

WHY VOTE REPUBLICAN?

Honorable Susan Combs, Texas Comptroller

In this very interesting political environment, Republicans need to be able to articulate a clear answer when someone asks: "Why vote for a Republican?"

Here's how I would answer it. Since 1995, when every statewide office including the governor's office was held by Republicans, Governor Bush and Governor Perry worked hard to bring conservative leadership to the state. Their efforts were bolstered by majorities in the Texas House and Senate as vitally important legislation was moved.

Tort reform was first passed under Governor Bush and then further refined under Governor Perry with wonderful results: for example, more than seven thousand doctors have moved to Texas since Prop 12 passed fixing medical malpractice. The cost of business liability has been curtailed and this has also been a significant reason for the incredible dominance Texas has on the national landscape.

Later, when we saw a possible budget problem in 2003, the governor and the legislature acted decisively to trim spending, narrow priorities, and avoid a tax increase. Business does the very same thing in order to control costs and expand opportunity.

Today, Texas is the leader in the nation in terms of economic activity, job creation and expansion and a positive business climate. In the Wall Street Journal a recent letter to the editor by the CEO of Cypress Semiconductor pointed to the loss of jobs by California. He stated that he has moved 7,000 of his 8,000 jobs out of the state because of California's sales tax on investment, and other companies are also leaving.

In the financial and business world, capital will flee a hostile environment. As Comptroller for Texas, I watch over economic indicators because they present a clear picture of our state's fiscal health.

Here are some facts: If Texas were its own country, we would be the 12th largest economy in the world. Why? Because we have a youthful population, a stable workforce and a positive business climate.

We have not seen the incredible upward surge in housing prices experienced in California, Arizona, Nevada and Florida for example. Our lenders were able to get families into their homes without resorting to sub-prime. Yes, new housing permits are down, but thankfully the values of that housing stock across the state is up 10%. Multi-family building permits are up by 16%.

From June 2007 to June 2008, our Lone Star State brought in 245,000 new jobs – a whopping 73% of the entire US job growth. Folks are leaving other states and relocating to Texas. In return, we need more housing. In the period from May to June 2008, Texas gained 47,700 jobs. Compare that to the entire country--which lost 62,000 jobs.

Consumer confidence is up, sales taxes are up because of that optimism and Republicans can rightfully lay claim to this good business climate. Tort reform, good business climate, state government which watches its spending... these are Republican values and they have led to Republican successes.

So tell everyone who asks that the reason Texas is a success is because of all of us.