

Scott, Rider

From: Speaker Joe Straus [joe@joestraus.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2010 2:49 PM
To: Scott, Rider
Subject: A Blueprint for Addressing Our Budget Shortfall

Speaker
JOE STRAUS

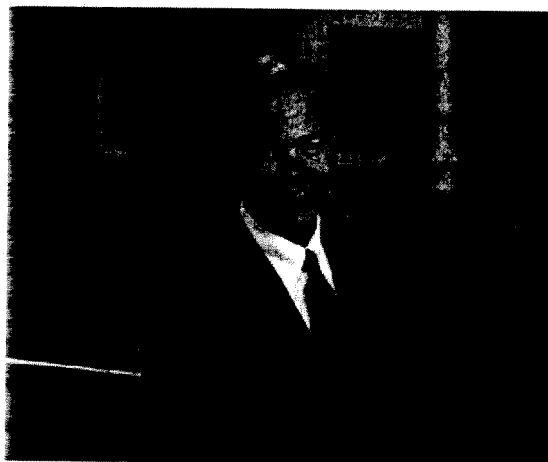
An Update from the Speaker

By now, most Texans are well aware of the significant budget shortfall our state faces as we head into the next legislative session. Last week, I had the privilege of addressing a group of business leaders at the Texas Taxpayers and Research Association meeting on this very topic.

When businesses face fiscal challenges, they look at what is causing the problem and monitor the factors that impact their bottom line. We have to do the same thing in state government. We've been hit with a one-two punch: declining revenue and increased spending to meet the demands of our growing population. Our approach to solving the budget shortfall is simple, but not easy.

First, we must return to the fundamentals of state government: education, healthcare, transportation infrastructure and public safety. Second, we must do more with less, and be more efficient and more effective with taxpayer funds. And third, most of all, we must make hard choices about our "needs" versus our "wants."

The real discussion about our priorities will begin in January when the House introduces the budget. As most of you know, the state does have a savings account, commonly known as the Rainy Day Fund, which could be used, in part, to balance our budget. However, before we decide whether and how much of the Fund should be spent, I strongly believe lawmakers need to have a clear picture of the true cost of running state government. The proposed cuts may seem drastic and painful, but we must make the tough choices now, to leave our state in better financial shape down the



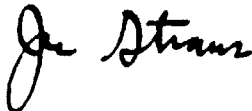
from which to develop the base bill:

- One: We must spend no more than our available revenue;
- Two: We must not assume the use of the Rainy Day Fund;
- Three: We must limit government, and
- Four: We must not raise taxes.

As someone who worked at one time in the Reagan Administration, I always remember his quote that, "business isn't a taxpayer, but a tax collector," meaning when business taxes are raised, those taxes are ultimately passed on to consumers as higher prices. That's why I have asked members of the House to recommend ways to balance our budget without placing an additional tax burden on Texas families.

While other states continue to experience economic challenges, Texas is widely noted as having the best business climate in the nation: Forbes, The Economist, CNBC, and The Wall Street Journal all agree. So, while we will face a significant budget shortfall next session, I know that we are up to the challenge.

Sincerely,



Speaker Joe Straus

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REPRESENTATIVE WARREN CHISUM
CANDIDATE FOR SPEAKER OF THE TEXAS HOUSE

October 13, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

Today I throw my hat, my experience, and my commitment to the House into the ring for consideration as Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives. Those of you who know me, know that this is not a decision I have entered into lightly, but like many of you I have come to realize that the time has come for us to unite behind a speaker that will lead the Texas House next session as we face our state's many challenges together.

The times demand a strong and decisive leader. The Texas House has enjoyed strong, experienced leadership under Speakers Laney and Craddick, who were fully supported by majorities of their respective political parties. Sadly, recent history has shown us that when a chamber's leadership does not enjoy majority support from his own party mixed with good support from the opposition party, his leadership is weak and ineffective. As a candidate for Speaker of the House, I will give Republicans and Democrats an opportunity to decide whether the Texas House wants to lead this session, or whether it doesn't.

Since 1989, I have served with you, lead with you, fought in the trenches with you, and submitted myself to the leadership of the speaker we all elected. You know my character, my trustworthiness, my fairness, and my faithfulness to conservative principles. In January, we will be facing the most difficult session Texas has ever faced. Together, we must find a way to appropriately fund the state's obligations while not raising taxes. This can only be done by reducing government budgets, a fight I have fought before, and won.

The budget is only one of our challenges; we must also face the contention that redistricting brings. I have served with you during the last three redistricting sessions, and know how to fairly navigate those treacherous waters while continuing the other serious business the House must complete for a successful session.

In deciding to run for Speaker of the House, I heavily weighed the experience of last session with the demands of the upcoming session. In earnest, we entered the 81st session with open minds, hoping for the brand of leadership Speaker Straus had pledged. However, his approach, guided by his inexperience, instead allowed the

minority party to control much of the session's agenda, and the result was no leadership during the total breakdown in the most critical days of the session. Speaker Straus has never served on Appropriations, never served on Ways and Means, has never even faced a difficult budget cycle, much less served as a member during a redistricting session. As the 82nd Legislature approaches, Texas demands a speaker who can successfully navigate these waters. I have the experience and skill that the House requires.

The vote for the Speaker is a decision made by us, by 150 individuals and whom we trust to lead us through 140 days. It is a vote about leadership, experience, and trust. I look forward to visiting with each of you soon about the challenges and opportunities ahead and how we can bridge those gaps together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren Christen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "C".

For immediate release:
Wednesday, November 3, 2010

Statement from Speaker Joe Straus:

"On the night of this landmark election, Texas heard a resounding call from voters for continued fiscal responsibility and conservative leadership in Austin. I am proud that Republicans have gained a record number of seats in the Texas House, reversing the losing trend for the past three election cycles."

"As Speaker, I congratulate every House candidate elected tonight, and I look forward to working with each member for the good of our state. I will continue to lead the Texas House in a fair and respectful way as Speaker, and at this early hour, I'm grateful to have 122 colleagues support me for Speaker, including 76 Republicans and 46 Democrats, and I look forward to visiting with more members in the coming days."

Confirmed List of Pledges for Republican Texas House Speaker Joe Straus
UPDATED: November 3, 2010 12:00 a.m.

Confirmed List of Pledges for Republican Texas House Speaker Joe Straus
UPDATED: November 3, 2010 1:25 a.m.

Aliseda, Jose
Allen, Alma
Alonzo, Roberto
Alvarado, Carol
Anchia, Rafael
Anderson, Charles "Doc"
Aycock, Jimmie Don
Beck, Marva
Bohac, Dwayne
Bonnen, Dennis
Branch, Dan
Brown, Fred
Burnam, Lon
Button, Angie Chen
Callegari, William "Bill"
Carter, Stefani
Castro, Joaquin
Coleman, Garnet
Cook, Byron
Creighton, Brandon
Crownover, Myra
Darby, Drew
Davis, John
Deshotel, Joe
Driver, Joe
Dukes, Dawnna
Dutton, Harold
Eiland, Craig
Eissler, Rob
Elkins, Gary
Farias, Joe
Farrar, Jessica
Fletcher, Allen
Fruzzo, John
Geren, Charlie
Giddings, Helen
Gonzales, Larry
Gonzales, Veronica
Gonzalez, Naomi
Gooden, Lance
Guillen, Ryan
Gutierrez, Roland
Hamilton, Mike

Hancock, Kelly
Hardcastle, Rick
Harless, Patricia
Harper-Brown, Linda
Hartnett, Will
Hernandez, Ana
Hilderbran, Harvey
Hochberg, Scott
Hopson, Chuck
Howard, Donna
Huberty, Dan
Hughes, Bryan
Hunter, Todd
Jackson, Jim
Johnson, Eric
Keffer, Jim
King, Susan
King, Tracy
Kleinschmidt, Tim
Kolkhorst, Lois
Kuempel, Edmund
Larson, Lyle
Laubenberg, Jodie
Lavender, George
Legler, Ken
Lewis, Tryon
Lozano, J.M.
Lucio III, Eddie
Lyne, Lanham
Madden, Jerry
Mallory Caraway, Barbara
Margo, Dee
Marquez, Marisa
Martinez, Armando
McClendon, Ruth Jones
Menendez, Jose
Miles, Borris
Miller, Doug
Miller, Sid
Munoz, Sergio, Jr.
Murphy, Jim
Naishtat, Elliott
Nash, Barbara
Oliveira, Rene
Orr, Rob
Otto, John

Parker, Tan
 Patrick, Diane
 Paxton, Ken
 Pena, Aaron
 Phillips, Larry
 Pickett, Joe
 Pitts, Jim
 Price, Four
 Quintanilla, Chente
 Raymond, Richard
 Reynolds, Ron
 Riddle, Debbie
 Ritter, Allan
 Rodriguez, Eddie
 Schwertner, Charles
 Scott, Connie
 Sheffield, Ralph
 Shelton, Mark
 Smith, Todd
 Smith, Wayne
 Smithee, John
 Solomons, Burt
 Strama, Mark
 Straus, Joe
 Taylor, Larry
 Thompson, Senfronia
 Torres, Raul
 Truitt, Vicki
 Turner, Sylvester
 Veasey, Marc
 Villarreal, Mike
 Vo, Hubert
 Walle, Armando
 Weber, Randy
 Workman, Paul
 Zedler, Bill
 Zerwas, John

*Updated Partial Listing as of 1:25 a.m;11/3/2010

126 total
 77 Republican and 49 Democrat
 Partial Listing as of 1:25 a.m; 11/3/2010

126 total
 77 Republican and 49 Democrat

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010

Notes from Chisum's press conference

posted by paulburka at [9:02 PM](#)

This report is from my colleague Patricia Kilday Hart, who attended Warren Chisum's press conference this morning:

Warren Chisum, surrounded by an impressive array of dead animal heads on his basement Capitol office walls ("I still remember the looks in their eyes") announced this morning that he was still a candidate for Speaker of the Texas House.

Chisum said he interprets the huge Republican win Tuesday as an endorsement by Texans of conservatism, rather than a rebuke of Washington-style politics.

Under that reasoning, he called for the Republican Caucus of the Texas House to meet and choose the next Speaker – which is how things are done in Washington, D.C. (He acknowledges he opposed this idea when Democrat Pete Laney was Speaker, but said times – and politics – have changed.)

"The race is not over," Chisum said. "I am still in the race for Speaker of the House." I asked whether that meant Democrats did not count in the Speaker's race. "That's not where we are at," he said – explaining further that with such a large majority elected Tuesday "the Republicans need to act like Republicans and choose a leader in the caucus." He added that he did not think such a move would "disenfranchise" the Democrats.

Reporters asked: What mistakes has Straus made as Speaker?

Chisum: Some committee chairs were not sufficiently conservative.

I asked about the document that Republican activist David Barton circulated at the Republican convention in Dallas in June calling for Straus' removal. Did he endorse the contents? "I don't know that there are any false statements in there," he responded.

On further questioning about Straus' record, Chisum said "I didn't notice any illegal immigration bills getting passed" last session and said he would be willing to take a long look at an Arizona-style law. He added that "a carbon copy" would probably not work in Texas.

As for Straus' pledges, he said, "Money talks."

On other issues, Chisum said Texas should seriously consider "opting out" of Medicaid – but quickly added, "we can't just walk away." He seemed to indicate some government health insurance program would need to fill in the role of a safety net.

He did not rule out the possibility of seeking a coalition with Democrats if he failed to win the Speakership within the Republican Caucus He did not elaborate on how he could effectively win over Democrats after trying to exclude them from the speaker election. Immediately after the press conference, I hopped aboard an elevator with State Rep. Senfronia Thompson, who was headed to a Joe Straus press mixer. In typical "Miz Thompson" fashion, she confided to the assembled reporters that she was disappointed that her friend, Mr. Chisum, would want to cut Democrats out of the process of electing a Speaker. (I was reminded of the killer Ann Richards' line about many an adversary: "Bless his heart.")

Straus, protected by an impressive front line of House members, told reporters he wasn't opposed to the Republican Caucus meeting and choosing a Speaker. "I'll leave it up the members," he shrugged. "It's something we haven't done before." He claimed pledges from 79 of 99 Republicans, and insisted, "I'm not defensive" about a caucus vote. My take: Hard to figure how Chisum peels off enough Republicans after Straus's active campaign contributions – plus, how do Democrats justify voting for a guy who excluded their votes in the first go-round? He's going to need a helluva pick-up line.

GOP members not pledged to Straus

posted by paulburka at 4:10 PM

There are 25, including Zedler, who withdrew his pledge.

Republicans/District X = new member

2 Flynn

3 Cain X

6 Berman

7 Simpson

9 Christian

12 White X

26 Howard, Charlie

30 Morrison

45 Isaac X

61 King

66 Taylor, Van X

74 [Gallego pledged to Straus]

82 Craddick

83 Perry

85 Landtroop X

88 Chisum

96 Zedler X (withdrew pledge)

101 Burkett X

106 Anderson X

107 Sheets X

117 [Garza pledged to Straus]

134 Davis X

November 3, 2010 4:41 PM

CHAIRMEN VACANCIES IN THE TEXAS HOUSE

Nine open slots allow for leadership maneuvering room

Mark Homer (D), Chair of Culture, Recreation & Tourism

Tommy Merritt (R), Chair of Public Safety

Jim McReynolds (D), Chair of Corrections

Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles (D), Chair of Agriculture & Livestock

Patrick Rose (D), Chair of Human Services

Jim Dunnam (D), Chair of Federal Economic Stabilization Funding** & House Democratic Leader

Brian McCall (R)*, Chair of Calendars

Delwin Jones (R), Chair of Redistricting

Frank Corte (R), Chair of Defense & Veterans Affairs

*McCall has already resigned & been replaced by **Van Taylor**; Calendar has no chair currently...

** This is a select committee, so very much an open question, as to whether it exists next session.

By John Reynolds

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