



## The Tea Party & Choosing Choice Candidates

A recent poll conducted by Republican pollster Tony Fabrizio indicated that 41 percent of Americans have a favorable opinion of the Tea Party Movement. This support is manifest in the influential role played by Tea Party activists in the defeat of Governor Jon Corzine in New Jersey, the landslide election of Governor Bob McDonnell in Virginia, and most recently and visibly, Scott Brown's historic victory in the special election in Massachusetts to fill the seat left vacant by the passing of Senator Edward Kennedy. To varying degrees, all of these men owe their success to the skill, spirit, and stamina of the men and women of the Tea Party Movement.



In the spirit of full disclosure, however, the Tea Party has suffered a few notable electoral defeats. Illinois was the site of two Tea Party failures: that of Patrick Hughes in the GOP senatorial primary and Adam Andrzejewski in the corresponding gubernatorial race. Most recently (and heartbreaking to constitutionalists nationwide) there was the story of the hard-fought gubernatorial race in Texas where Debra Medina finished a distant third (18 percent) in the Republican primary to a couple of establishment mainstays despite a promising start and strong homestretch polling numbers.

These electoral setbacks should not weaken the resolve of the Tea Party faithful or of like-minded constitutionalists. Within seven months, elections will be held throughout the country and the names of many Tea Party-friendly candidates will appear on many of those ballots. For the first time in many years, there is a respectable slate of viable constitutionally minded candidates seeking office in nearly every state.

Given the mercurial nature of politics and the ebb and flow of campaigns, it would be impracticable and perhaps even impossible to publish a list of all the candidates claiming some degree of simpatico with the Tea Party Movement or adherence to its platform of small government, lower taxes, and greater responsibility. With that hindrance in mind, on the next page is a roster of candidates who have affirmed their adherence to the fundamental principles of the Tea Party Movement: limited government, reduced spending, lower taxes, and personal liberty.

While experience has taught constitutionalists that the promises of constraint sworn to by those seeking public office are often forgotten after the assumption of power, the strength of these candidates' commitment must be measured individually and voters must evaluate the claims for themselves. As explained in the previous article, the Tea Party Movement does not endorse candidates for office principally because there is no leadership or central authority that can speak for the collage of conservative activists that comprise the Tea Party membership. There are, however, unwritten articles of faith to which those seeking the tacit endorsement of the constitutionally minded Tea Party faithful must pledge their allegiance.



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on April 1, 2010

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First, the national government must be chased back inside the corral built by our Founding Fathers as set forth in the Constitution. The Constitution established a government of enumerated and limited powers and those limits must be adhered to.

Second, the states were never intended to be mere minions of the federal government. Our Founding Fathers recognized and held inviolable the sovereignty of the various states and confined the national government to a separate sphere of influence. The rights of states to govern must be defended, and the boundaries between the state governments and the national government as defined by the Ninth and 10th Amendments to the Constitution must be rehabilitated and secured against the trespasses of Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court.

Next, taxes must be reduced. Were the government to confine its spending within the narrow constraints of the Constitution, there would be no need to siphon more and more of the hard-earned money out of the pockets of Americans and into the coffers of the national treasury. Foreign aid, undeclared foreign wars, and federal “entitlement” programs have sapped the strength and the patience of the American public. Such unconstitutional outlays must end and the burden of financing them must be removed from the backs of the ever-shrinking American middle class.

Finally, there must be a return to the eternal principles of Judeo-Christian virtue upon which our Republic was founded. There is a plethora of quotes from our Founding Fathers exhorting their countrymen to live honorable lives and the necessity of such devotion to the preservation of liberty. Candidates are human and as such must be afforded the same latitude for folly as all men, but they should be nonetheless examples of personal integrity in both their public and private lives. A genuine commitment to abide by the common code of decency should be the sine qua non of a candidate seeking the support of constitutionalists.

As discussed above and in the cover story, there is an undeniable energy and force propelling the Tea Party Movement. It is exciting and hopeful and augurs well for a renewal of those timeless tenets of good Republican government. The message of the movement, as well as that of the candidates mentioned above, is resonating with voters who feel they have been constructively disenfranchised by the two major political parties and the profligate elected representatives who flagrantly disregard constitutional tethers and have taxed and spent the United States into a deep recession.

The responsibility of those rallying around the Tea Party flag (or any other constitutional banner) is to identify those candidates and causes consistent with their values and promote them, propel them, and praise them in the ears of all those who will listen.

## **Constitutional Candidates**

Adam Kokesh - New Mexico (Congress)

Art Robinson - Oregon (Congress)

Bill Hunt - Orange County, California (Sheriff)

Bill Connor - South Carolina (Governor)

BJ Lawson - North Carolina (Congress)

Carl Bruning - Colorado (Larimer County Sheriff)

Chelene Nightingale - California (Governor)

Chris Simcox - Arizona (Senate)



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David Hedrick - Washington (Congress)  
David Ratowitz - Illinois (Congress)  
Dennis Steele - Vermont (Governor)  
Glen Bradley - North Carolina (State House)  
Heidi Munson - Washington (State Representative)  
Jake Towne - Pennsylvania (Congress)  
Jaynee Germond - Oregon (Congress)  
Jim Deakin - Arizona (Senate)  
Jim Forsythe - New Hampshire (State Senate)  
Joe Walsh - Illinois (Congress)  
John Dennis - California (Congress)  
Justin Amash - Michigan (Congress)  
Marvin "Chick" Heilesen - Idaho (Congress)  
Michael Chadwick - Idaho (Congress)  
Mike Beitler - North Carolina (Senate)  
Mike Vasovski - South Carolina (Congress)  
Patrick Henry Sellers - Pennsylvania (Congress)  
Paul Lambert - Alabama (Congress)  
Peter Schiff - Connecticut (Senate)  
Rand Paul - Kentucky (Senate)  
Randy Brogdon - Oklahoma (Governor)  
Ray McBerry - Georgia (Governor)  
RJ Harris - Oklahoma (Congress)  
Robert Broadus - Maryland (Congress)  
Robert Lowry - Texas (Congress)  
Ron Paul - Texas (Congress)  
Roy Moore - Alabama (Governor)  
Shane Coley - Georgia (State Senate)  
Valerie Meyers - Georgia (Congress)  
Van Irion - Tennessee (Congress)

*Photo of Rand Paul: AP Images*

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