



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on February 28, 2015

Rand Paul at CPAC: Tax Cut, Privacy Rights, and Retirement for Hillary

Senator Rand Paul got a rousing response from a lively crowd at the Conservative Political Action Conference Friday, as he announced his proposal for the “largest tax cut in American history.”

“My tax plan will keep the IRS out of your life and out the way of every job creator in America,” the Kentucky Republican told the overflow crowd in the ballroom of the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. “My plan will also cut spending and balance the budget in just five years.” And that was just for starters. Paul offered a [“truly outrageous” proposal](#) for a Congress he called “dysfunctional.”



“Often, bills are plopped on our desk with only a few hours to review,” he said. “No one, and I mean no one, is able to read what is in the bill. I propose something truly outrageous: Congress should read every bill.” Paul delivered a message strong on personal freedom and privacy rights, as he called on “lovers of liberty” to “rise to the occasion.”

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“You do have a right to privacy. Your rights are who you are, your rights are what you are, your rights are in your DNA — and the government can, quite frankly, get over it,” Paul said, referring to the National Security Agency’s daily dragnet collection of telephone records and e-mail messages. “I say that the phone records of law-abiding citizens are none of their damn business,” he added. “From within, our freedom is threatened by debt and by a government that regulates everything that moves.” While Paul and other presidential hopefuls appearing at the conference stressed the traditional Republican themes of limited government and personal freedom in domestic politics, the Kentucky senator warned against expectations that U.S. interventions can bring peace and stability to other parts of the world.

“At home conservatives understand that government is the problem, not the solution,” he said. “But as conservatives we should not succumb to the notion that a government inept at home will somehow become successful abroad.” He drew a rousing response when ridiculing former secretary of state and anticipated Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton over the ongoing crisis in Libya, where the United States and allied nations conducted an air war in 2011 that brought down the regime Moammar Gadhafi and left the country largely in the hands of Islamic jihadists.

“Hillary’s war in Libya is a perfect example,” Paul said. “Hillary’s war made us less safe,” he added. “Libya’s less stable.” The State Department response to the terrorist attack on a U.S. outpost in Benghazi, Libya, killing the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans, “should forever preclude her



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from high office,” said Paul drawing loud and sustained applause. “It’s time for Hillary Clinton to permanently retire,” he said.

Like his father, former Congressman and two-time candidate for the Republican presidential nomination Ron Paul, the Kentucky senator has attracted a large following of like-minded libertarians and critics of U.S. interventions in foreign wars. Many seemed eager to see the younger Paul capture the prize that eluded his father. Rand Paul, who has made no secret of his own White House ambitions, was interrupted during his speech to by chants of “President Paul!” A frequent critic of both deficit spending and foreign aid, Paul criticized the practice of borrowing money from China to send it to countries such as Pakistan, the home of frequent anti-American demonstrations.

“It angers me to see [mobs] burning our flag and chanting ‘Death to America’ in countries that receive our foreign aid,” he said. “I say [not one penny more](#) to these haters of America.”

Young Paul supporters wearing “I Stand with Rand” T-shirts were distributing buttons and posters outside the ballroom hours before the senator arrived. Paul ended his speech by asking the crowd to “stand” with him: “Will you fight for freedom?” he asked. “Will you vote for freedom?”

During the question-and-answer session that followed, Paul responded to criticisms of his view on foreign policy, often described as “isolationist” by more hawkish members of his party. He said he shared the view that the United States requires a strong capability for national defense.

“When we get to foreign policy, though, we’re not all the same,” he said. “On one end, there are people who believe we should never be anywhere ... on the other end, there are people who believe we should be everywhere all the time.” Paul warned against allowing the president to take military action overseas on his own initiative.

“I think really, in the end, what we should do is obey the Constitution,” he said. “The Constitution says that war, when we go to war, should be declared and should be initiated by Congress.”

While enjoying the show of support for the Kentucky senator and presidential hopeful, Allen Skillicorn, chairman of the Republican Liberty Caucus of Illinois, observed that the enthusiasm shown by the Paul supporters at the CPAC conference will not necessarily translate into votes in presidential primaries.

“The average primary voter is a lot older than the crowd in the hall,” [Skillicorn told Politico](#). Neither will the CPAC straw poll on Saturday be a reliable predictor of who will be the next president. Rand Paul won the straw poll in each of the last two years, but Ron Paul’s straw poll victories at the CPAC conferences of 2010 and 2011 did not lead to his party’s nomination. On the other hand, Jeb Bush, who drew choruses of boos when he appeared at the conference Friday, might draw consolation, Politico noted, from the fact that his father, President George H.W. Bush, won the White House without winning a CPAC straw poll.

Photo of Sen. Rand Paul: AP Images



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