



Conservatives Unveil Economic Recovery Policies Rooted in Fiscal Reform and Workforce Training

Latest unemployment report must spur urgent action

For Immediate Release: February 6, 2009

Contact: Brent Connett, 512-474-1798

AUSTIN, TX – With today’s release of the Department of Labor’s latest report showing unemployment nationally crawling toward 8%, conservative legislators in Austin outlined their five-point plan to react prudently to the economic crisis.

In a letter to Governor Rick Perry, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, and Speaker Joe Straus, the Board of Directors of the Texas Conservative Coalition outlined their priorities, noting that: “The key to a strong, vibrant economy lies not in handouts or bailouts, but in sound and responsible fiscal policies that encourage growth, risk-taking, and opportunity.”

State Representative Wayne Christian (R-Center), President of TCC, said: “Today’s unemployment report must create a sense of urgency. Government will not solve our economic woes, but Washington has proven that government can certainly add to the problem.” Rep. Christian continued: “Congress’ plan to spend nearly one trillion dollars in the name of fiscal stimulus is a disaster in the making. Our workforce and our businesses can keep Texas from falling in an economic hole as long as we take immediate action to limit taxation and carefully prioritize spending.”

The Board of Directors of the Texas Conservative Coalition, the conservative caucus of the Texas Legislature, outlined the following policy goals aimed at business and job growth to spur a stronger economy:

1. Significantly reform property tax appraisals and constitutionally dedicate a portion of surplus revenue to property tax relief.
2. Raise the floor of the margins tax to \$1 million, guard against rate increases through a super-majority requirement, and allow businesses to deduct expenses for contract workers.
3. Employ greater fiscal restraint and protect the Rainy Day Fund.
4. Invest in workforce development and adult education programs.
5. Use unexpended funds held by TEA to fund needed improvements in public education; also encourage the creation of two new Tier One universities.

State Representative Linda Harper-Brown (R-Irving), TCC Vice-President, stated: “Increased spending leads to increased taxes, which will only exacerbate our current economic condition and lead to even fewer jobs.” Rep. Harper-Brown added: “Our plan limits taxes on the families, workers, and businesses who are the muscle of our economy, while putting the right focus on education and job training.”

State Representative Ken Paxton (R-McKinney), TCC Secretary/Treasurer, concluded “Washington and California are giving us a stark lesson in how not to respond to tough economic conditions. It is our fundamental belief that our chief task is to refine our basic tax and spending priorities to give families and businesses the best opportunity to withstand the current economic crisis.”

###