

Bryan/College Station Tea Party Texas House District 14 Candidate Forum Program Questions

Introduction

Thanks to everyone for attending the Bryan/College Station Tea Party's first Candidate Forum. Special thanks are in order to the candidates for participating in this event.

As most everyone here understands, one of the greatest contributions the Tea Party Movement has made to our nation has been to change the subject of political discussion. The B/CS Tea Party refuses to accept the false argument that political discussion and policy must necessarily pit the so-called haves against the so-called have-nots. Rather, we seek to move the discourse back to the founding principles of this country, which will benefit all.

So in that effort, each of the topics will be discussed according to government's true role which is to promote personal liberty and the protection of private property rights. These two principles created the Republic of Texas right here in the Brazos Valley, March 2, 1836 and we affirm as Texans that without these two principles - personal liberty and private property rights - civil society cannot exist.

We have provided everyone with scorecards so you can rate answers according to the Federalist 10 principle of the purpose of government. This is purely for your own use. After the event we will post the questions asked at bcsteaparty.com, so you can continue to discern the candidate who you think will best represent you according to Constitutional Principles.

Candidate Introductions

Explanation of question / answer process (1 min answers)

State Services

1. What are the basic services you believe the State of Texas is required to provide for citizens?
2. The next state budget will be a big challenge to solve. Typically budget discussions revolve around how to keep the existing government services intact. Would you consider eliminating and/or privatizing portions of the state government that are not essential basic services?

Federal Overreach - 10th Amendment

The 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution - which is a part of The Bill of Rights - states that powers not granted to the federal government nor prohibited to the states by the Constitution are reserved, respectively, to the states or the people.

However, the federal government ensures their regulatory authority in each state by threatening to withhold the return of our tax money to the state budget unless the state complies with federal regulations. This was the method used to enforce compliance with the 55 mile speed limit.

Our leaving District 14 State Rep., Fred Brown, was one of the signers of the Texas Conservative Coalition. Rep. Brown received an award from them at one of our meetings. A Portion of Texas Conservative Coalition Pledge - Point 2 states:

*"I pledge to advance, support, and vote for legislation that reasserts the limited role of the federal government and those rights guaranteed to Texas under the United States Constitution as codified in the Tenth Amendment. **I pledge to reject new federal funds with strings attached as an enticement to create new programs.**"*

3. Will you affirm that portion of the Texas Conservative Coalition pledge as a member of the Texas Legislature?

Federal Overreach - Energy Production

Availability of energy is the engine of healthy economic growth that benefits all Texans. Currently the EPA is using various regulations to stop Texas in the development of coal, gas, oil reserves. Besides the jobs lost, Texas is also losing the revenue of royalties paid for off-shore drilling. Some have suggested that rejecting certain federal regulations inhibiting energy exploration could unleash the Texas spirit of innovation and result in dynamic growth.

5. As a legislator, would you be willing to stand against federal overreach in pursuit of a dynamic Texas state energy policy?

Federal Overreach - Public School Programs

Since the creation of the Department of Education, so many of the federal programs required in every public school seem to incentivize less learning, rather than more. For instance, the federal funding for remedial reading classes creates a moral dilemma for teachers and administrators, as more remedial students mean more federal money for the district, and as a by-product increased job security. These conditions tend to lower the expectations for students which reduces the student's life potential and has a negative effect on the community. We believe it is neither compassionate nor wise to reward less achievement with more educational funding.

6. To stop the decline of academic achievement fostered by mandates from the Federal

Department of Education would you support legislation to reject these federal funds?

7. What do you believe the Texas Legislature can do to encourage academic achievement?

Higher Education - The Seven Solutions for Higher Education

1. Measure teaching efficiency and effectiveness.
2. Publicly recognize and reward extraordinary teachers.
3. Split research and teaching budgets to encourage excellence in both.
4. Require evidence of teaching skill for tenure.
5. Use “results-based” contracts with students to measure quality.
6. Put state funding directly in the hands of students.
7. Create results-based accrediting alternatives.

8. Do you support the 7 Solutions for Higher Education in Texas?

9. Is there one solution that you particularly support or disagree with?

Education Spending Reform

Forty years ago the ratio of teachers to non-teachers was 5:1, but since then ratio has become an astonishing 1:1. If this were to happen in a free market business it would not survive very long due to excessive overhead cost.

10. What can be done to reduce the administrative overhead cost in Texas education and put more money in the classroom?

There is typically a small percentage of students that cause most of the problems on school campuses. These few consume far more instruction and administration time and effort than other students due to their bad attitude and behavior; they are actually stealing from all the other students. Administrators and teachers cannot remove the bad students for fear of losing funding in some way. These conditions penalize and demoralize good students to accommodate the unruly ones.

11. How can the Texas legislature improve this situation?

Education Funding Reform

Property tax was understood by Alexander Hamilton to be the most punishing method of taxation, for various reasons, with the most important being that it taxes the very means used to conduct commerce. Today, property taxes are set using subjective methods and the

assessments often bear little correspondence to the actual economic value of the property. The current property tax program pits the haves and have nots against each other, rather than unite Texans in their responsibility to education all our children.

12. Would you consider the possibility of replacing the existing property tax system with a commerce based sales tax system that could be divided according to the entire state student population?

13. Do you see any way to reform the method of funding public education so that the money actually funds the student, not the district?

14. If education funding reform were able to link spending to the student would that consideration make funding for vouchers or homeschoolers a possible source of education reform that you could support?

Economic Development

The Texas Legislature's development of special preferences for individuals and groups has come at a cost to its purpose of ensuring and defending the personal liberty and private property of all citizens. Although celebrated for righting some historical injustices, the end result is the promotion of injustice and unmerited outcomes—the source of civil unrest.

15. Do you believe government set asides for historically underutilized businesses such as those operated by minorities, women, or any other group that qualifies to receive preferential treatment is in direct conflict with the purpose of both American and Texas governments to first ensure and defend the liberty of all citizens?

16. How can the Texas legislature promote open and honest business development that ensures and protects the liberty and private property of all Texans, instead of picking winners and losers?

Private property Rights

Many of our municipalities across the state including our local government are adopting [Agenda 21](#) centralized planning as developed by the UN and other organizations. This program subverts individual and private property rights to the government under the guise of controlling our dwindling resources according to terms such as: fairly, sustainable growth, buffer zones, reclamation, blighted, and numerous others. In fact communities across the nation are finding that the only way to eliminate this United Nations sponsored program is to make it illegal.

17. Would you support legislation to make these U.N sponsored regulations illegal in the state of Texas?

Rural land owners are also facing newly created bureaucracies that seek to regulate private property water rights in favor of larger cities pitting agri-business against tourism. The Texas legislature is actively working against the private land owner by directing the creation of “advisory boards” that assume authority of all water within their purview, rather than the property owner. Some define this as legalized tyranny.

18. What can you as a legislator do to protect the private citizen against these state sanctioned advisory boards?

Border Security

While border security is a federal issue, many Texans believe Border Security is an issue to be addressed by our our state government.

19. What measures would you like to see happen with regard to border security?

In the past session, a bill that addressed the issue of Texas cities declaring themselves sanctuary cities was bottled up in committee, never to receive debate on the floor of the Senate or House.

20. Do you think Texas cities have the right to declare themselves sanctuary cities and disregarding Texas law?

21. Do you think the state should form a Green Card system that would give current illegals the protection of law in order to provide safety to the illegal alien from unscrupulous business owners and managers?

22. Do you think before receiving state services, all individuals must produce a photo id that establishes citizenship?

Fostering a Thriving Texas Economy With Robust Commerce

The state process of licensing jobs is strictly a method to raise revenue having nothing to do with protecting the consumer or ensuring that the license holder adheres to good business practice. Indeed, the license process is one that inhibits the liberty of any man to contract his time/labor in exchange for money. According to Texas Public Policy Foundation, “in Texas, anyone wanting to practice one of [514 occupations](#) must obtain an occupational license. The occupations licensed extend beyond professionally certified services to horse tooth floaters, hair braiders and weavers, funeral directors, body piercers and referees.

23. Would you vote to end the process of revenue collection by issuing such state employment licenses?

24. Would you be a vigilant legislator voting against such methods of revenue collection in the future?