



PROTECTING LIBERTY, INTEGRITY AND JUSTICE.

HOW TO GUIDE

GET TO KNOW A CANDIDATE

About We Texans

We Texans is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that fights to protect liberty, integrity and justice through legislation and education. We engage in research, analysis, education and activism. We value responsibility and the principles of private property, personal and economic freedom and limited constitutional government. Our purpose is to return accountability and freedom-minded principles to the Texas legislature and her citizenry by educating Texans and spurring them to action.

Our mission

- research current political issues and proposed legislation
- commission studies to serve as foundations for sound legislation
- communicate with Texas legislators acting as both resource and watchdog
- endorse legislation that protects liberty and oppose legislation that undermines it
- inform and educate Texas citizens through our blog, email newsletter, social media sites and live events
- serve as an agent of accountability for Texas government and business.

We promise to be a well-researched, honest and active resource for conservative thought in Texas. We promise to stand for principles not personalities. We intend to be trusted, well-respected and effective. We work for liberty-minded grassroots Texans looking for a voice!

More info can be found at our website:
www.WeTexans.com

WHY?

Ideas Have Consequences

CONSERVATIVE PRINCIPLES MATTER

There is a growing dissatisfaction of the people with their leaders. Voters have realized that voting for someone with an R after their name is not a guarantee that liberty will be supported once the candidate is elected. Voters, now more than ever, must scrutinize candidates for evidence that their true ideology is in accordance with the conservative values on which they are campaigning. We Texans believe that candidates must have a firm grasp on a few key constitutional principles in order to govern in a manner that protects freedom.

Key Principles of American Liberty:

- Private Property Ownership
- State Sovereignty
- Right to Bear Arms
- Inherent Rights of the Individual
- Free Market Economy
- Opposition to Socialism
- Limited Government

If a candidate does not fully understand these principles, he will be ill-equipped to protect your freedom once elected. The powers of personality, charisma and electability will not save citizens from tyranny. Only principles can give men the strength our founding fathers had to fight for freedom at all costs.

We must work together to find the solutions to society's problems that do not trample the rights of the few in favor of the many. In order to do that, we must have the courage to elect principled leadership and the willingness to work hard to find the candidate that will protect the values of individual liberty, morality, and the free market for ourselves and future generations.

About this Guide

It is becoming increasingly difficult to discern rhetoric from reality when following political campaigns today. Each “ conservative ” candidate is well versed in the popular talking points and current buzz-words, but how can we as voters determine if they truly believe and understand the content in the speeches they give?

The goal of this guide is to help cut through pre-packaged messaging and quickly get to the heart of any candidate’s true ideology. In this guide, we have addressed elected offices you will find on your ballot in any given election year. For each office we have supplied questions designed to be asked directly to a candidate, perhaps at a town hall meeting, candidate forum, via e-mail or even over social media. Following each question, we have outlined a proper liberty-minded response. Certainly, a candidate’s exact answers to these questions will vary greatly, but if they truly understand what makes and keeps men free, their answers to the questions in this guide will reflect those we have provided.

Our sincere hope is that this guide will serve as a valuable resource to all liberty-minded voters for years to come. By focusing on principles rather than personalities, the process of choosing a candidate to support with your vote becomes rather simple. Please use this guide as a tool to make informed voting decisions that serve to secure the blessings of freedom for ourselves and our posterity.

Guide Format

Elected Office

LENGTH of TERM

Q. Question to Candidate

A. Outline of a liberty-minded response

Federal Representative

VARIES

Includes the following elected positions:

- United States Congressman (2 Year Term)
- United States Senator (6 Year Term)

Q. What is the primary responsibility of a representative?

A. The answer should not be “constituent services ” or “to do the will of the people. ” These are incorrect answers because we are a republic, not a democracy. The primary responsibility of members of Congress is to uphold the Constitution, even against the will of the people. A Candidate ’ s response to this question should sound similar to the oath they will swear if elected: *“ I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So help me God.”*

Q. Who is responsible to take action to limit the federal government to its constitutionally mandated powers?

A. The founders understood that the federal government would tend towards accruing more power unto itself and provided the 9th and 10th amendments to Constitution to safeguard limited government.

- *9th Amendment: The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.*
- *10th Amendment: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to*

the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

It is the responsibility of the individual states to limit the federal government when it acts outside the powers delegated to it in Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Q. Under what circumstances would you vote to allow the federal government to act beyond it's powers defined in Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution?

A. The correct answer to this question is quite simple: " Never. " Members of Congress violate their oath of office any time they vote on items that are not listed as powers of Congress in Article I Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. Candidates should be able to acknowledge that there are many things that the current Congress addresses which are not within their constitutional power. Candidates should respond that powers not granted to the federal government by the Constitution are reserved to the States or the people.

Railroad Commissioner

6 YEARS

Q. How would you advocate to advance states' rights in the event that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines conflict with those of the Railroad Commission?

A. Industry in Texas is best regulated by Texas, period. The Railroad Commission ideally should serve as the sovereign regulatory agency for the energy industry in our state. A candidate's response should include that the EPA is truly unconstitutional.

Q. Considering the scope of the energy sector in Texas, how has that industry affected private property rights?

A. In Texas, private companies within the oil and gas Industry have tremendous powers granted to them by the state to use private property for their projects. While those powers are granted by the legislature and cannot be amended by the Commission, the Commission does have great authority to ensure that landowners and their property are protected to the fullest extent possible from property damage caused by negligence and abuse from the energy industry. Railroad Commissioners should be accountable to their electorate and strive to ensure that all parties, both the industry and the individual, receive fair and just treatment under the law.

Q. As a regulator of the oil and gas industry in Texas, how does the Railroad Commission work to create jobs?

A. Government does not create jobs, the private sector creates jobs. Regulatory agencies can only hinder job creation. Any candidate claiming they will or can create jobs does not understand their role as a regulator. It is not their role to create jobs.

Statewide Judge

6 YEARS

Includes the following elected positions:

- Texas Supreme Court Justice
- Presiding Judge
- Court of Criminal Appeals Judge
- Court of Appeals Chief Justice
- Court of Appeals Justice

Q. When is a judge justified in striking down a law?

A. When the legislature hasn't been granted authority to create such a law under the Texas Constitution.

Q. In any given case, what should a judge do if he believes that controlling precedent from a higher court is wrongly decided?

A. A judge's first consideration should always be our state constitution. A judge can be guided but should not be controlled by higher court precedent.

Q. When applying a law to a specific case, what should be the judge's primary objective and how should the judge pursue that objective?

A. The highest purpose of a judge is to ensure that our laws are applied fairly and justly to all. In order to pursue that end, a judge must examine whether or not the legislature had the authority to make the applicable law, and if so the judge must follow that law.

State Legislators

2 YEARS

Includes the following elected positions:

- State Representative
- State Senator

Q. What is the primary responsibility of a legislator?

A. The answer should not be "constituent services" or "to do the will of the people." These are incorrect answers because we are a republic, not a democracy. The primary responsibility of state representatives is to uphold the Texas Constitution, even against the will of the people.

A candidates response to this question should sound similar to the oath they will swear if elected: *“I do solemnly swear (or affirm), that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of State Legislator of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State, so help me God.*

Q. What options do state legislators have to limit the federal government to its constitutionally mandated powers?

A. As Thomas Jefferson outlined, when the federal government steps outside it's powers, specified in Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, the states have a duty to interpose and nullify federal actions in order to protect the citizens of their state from a tyrannical Washington DC. State legislators then have two options available to them in this situation:

1. Nullification—passing state law that says an unconstitutional federal law will be null and void within our state
2. Interposition—passing a state law that says an unconstitutional federal law will still stand within the state but consequences for breaking that law will not be enforced by officers of our state. Additionally, our state law enforcement will prevent federal officers from enforcing consequences of breaking the unconstitutional federal law.

Q. What role should the state play in economic development?

A. It is not government's job to incentivize economic development. The biggest role the legislature can play in developing the economy in Texas is to pass sound legislation and tax policy that applies equitably to all and to remove as much regulation as possible to allow the free market to function without undo burden of unnecessary compliance and mandates.

State Board of Education Member

4 YEARS

Q. What do you believe the state is responsible for when it comes to public education?

A. The Texas Constitution clearly stipulates that the state is responsible for the “the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools ” in order to provide “a general diffusion of knowledge.” Currently, many of the activities provided by public schools falls outside the scope of a “general diffusion of knowledge ” and therefore beyond the responsibility of state government.

Q. What do you see as the primary reasons for the less than excellent quality of education in Texas public schools?

A. While there is no simple or single answer for this complicated issue, there is ample evidence that increased funding is not the solution. Remedy for public school dysfunction is more likely found in decreased regulation and mandates and an increase in the quality of educators.

Q. How would you return management of public education to local districts?

A. The candidate must acknowledge that the scope of the state ’ s responsibility for public education should be limited. Additionally, they should demonstrate a willingness to lead an effort to transition responsibility for education from the state level back to parents and communities where it rightly belongs.

Includes the following elected positions:

- County Judge
- County Commissioners

Q. What do you see as the primary role of county government?

A. While the scope of county government continues to grow, at its core, the county is responsible for roads, local law enforcement, some public works and maintenance and administration of county courts. County elected officials must refrain from accepting responsibility for humanitarian efforts (which rightly rests with people) and work instead to insure individual rights are protected.

Q. In what areas do you believe the county is providing services that it should not be providing and how would you propose to eliminate those services?

While many candidates will discuss the burden of unfunded mandates, many counties offer a plethora of additional public services. A candidate should hold that most social, environmental and economic development services should be left to the private sector.

Q. In what ways has our county become dependent on the state or federal government and how would you propose to reduce that dependence?

A. The county receives funding from both the state and federal government for roads, healthcare and economic development just to name a few. Commissioners committed to protecting individual liberty and freedom will acknowledge the need to resist mandates, including the

solicitation and acceptance of government grants, which invariably create long term liabilities for the county to provide additional services.

Prosecutor

4 YEARS

Includes the following elected positions:

- District Attorney
- County Attorney

Q. When developing a case and charging a suspect, does incentivizing convictions make elected attorneys more or less likely to have prosecutorial conduct that is just?

A. Elected attorneys have a unique position, in that they are representatives of the state and prosecute to protect the people. However, they must also ensure that justice is done, which means they are to protect the rights of victim and the suspect simultaneously. Incentivizing convictions may cause elected attorneys to focus on conviction rate and winning rather than ensuring justice is done. Texas Criminal Code defines the duties and responsibilities of the District Attorney and states, *“It shall be the primary duty of all prosecuting attorneys, including any special prosecutors, not to convict, but to see that justice is done “*

Q. If the Federal Government or the United Nations were to implement a policy of door to door gun confiscation in your jurisdiction, similar to what took place in New Orleans, Louisiana immediately following Hurricane Katrina, what would you do?

A. In such a situation, a Sheriff should interpose himself on behalf of the people to protect their constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

Q. In 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for failing to give her seat on a bus to a white man. Knowing what we know now about equality and justice, if you were the responding officer to this call back in 1955, what would you have done?

A. The police are not robots for the legislatures. Law enforcement officers should never enforce unjust law. A true constitutional Sheriff would have sat down next to Mrs. Parks, shook her hand, made sure she got home safely and given her home extra patrol throughout the night.

Q. What will be your highest priority as Sheriff?

A. The proper answer is “ Keep my oath to the people of my county to protect their constitutional rights. ” A Sheriff has no higher duty than this. While answers of “ keep the peace, reduce the crime rate, stop drug trafficking and drug abuse or work with Federal and State agencies to combat crime ” may be duties of a Sheriff those should not be his highest priority. A Sheriff ’ s oath binds him to only enforce laws that coincide with the Constitution. He should not violate that oath for anyone or any purpose.

Q. Do you believe that the IRS conducting random audits is a proper and constitutional procedure?

A. No. No other law enforcement agency in this country is allowed to conduct random audits to reduce crime or detect crime. As much as the IRS might like to think they deserve an exception to the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, no such exemption exists and they should follow the rule of law just like everyone else.

Q. It appears that all citizens will be required by “law” to participate in the recently enacted federal healthcare regulation. If citizens in your jurisdiction refuse to accept or use this federal program and you are ordered to cite or arrest them, what will you do?

A. No local law enforcement officer should ever enforce any such law or serve any warrants from any court to arrest citizens for refusing to participate in any federal program; not for healthcare or anything else. Local law enforcement should stand next to their constituents and put themselves on the line to protect them from such abuse.

Q. If Federal and State bureaucracies are raiding farmers and destroying their dairy products and businesses for merely distributing raw milk and cheese, what would you do about it?

A. The right farmers have to run their businesses as they see fit is more important than regulations and rules. As long as they have not hurt anyone, I will stand with all farmers and will indeed protect their lands and businesses, from all threats.

Justice of the Peace

4 YEARS

Q. According to the principles of our Constitutional Republic, who is responsible for keeping the Federal Government in check?

A. James Madison said the people can safely rely on the disposition of local legislators to erect barriers against the encroachments of the Federal Government. Therefore, it is the duty of all States to keep the Federal Government in check. Local officials are absolutely an integral part of maintaining the balance of power between the States and Federal Government.

Q. Thomas Jefferson warned us that Washington DC would at times become “ venal and oppressive.” If this were to happen today; who would the people in your county be able to turn to for peace, safety, and protection?

A. The Sheriff and other local officials like the Constable and Justice of the Peace.

Q. Article 6 of the U S Constitution requires each public official to swear an oath of allegiance to the Constitution. What is it that you do to keep this oath?

A. A true conservative candidate most certainly should have read the Constitution and studied what the Framers of America intended. They should have also studied the Declaration of Independence and know what the purpose of all government is. The candidate should acknowledge that they will only enforce laws that coincide with the Constitution.



Contributors

Several liberty-minded Texans contributed to the content of this guide. Without the wealth of their knowledge this project would not have been possible. We would like to thank the following patriots for their thoughtful submissions:

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Commissioner Gregory Parker

Comal County Commissioner since 2004. First African American and the youngest person ever to win election as a county commissioner in Comal County.