



Speech in support of Republican candidate

Ron Paul

Prepared for the Dixie Republican Forum
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Ron Paul 2008

HOPE FOR AMERICA

RonPaul2008.com

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Introduction

Good afternoon, fellow Republicans. My name is Mike Parker¹, I'm from Hurricane, and I'm a grassroots supporter of Presidential candidate Dr. Ron Paul. On behalf of the Washington County Ron Paul Meetup², allow me to thank you for the invitation to speak to you today.

Ron Paul is a 10-term Congressman representing the Galveston, Texas area.

He graduated from Duke University School of Medicine, before proudly serving as a flight surgeon in the U.S. Air Force during the 1960s. He has been a practicing OB/GYN for 40 years and has delivered more than 4,000 babies.

During his 20 years in Congress Dr. Paul has never voted to raise taxes, voted for an unbalanced budget, or voted to raise congressional pay. He has never taken a government-paid junket, and he does not participate in the lucrative congressional pension program. He returns a portion of his annual congressional office budget to the U.S. treasury every year; this year that amount is about 75,000 dollars.³

In 1976, Ron Paul was one of only four Republican congressmen to endorse Ronald Reagan for president.

In the House of Representatives he tirelessly works for limited constitutional government, low taxes, free markets, and a return to sound monetary policies. He is known among his congressional colleagues and his constituents for his consistent voting record. He has earned the nickname "Dr. No" because he never votes for legislation unless the proposed measure is expressly authorized by the Constitution.

Liberty

Ron Paul's campaign can be summed up in a single word: Liberty. He believes the Founding Fathers gave us the gift of freedom from government control over our lives. This principle of small, limited government is the basis of our Constitution and the Republican Party platform.

Just before the Presidential election of 1964, Ronald Reagan gave a nationally-televised speech in support of Republican nominee Barry Goldwater. He said:

You and I are told increasingly that we have to choose between a left or right, but I would like to suggest that there is no such thing as a left or right. There is only an up or down — up to a man's age-old dream, the ultimate in individual freedom consistent with law and order — or down to the ant heap totalitarianism, and regardless of their sincerity, their humanitarian motives, those who would trade our freedom for security have embarked on this downward course.⁴

I submit that this is just as true today as it was then.

Following the Constitution

Virtually every problem we face today as Americans stems from our failure to follow the Constitution.

For the last 75 years we have been essentially *ignoring* the Constitution. Rather than follow it or amend it, we pretend it doesn't exist. The politicians in Washington simply write laws they think are good, regardless of whether they have authority to do so, and the courts go along with them.

And over the last 20 years, the Republican Party has undergone a radical shift from being the party of small government to being a party of big government. Instead of talking about *eliminating* the federal Department of Education, as Ronald Reagan wanted to, today a Republican President is *using* the Department of Education to enforce his own big-government "No Child Left Behind Act."

¹ You can contact Mike by phone at (435) 635-2087 or by email at mike@mike-parker.org

² <http://ronpaul.meetup.com/37>

³ "House Says Paul Again Set to Return Thousands to Treasury," press release, 13 January 2008 (<http://pressmediawire.com/article.cfm?articleID=4685>)

⁴ Ronald Reagan, "A Time for Choosing," 27 October 1964 (<http://www.reaganlibrary.com/reagan/speeches/rendezvous.asp>).

It's been said that "9/11 changed everything." Apparently, that includes the Republican Party and what it stands for.

Today I would like to share with you Ron Paul's conservative, Constitutional platform that will return the Republican Party to its core values and bring peace and prosperity to America.

There are many issues that I could address⁵; I've chosen five:

1. Domestic spending and monetary policy
2. Immigration
3. Gun rights
4. Civil liberties
5. Foreign policy and military intervention

1) *Domestic spending and monetary policy*

There's no way to overstate how serious America's financial situation is. We have *9 trillion dollars* in existing federal debt. But that's just the tip of the iceberg — last month David Walker, Comptroller General of the United States and head of the GAO, said the following:

The federal government's total liabilities and unfunded commitments for future benefits payments...are now estimated at 53 trillion dollars, in current dollar terms, up from about 20 trillion dollars in 2000. This translates into a *de facto* mortgage of about 455,000 dollars for every American household and there's no house to back this mortgage! In other words, our government has made a whole lot of promises that, in the long run, it cannot possibly keep without huge tax increases.⁶

It is clearer now than ever that we need to make *drastic* cuts in the size and spending of the federal government. Simply trimming a bit here and there, as the other candidates are proposing, will not do — we are facing certain bankruptcy and the end of American prosperity.

Only by reducing the size of government can we meet obligations like Social Security and still pay down our debt. (And I note here that Ron Paul is the *only* candidate of *either* party with a plan that will save Social Security!)

To make these cuts we will need to dramatically reduce overseas spending. We are spending nearly a trillion dollars a year around the world, and we simply can't afford it anymore.

At the same time we need to unshackle American taxpayers from the ball-and-chain of the income tax.

Ron Paul is proposing that we eliminate the IRS. Now, Mike Huckabee stole this line from Ron Paul at the November CNN/YouTube debate, but Huckabee *didn't* mention that he'd replace it with a 30% national sales tax!⁷ Ron Paul wants to eliminate the IRS and replace the federal income tax *with nothing*. If we eliminate the income tax, we'll still have from other sources about the same amount of revenue that we had in 1998. We can only do this if we re-think the role of government in our lives — if we think that the government should take care of us from cradle to grave and police the world, then we can't do it; but if we roll back federal responsibilities to constitutional levels, allow states and local governments to handle education, welfare, and other responsibilities, and allow people to be responsible for their own lives, we can — *and* we can pay down the debt and save Social Security.

Finally, we need to rethink the role of the Federal Reserve in our monetary system. The Fed creates money out of thin air, with nothing to restrain how much they print. The Fed in turn buys Treasury bills to support our runaway federal spending. This excessive creation of dollars devalues the currency and causes inflation. Everyone rolls their eyes when Ron Paul talks about returning to sound money backed by gold and silver, but it is the only realistic brake on federal spending, the only way to restrain inflation, and the only constitutional monetary system.

⁵ You can see all the issues in Ron Paul's platform at (<http://www.ronpaul2008.com/issues/>).

⁶ "A Call for Stewardship: Presentation by the Honorable David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States," The National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 17 December 2007, p. 2 (<http://www.gao.gov/cghome/do8371cg.pdf>). Dollar signs (\$) converted into text "dollars" for speech-reading purposes.

⁷ The so-called "FairTax" claims to have a rate of 23%, but this is based on the *total price* of the item *after* taxes, not 23% of the sales price. Under the FairTax plan, an item with a \$100 sales price would cost \$130, which is a 30% increase on the sales price. The presentation of the tax rate by advocates of the FairTax plan is disingenuous, at best. See (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FairTax#Presentation_of_tax_rate).

2) Immigration

The talk must stop. We must secure our borders *now*. It makes no sense to fight terrorists abroad when our own front door is left unlocked. Dr. Paul's six point plan is:

- 1) **Physically secure our borders and coastlines.** We must do whatever it takes to control entry into our country before we undertake complicated immigration reform proposals.
- 2) **Enforce visa rules.** Immigration officials must track visa holders and deport anyone who overstays their visa or otherwise violates U.S. law. This is especially important when we recall that a number of 9/11 terrorists had expired visas.
- 3) **No amnesty.** Estimates suggest that 10 to 20 million people are in our country illegally. That's a lot of people to reward for breaking our laws.
- 4) **No welfare for illegal aliens.** Americans have welcomed immigrants who seek opportunity, work hard, and play by the rules. But taxpayers should not pay for illegal immigrants who use hospitals, clinics, schools, roads, and social services.
- 5) **End birthright citizenship.** As long as illegal immigrants know their children born here will be citizens, the incentive to enter the U.S. illegally will remain strong.
- 6) **Pass true immigration reform.** The current system is incoherent and unfair. Legal immigrants from all countries should face the same rules and waiting periods.

America is a nation of immigrants, and we welcome people from around the world who want to come here to share the American dream of freedom and opportunity. But we must have a fair and fairly enforced immigration system.

3) Gun rights

This one is short and simple: Congressman Ron Paul has *never* voted for a federal restriction on gun ownership of any kind. You have the right to protect your life, liberty, and property. As President, Ron Paul will zealously guard the liberties guaranteed in the Second Amendment.

This includes protecting the rights of veterans to own firearms, which was weakened just this month in a bill passed by Congress and signed by the President that would make it possible to take guns away from veterans who are diagnosed with even mild post-traumatic stress disorder.⁸

4) Civil liberties

One of the most disturbing developments among Republicans since 9/11 is our apparent belief that civil liberties are something only Democrats believe in. It's as if we've reduced the Bill of Rights to the Second Amendment and the Establishment clause of the First Amendment.

America is not made stronger by making the Constitution weaker.

In 2001 the U.S. Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act, which gives the FBI and other federal agencies the power to write their own search warrants to go through private records of any kind, even if the person being investigated isn't suspected of terrorism. This was the very same power the British used against us with the Stamp Act in 1765. The Stamp Act sparked the American Revolution, but we've given our own government the same abusive authority the British once had!⁹

And the result? The vast majority of self-written search warrants have nothing to do with terrorism, and are frequently misused. A 2007 Department of Justice audit revealed more than a thousand violations in the 10 percent sample of self-written warrants they audited.

⁸ NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (H.R. 2640), passed by voice vote in the House and Senate and signed into law 8 January 2008 (<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-2640>). See the analysis by Gun Owners of America (<http://www.gunowners.org/neo701.htm>) with particular emphasis on section 3(2).

⁹ The "Patriot Act" is one of the most anti-liberty pieces of legislation ever passed. Its misleading name compelled legislators to vote for it (who could be against *patriotism*?). The full text of the measure (over 300 pages) appeared on the House computer network only 15 minutes before the vote was taken. The vast majority of legislators never read it, and those who did uniformly voted against it.

Under the pretense of protecting American lives, Congress has also given the President the power to detain American citizens as “enemy combatants,” strip them of their rights to see or talk to lawyer, hold them indefinitely without charge, and torture them.¹⁰ (And do not try to tell me that Americans are not torturing detainees, because we *are*.¹¹)

My friends, these are not American values. They are not *Republican* values.

These are things that the Founders pledged “their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor” to eliminate 230 years ago. These are things that 420,000 Americans gave their lives at places called Normandy, Iwo Jima, and the Ardennes to save the world from.

Perhaps there are some in this room who are thinking, “I’m not doing anything wrong, so why should I care if the government is tapping my phone or reading my mail or going through my bank records?” But that faith presupposes that no one will ever use your words or actions against you unfairly. It presumes that the government only targets *guilty* people. But history clearly shows that innocent people are all too often the targets of mistaken or corrupt government harassment. What happens today to people who have brown skin and funny-sounding names and are probably guilty will certainly be used eventually against everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or citizenship.

Perhaps you don’t mind giving President Bush such extreme powers because you trust him. But the Founding Fathers strongly warned against this attitude. Alexander Hamilton wrote:

For it is a truth, which the experience of ages has attested, that the people are always most in danger when the means of injuring their rights are in the possession of those of whom they entertain the least suspicion.¹²

Also consider that George W. Bush *won’t be President forever*, and future Presidents whom you *don’t* trust will have these same powers. Considering all the illegal activities and political retribution carried out by the Clintons, do you really want a President Hillary Clinton to have the power to detain, wiretap, and harass American citizens?

A Ron Paul presidency would bring an end to the Patriot Act, the Military Commissions Act, proposals for a national ID card, and the other abuses of the rights of free individuals that we have suffered since 2001.

5) Foreign policy and military intervention

I’d like to begin this final section with a quote:

If we’re an arrogant nation, [foreign nations will] resent us; if we’re a humble nation, but strong, they’ll welcome us. And our nation stands alone right now in the world in terms of power, and that’s why we’ve got to be humble, and yet project strength in a way that promotes freedom.¹³

Those are the words of George W. Bush, one month before the November 2000 election. Bush ran and won on a platform of not being the “policeman of the world.” Voters who were fed up with Bill Clinton’s war in Bosnia responded to that message.

But yet here we are seven years later, and candidate Bush’s words have come to pass: We *have* been “an arrogant nation,” and foreign nations around the world have come to resent us. We had the support of the entire world after 9/11 — including, I might add, from Iran, who helped us with intelligence and on the ground to defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan¹⁴ — but President Bush has gone far beyond simply bringing the planners of 9/11 to justice.

¹⁰ This under the Military Commissions Act of 2006.

¹¹ “[In] 1947, the United States charged a Japanese officer, Yukio Asano, with war crimes for carrying out another form of waterboarding on a U.S. civilian. The subject was strapped on a stretcher that was tilted so that his feet were in the air and head near the floor, and small amounts of water were poured over his face, leaving him gasping for air until he agreed to talk.” “Waterboarding Historically Controversial,” Walter Pincus, *Washington Post*, 5 October 2006, A17 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/04/AR2006100402005.html>)

¹² *The Federalist*, No. 25, ¶ 3 (21 December 1787).

¹³ George W. Bush, Presidential debate with Al Gore, 12 October 2000 (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/politics/july-dec00/for-policy_10-12.html).

¹⁴ “Iran helped overthrow Taliban, candidate says,” Barbara Slavin, *USA Today*, 9 June 2005.

The problem with the “war on terror” is that terrorism is not an *enemy* that can be defeated; it’s an *ideology* that will always exist in the hearts and minds of those who feel they have no other options. The Bush administration’s policy of using overwhelming military force to fight “terror” only serves to make the problem worse: The more countries we invade or intimidate, the more people we detain or kill, the more money we spend propping up dictators who are friendly to our cause, the more desperate we make disenfranchised people feel, and the more willing they will be to take extreme measures against us.

The other Republican candidates are talking about “winning the war on terror,” when, in fact, *it cannot be won* simply because there is no force of arms that can eliminate an ideology — and, quite often, use of military force only makes that ideology more popular! It’s incumbent on those who claim that we can “win the war on terror” to explain exactly *how* to go about it and *how* we will know when we’ve “won.” So far the Bush administration and the Republican candidates who support continuing their strategy haven’t done so. Until they do, the “war on terror” is no different than the “war on poverty,” “the war on drugs,” and other failed policies with hawkish-sounding names that we have no way to win and therefore never end.

The same goes for applying sanctions against countries we want to punish. Sanctions disproportionately affect the general populace, while ruling elites retain their comfortable lifestyles. Dictators use sanctions to manipulate their people into believing that all their troubles are because of the “evil” United States. At best, sanctions keep dictators in power — Fidel Castro has managed to hang onto power in Cuba for nearly 50 years, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. At worst, sanctions enflame the population to extremism — the sanctions imposed against Iraq in the 1990s forced its moderate, secular people to turn to fundamentalist Islam, which set the stage for the insurgency that appeared in the summer of 2003 and has killed thousands of U.S. troops.

This scenario where our own foreign policy actions cause problems for us down the road is known among CIA operatives as *blowback*. And blowback is the primary reason the U.S. is now engaged so heavily in the Middle East. It goes back to at least 1953 when the CIA overthrew the Mosaddeq government in Iran and installed the Shah in order to protect British oil interests. The Shah lived an incredibly wealthy lifestyle and used terror and intimidation to stay in power; these directly lead to the 1979 Islamic fundamentalist revolution. The United States then supported Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran in the 1980s, supplying him with conventional and chemical weapons. When Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, we were forced to directly intervene to remove him. Our sanctions on Iraq and the presence of U.S. military forces on the Arabian Peninsula were Osama bin Laden’s primary motivations for attacking the United States¹⁵, and he used them to incite people willing to help him. We are living a global political version of *Frankenstein*, where the monster returns to kill his creator.

The United States is not to *blame* for terrorist attacks like the kind that happened on 9/11, but we could have taken steps to *avoid* them. It’s similar to stepping on a snake and being bitten — the snake is responsible for biting me, but I could have avoided being bitten by not stepping on him in the first place.

So how do we avoid “stepping on the snake”? How can we craft a foreign policy that protects American lives and interests, reduces the costs of maintaining a worldwide military, and makes the world a safer and more stable place? Ron Paul is the *only* candidate who is addressing these issues:

1. The only *proper* way to go to war, the only *legal* way to go to war, the only *constitutional* way to go to war is for *Congress to declare war*. Under no circumstances should the U.S. go to war at the whim of a President acting alone. Neither should we go to war as the result of a resolution that comes from an unelected, foreign body, such as the United Nations.
2. We *must* withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Germany, South Korea, and the 130 other nations in which we have military personnel. We are overextended and simply cannot afford to maintain what many have called “the American Empire.” Bringing our forces home will save hundreds of billions of dollars every year, prevent blowback from American involvement in conflicts that do not directly affect our interests, and allow sovereign nations to work out their own problems without our interference.

¹⁵ Osama bin Laden, Fatwa issued 23 February 1998; English translation at (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html). “[It’s] a well-known fact that U.S. troop presence in Saudi Arabia was the catalyst for Bin Laden’s terrorist assaults on U.S. interests, both here and in the Middle East. As author Christian Alfonsi notes in his excellent book, *Circle in the Sand*, U.S. policy makers received frequent warnings that presence of a substantial number of U.S. troops could lead to disaster. During the leadup to the first Iraqi War, the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Charles Freeman, warned the administration that ‘It remains our judgment that Saudi and Arab political realities preclude a U.S. military presence in the Islamic holy land which appears to be open-ended or semi-permanent.’ During the war itself, a report issued by a committee headed by Richard Clarke stated that ‘A permanent U.S. presence will provide a rationale for, and could become a target for, the terrorist threat that will outlive the war.’ Of course, the U.S. received frequent complaints from the Saudis themselves.” — Alan Vanneman, “Bank Shot,” 11 January 2008 (<http://avanneman.blogspot.com/2008/01/bank-shot.html>).

3. We must return to the platform that Republicans supported and that George W. Bush won with in 2000 — a humble foreign policy, no nation-building, no-preemptive wars, and stop being the policeman of the world.
4. We must end the billions in foreign aid we send around the world every year. At best foreign aid makes nations dependent on us, just like a welfare recipient becomes dependent on the dole. At worst we give foreign aid to despots who are despised by their people, creating anti-American sentiment.
5. Freely trade and talk with all nations. We should have free and open diplomacy, and permit trade without bad trade treaties (like NAFTA and GATT) that only protect corporate and bureaucratic interests.
6. Have a strong, capable military with high morale that defends the United States without being overextended or misused.

Isolationists would erect protectionist trade barriers and have America “go it alone” in policing the world. Ron Paul’s policy of *non-intervention* encourages open trade and frequent diplomacy to work out differences between us and other nations. Once the people in nations with whom we trade get a taste of prosperity, they quickly begin to yearn for political freedom. This type of shift is taking place in China, Vietnam, and other countries right now; we can apply it to Middle East and erase fundamentalist extremism much more easily, cheaply, and effectively than by bombing people and propping up dictators.

Finally, purely from the standpoint of *political* survival, two-thirds of Americans oppose the war in Iraq.¹⁶ There is no way to elect a Republican President in 2008 who runs on a platform of continuing the war — let alone *expanding* it!¹⁷

Conclusion

In his farewell address at the end of his presidency Ronald Reagan championed John Winthrop’s vision of America as a “shining city upon a hill.” He said:

I’ve spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don’t know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace, a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That’s how I saw it and see it still.¹⁸

Thomas Jefferson envisioned an America built on “peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with none.”¹⁹

That is the kind of America that Ron Paul sees. He represents a choice for true Republicans to return to the ideals that made our party, and America, great: Personal liberty and limited government at home and abroad.

Fellow Republicans, we have strayed from the vision of the Founders, and our Constitution is hanging by a thread. But you can do something about it. I urge you to vote on February 5th for Ron Paul to be the Republican nominee for President of the United States.

Thank you.

¹⁶ CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll of 1,002 adults nationwide, conducted 6–9 December 2007 (<http://www.pollingreport.com/iraq.htm>).

¹⁷ I note here that Ron Paul receives more donations from active-duty military personnel than any other candidate. Sources at (<http://www.militaryforpaul.com/donations.html>).

¹⁸ Ronald Reagan, “Farewell Address to the Nation,” 11 January 1989 (<http://www.reaganlibrary.com/reagan/speeches/farewell.asp>).

¹⁹ Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address, 1801 (<http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1400.htm>).

Other ideas

Electability?

In both Iowa and New Hampshire nearly 30,000 people cast their vote for Ron Paul — more than either Rudy Giuliani or Fred Thompson:

1. Romney103,755.....30%
2. McCain.....102,361.....29%
3. Huckabee..... 66,876..... 19%
4. Paul.....29,648..... 9%
5. Giuliani..... 24,151..... 7%
6. Thompson 18,712..... 5%

Allan Bloom on tyranny and thought control

Allan Bloom:

The most successful tyranny is not the one that uses force to assure uniformity but the one that removes the awareness of other possibilities, that makes it seem inconceivable that other ways are viable, that removes the sense that there is an outside.²⁰

New bases overseas; closed bases at home

There's a certain irony in the fact that we're spending billions of dollars to build 14 permanent military bases in Iraq, and yet we're closing military bases here at home, destroying the lives and livelihoods of the communities they support.

Downwinders

Downwinders are an example of how government harms the lives and liberties of innocent Americans, even when it has the best of intentions. In the 1950s and 60s the United States government tested above-ground nuclear weapons in the Nevada desert, exposing southern Utah residents to unhealthy levels of radioactive fallout. These tests caused approximately 22,000 cancers and 2,000 deaths.

Republican opposition to Bosnia war

Republicans opposed President Bill Clinton's use of American troops in Bosnia, and were frequently vocal on the floor of Congress in their criticism of it. For example, then-House Majority Whip Tom Delay said:

[I] support our military and the fine work that they are doing. But I cannot support a failed foreign policy.... But before we get deeper embroiled into this Balkan quagmire, I think that an assessment has to be made of the Kosovo policy so far. President Clinton has never explained to the American people why he was involving the U.S. military in a civil war in a sovereign nation, other than to say it is for humanitarian reasons, a new military/foreign policy precedent.... Was it worth it to stay in Vietnam to save face? What good has been accomplished so far? Absolutely nothing.²¹

²⁰ *The Closing of the American Mind*, 249.

²¹ *Congressional Record*, "Removal of United States Armed Forces from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," 28 April 1999.

Barry Goldwater on the Constitution

Barry Goldwater:

Being a conservative in America traditionally meant that one holds a deep, abiding respect for the Constitution. We conservatives believe sincerely in the integrity of the Constitution. We treasure the freedoms that document protects.

I have little interest in streamlining government in making it more efficient, for I mean to reduce its size. I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them. It is not to inaugurate new programs, but to cancel old ones that do violence to the Constitution, or that have failed their purpose, or that will impose an unwarranted financial burden. I will not attempt to discover whether legislation is 'needed' before I have first determined whether it is constitutionally permissible.

John McCain on economics

John McCain:

The issue of economics is not something I've understood as well as I should. I've got Greenspan's book.²²

²² "Responding to Recession," Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, 14 January 2008 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/14/opinion/14krugman.html>).