii} "Republican State Convention Preview" Texas Conservative Review, Volume V, Number 9, May 26, 2006

^{viii} "Texas GOP Convention Comes and Goes, So Where Are We?" Texas Conservative Review, Volume VI, Number 10, June 16, 2006

^{ix} "Tom DeLay and His Seat, What Went Wrong?" Texas Conservative Review, Volume V, Number 12, August 15, 2006

^x "DeLay Seat Turns Into Fiasco" The Loft, GOPUSA.com, Bobby Eberle, August 16, 2006