



Tom Tancredo and Colorado's "Platform for Prosperity"

Tea Party activists are working nationwide to shake every tree of unrest wherever they find them growing to acquire money sufficient to fund campaigns of viable political candidates who are willing to vow to hew tightly to the conservative principles upon which the movement is built. While these support safaris are happening in several states, the battle for the state house in Colorado has particularly animated the substantial segment of the population dissatisfied with the policies of the current Democratic governor, Bill Ritter.



To winnow the crop of potential GOP candidates proffered as an alternative to the incumbent executive, some high-profile Republicans in the Centennial State have fashioned a measuring stick to size up the several men hoping to be the Republican nominee. The agenda is called the "Platform for Prosperity" and is similar in tone and aim to [the litmus test](#) that will be presented at the annual Republican National Committee convention in January. If candidates refuse to promise allegiance to the principles set forth in the "Platform," then they cannot count on the backing of the state party's heavy hitters.

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One of the heaviest hitters in the Colorado GOP's lineup is Tom Tancredo, former congressman and presidential also ran. Tancredo is famous as a fiercely conservative firebrand and as an outspoken proponent of several controversial measures to halt absolutely the influx of illegal immigrants. His unwavering commitment to traditionally conservative dogma and his intimidating thrust of argument in support of it have attracted the respect and fear of many of his fellow Coloradans, especially those interested in running for governor in 2010. Tancredo himself has expressed a similar goal although as of now he has not formally announced his candidacy.

Perhaps as groundwork for a run at the state executive mansion, Tancredo delivered a stirring speech to a ballroom full of admirers at the annual convention of the Constitution Party in October. Such public appearances only serve to bolster Tancredo's already unmatched name recognition among the state's GOP electorate.

Beyond preaching to the choir, however, Tancredo and others anxious to jump on the tea party bandwagon have devised the "Platform for Prosperity" in order to attract the attention (and donations) of the thousands of "Tea Party" grassroots faithful in Colorado and beyond. By lifting this standard of conservative ideals, Tancredo and the others hope to rally throngs of volunteers around them and thereby have an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the cause.

Several planks of the Platform are cut from the same old wood as the more mainstream Republican agenda - smaller government, lower taxes, etc. However, among the predictable pabulum, there are a few points in the list that do stand out as particularly constitutionally minded and worthwhile.

For example, there is the promise to shore up the erosion of states' rights. The Platform states: "We



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commit to using our voices, votes and veto pen to push back on a federal government that is too big, too intrusive, and all-too-eager to seize power from the states. We believe in protecting states' rights under the Tenth Amendment. We oppose future 'stimulus' bills or other federal spending bills that serve no valid economic purpose and only add to the federal deficit." If adhered to by candidates for office in Colorado, perhaps the zeal would spread throughout the governors' offices nationwide and serve as a powerful stick with which the encroaching leviathan of the federal government might be beaten back and restrained as our Founders intended.

Another encouraging element of the agenda is commitment to stem the tide of illegal aliens and to punish those businesses employing undocumented workers. "We commit to using our voices, votes, and veto pen to support a mandatory workplace verification mechanism that will assist employers in ensuring that their employees are in the United States legally."

As the "Platform for Prosperity" is promoted throughout Colorado and as its principles are debated and discussed in living rooms and town halls throughout the state, there is hope that candidates who espouse these doctrines now, with an eye toward gaining the trust and treasure of Tea Party activists and other patriots, will remember these commitments after inauguration.

Photo of Tom Tancredo: AP Images



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