



From the office of Texas Workforce Commission

Chairman Tom Pauken

Opinion/Editorial

For Immediate Release

Date: June 27, 2011

Bringing Americans Together for the Good of the Country

By Tom Pauken

The political mood in America is extremely volatile these days. In 2008, the American voters were upset with the policies of the George W. Bush administration and turned over Congress to the Democrats while electing Barack Obama president of the United States. Two years later, disenchanted with the policies of the Obama Administration and the Democrat-controlled Congress, Americans voted the Democrats out of power in the House of Representatives.

At the moment it is hard to predict what Americans will do at the ballot box next year, but the serious nature of the problems facing our nation poses a major threat to the very preservation of our free society. Thus, it is imperative to find areas of agreement where Americans of different political parties can work together for the good of our country.

America faces its most serious economic crisis since the Great Depression with high unemployment, a stagnant economy, no private sector job growth, and the hollowing out of our U.S. manufacturing base. Yet, there are common sense solutions that both Republicans and Democrats should be able to support that can get the economy moving again and put Americans back to work. We were able to do that in the Reagan administration when Congress passed, with bi-partisan support, the Kemp-Roth Job Creation Act back in 1981.

U.S.-based businesses and American workers both are suffering under a corporate tax code which rewards debt while punitively taxing capital investment, employment, and savings – the engines of economic growth and job creation. Business and labor, two groups so often portrayed as being at odds with each other, should come together to advocate replacing our current corporate tax structure with a revenue-neutral, eight percent business-consumption tax that would be border-adjusted. All goods and services coming into the U.S. would pay that eight percent tax. All companies exporting from the U.S. would receive a tax credit against their business consumption tax back home.

– more –

I am encouraged to see that this proposal, which changes the way we tax business is beginning to gain bi-partisan support. Former Democratic Senator Fritz Hollings supports this concept as do Sen. Jim DeMint and Congressman Paul Ryan. Pat Choate, who ran for Vice President with Ross Perot in 1996 as an Independent, endorses this idea.

In a similar vein, we should try to bring Republicans and Democrats together behind an effort to rein in the excessive concentration of power in the hands of the federal bureaucracy in our nation's capital with its ever mounting federal mandates and controls.

This is an apt moment for a major shift away from the concentration of power in Washington, D.C., to a decentralized approach which would allow the states and local communities to exercise much greater control over how those federal dollars are best spent in their respective areas. "One size doesn't fit all" when it comes to dictating policy by a centralized bureaucracy headquartered in Washington, D.C. Diversity is a strength, not a weakness of our great nation. As quickly as possible, we need to move power and money away from Washington, D.C. and back into the hands of the states, communities, and the people themselves.

Americans need to understand that we are all in this together. It is not about Right vs. Left. It is about Up or Down. If nothing is done, the American dream will die for future generations. Are we going to change course and make America an even greater land of opportunity than it was for us and those who came before us? Or, are we going to go the way of so many other great nations throughout history that stumbled, declined, and fell – never to recover?

The choice is ours.

Tom Pauken is the Chairman of the Texas Workforce Commission and author of Bringing America Home

Media Contact: Lisa Givens (512) 463-8556

The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.