



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on September 2, 2009

Tea Party Express Message Rolls Across America

At Town Hall meetings throughout August, angry constituents have let members of Congress know that they are alarmed and outraged over the bailouts, runaway spending, and government takeovers of vast swaths of the American economy. Now the Town Halls have taken to the road, as the Tea Party Express rolls across the country on a 35-city tour. The bus tour, which began in Sacramento, will wind up with a Taxpayer March on Washington, D.C., on September 12



Thousands of Californians from all walks of life — farmers, ranchers, loggers, truckers, manufacturers, and laborers — converged on the California State Capitol on August 28 to express their concerns and show their support for the message of the Tea Party Express nationwide tour. The Obama White House, the Democratic leadership in Congress, and liberal media commentators are trying to marginalize the anti-big government sentiments welling up at Town Hall meetings and tea parties by deriding them as “Astroturf,” fronts for the Republican Party. The GOP leadership has indeed been trying to hijack the tea party movement, a phenomenon launched by Congressman Ron Paul’s grass-roots 2008 presidential campaign. However, as the Sacramento gathering demonstrated, rally organizers and attendees alike seem to have equal contempt for the Republican and Democratic politicians who are responsible for the explosion of government growth that is killing our economy and threatening our freedoms.

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While the people rallying in Sacramento represented a variety of issues — from opposition to Obamacare, to support for water rights for California farmers, and support for auditing the Federal Reserve — a common theme was alarm and anger over government gone wild, with out-of-control spending, borrowing, taxing, and regulation. California, which is struggling with state bankruptcy and



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ratings on state and municipal bonds that have dropped through the basement, presents a dire portent of what awaits the rest of the nation, if policies proposed by the Obama administration are enacted. One of the major bones of contention for activists at the California tea party event is the horrendously costly and oppressive “Climate Change” regime fastened on the Golden State by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Democratic-controlled legislature with AB 32. Hailed as a model for the national “Cap and Trade” program being promoted by President Obama, AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations that will ultimately reduce California’s greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020.

Mark Meckler of Grass Valley, California, the national coordinator of [Tea Party Patriots](#)², told The New American that CARB, “an unelected, unaccountable regulatory entity,” is imposing draconian regulations “that are literally killing California businesses and jobs and driving them out of the state.” The trucking industry is a prime example of regulation run amok, he says, with new CARB filter retrofit mandates for diesel big rigs that can cost \$50,000 per truck. “Everything we produce, and use, and consume moves by trucks, so this is dramatically driving up the cost of everything.” Most small and medium-sized independent truckers simply cannot afford to retrofit their existing trucks; their alternatives are either to go out of business or move out of state.

A [study released in July](#) by Sanjay Varshney, dean of the College of Business Administration at the California State University, Sacramento and Dennis H. Tootelian, professor of Marketing and the Director of the Center for Small Business at the California State University, Sacramento, underscores the impact that AB 32 is having, and will increasingly exert on California’s economy.

The study reported that:

when the plan is fully implemented, California families will be facing increased annual costs of \$3,857 and that in order to cope with the increased costs generated by the Greenhouse Program, consumers will be forced to cut their discretionary spending by 26.2%. We conclude that when California’s climate change program, AB 32, is fully implemented, the average annual loss in gross state output from small businesses alone would be \$182.6 billion, approximately a 10% loss in total gross state output. This will translate into nearly 1.1 million lost jobs in California. Lost labor income is estimated to be \$76.8 billion, with nearly \$5.8 billion lost in indirect taxes. This decline in revenues will have a severe impact on future state budgets.

The study also found that small businesses would be especially hard hit. This will dramatically impact job availability and unemployment, since:

Small businesses drive the economic engine in California. They comprise 99.2% of all employer firms and 99.7% of all firms. They account for over half the employment, over 90% of net new job creation, and 75% of the creation of gross state output. Costs borne by small businesses due to the implementation of AB 32 must be carefully evaluated for a full understanding of their significance and impact on the state and residents.

Many of those small businesses are family farms and agriculture-related businesses that are also being strangled by the CARB regulations and the drastic restrictions and cut-offs of water to farms, as a result of state and federal regulations and environmentalist lawsuits. With up to 90 percent of their water cut off, many of the farms and ranches in California’s central San Joaquin Valley, often referred to as the nation’s food basket, are [struggling to survive](#). Almond orchards and fruit orchards that have taken decades to build up are now drying up and dying. Farms that once planted thousands of acres of food



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crops now have only a few hundred under cultivation. “The government’s policies are destroying our farms,” central valley family farmer Josh Brooks told The New American. “Where is America going to get its food when the food producers — its farmers — are gone.”

California Republican Congressman Tom McClintock was one of the stars of the Sacramento event. A former state legislator who has doggedly fought against the big government programs and irresponsible spending, McClintock won huge applause with his denunciation of the trend of appointing “czars” to regulate every area of our lives. “The concept came from Russia,” he said, “and all they do is oppress the American people.” However, he noted, “The American spirit is returning. The Obama administration didn’t count on that.”

From Sacramento, the Tea Party Express rolled on to Reno, Nevada, and then [Las Vegas](#) and Albuquerque, New Mexico. From there the bus caravan heads to Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Illinois, Michigan, New York ... and Washington, D.C. — with many points in between.



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