



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on September 20, 2012

Texas Lawmaker Challenges Constitutionalist Colleagues

Constitution Day could not have been better celebrated than it was in Texas. On September 17, friends of State Representative David Simpson (R) hosted a fundraiser in Longview, Texas, for the popular statesman, who called on 13 freshman representatives to declare their allegiances to the Constitution and charged them with the solemn duty to listen to their constituents and “do the right thing in the right way.”



Simpson told *The New American* that he’d hoped for five of the invitees to show up, but was overwhelmed when many more than that showed up. Several more were unable to attend, but expressed support for Simpson’s effort to mentor or be mentored in constitutional service to Texas. Simpson said, “I’m very encouraged that so many came, and that we have a chance to return reason and principle to state government. It’s especially encouraging to see so many young legislators versed in the Constitution and committed to principle.”

The Legislature of the Lone Star State convenes every two years; the next session begins in January 2013. Each of the 13 freshmen at Simpson’s event is expected to be elected, as many are running unopposed, or against candidates who have little chance of winning. Simpson’s first term in 2011 gained national attention when he filed a bill opposing the TSA’s ham-handed tactics in harassing air travelers. While the bill was wildly popular with Texans and had unanimous support in the Texas House, it was derailed at the last minute following legislative wrangling and a visit from the TSA threatening to end air travel in Texas. Grassroots efforts helped propel the bill to a position as one of Texas’ top issues last year.

But Simpson also gained a reputation as being highly principled, and would not cave to pressures from senior legislators, including Governor Rick Perry. Simpson quickly became known for issues other than the TSA squabble; he objected to the ease with which legislators broke rules in moving bills and votes forward; he insisted that rules be followed, and that legislators act honorably. Consequently, he gained the attention of folks statewide, encouraging some to either run for office, or seek out friendships with him as a possible mentor.

At Tuesday’s fundraiser nearly 200 Texans listened as Simpson noted that one in five members of the Texas House chose not to run again, even more were not reelected by voters, and that 17 percent of Texas senators will be in their first or second terms. The result is an opportunity for freshmen to begin to set a new standard in Texas.

“This class won’t have the luxury of learning how to play the game; they should hit the ground running. Their constituents need representation now. The battle is a spiritual one, and our success is ultimately dependent upon God — please hold us up, and our families and staffs in prayer,” Simpson said.

“An issue that challenges freshmen is being entrusted with power. It will reveal your true character. You’ll be pressed to forget or violate your oath, to compromise, and abuse power. But you have a covenant with the people, made before God, to restrain yourself and also to restrain others who abuse



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power.” One freshman added that politicians go to Washington hoping to clean up the cesspool, and find a hot tub instead, warning newbies to be careful.

Two of the freshmen, Steve Toth (The Woodlands) and Scott Sanford (McKinney) are pastors. In his brief comments, Toth remembered the biblical story of Esther (Esther 4:14) in which the young queen was exhorted by her uncle, “Who knows but that you have been raised up for such a time as this?” adding that in his experience, congregations are waiting for their pastors to preach messages of liberty, Constitutional responsibility, principle, and honor in government.

Other comments from the 13 indicated where they stood:

James Frank (Wichita Falls): “A defining question should be: does a piece of legislation result in more or less individual freedom? If not, don’t vote for it. The government’s only job is to protect you from me, and me from you, but not me from me!”

Scott Turner, former player with the Washington Redskins (Frisco): “The way the government spends your money is a moral matter.”

Giovanni Capriglione (Southlake): “It is incumbent on all of us to defend and protect the Constitution, but we can’t do it if we haven’t read it.”

And the crowd also heard from Bryan Hughes, who is expected to run for Texas Speaker of the House against incumbent Joe Strauss, who earned the ire of Texans last session when he helped derail Simpson’s anti-TSA bill.

Although most attendees hailed from the nearby districts of the freshmen, Kathy Geraghty traveled five hours to hear the speeches. A long-time Simpson supporter, she said, “Mr. Simpson strikes me, among other things, as a wise legislator, and I’m glad he’s taken the initiative to identify these constitutionalists and is attempting to help them stay the course during the session.” The event was truly unique in its tone of duty, honor and accountability.

Texas has experienced some knock-down drag-out legislative sessions in recent years, as state lawmakers have disregarded Texans’ opposition to the Trans Texas Corridor, the TSA, border insecurity, executive orders issues from the governor (such as forced Gardasil inoculations for young girls), the rogue Texas Department of Transportation, consolidation of law-enforcement duties under the Department of Public Safety, eminent domain abuses, and a myriad of other issues that threaten individual liberty. A very real opportunity exists for Texas to regain its reputation as independent and liberty-loving. But as always, it’s incumbent upon individual Texans to saddle up and pay attention, holding their elected officials accountable to their oaths of office. Simpson’s new contingent of constitutionally savvy representatives looks to be the opportunity we’ve been waiting for.

Simpson plans to re-introduce his bill opposing TSA abuses in next year’s session, along with other bills to protect Texans’ liberties and exercise its 10th Amendment right. With help from these brave freshmen, perhaps it won’t be quite the mechanical-bull ride of 2011.



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