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11/24/09

Position on Glenn Beck's 5 Pledges

I am a member of Glenn Beck's 912 Project. Glenn and I most definitely are "on the same page," but we are taking different approaches. I cannot support 4 of his 5 pledges as they are written for the reasons stated below. Some of the pledges conflict with pledges that I already have made and, for others, I am proposing different ways to address the issues in the pledges. I make few pledges and intend to keep the few that I do make.

I do pledge to

- Put the people first ahead of self and party;
- Work to restore America's strength in the world (see *Restoring America's Strength*);
- Work to restore liberty in the United States (see *The Second American Revolution*);
- Work to create more jobs and reduce the cost of living to help those who struggle to make ends meet (see my *Economic Recovery Plan*);
- Work to reduce the cost of doing business in the United States to bring back jobs lost to other countries (see my *Economic Recovery Plan*);
- Work to reduce the cost of health care and health insurance premiums (see *The Freedom Plan for Health Care Finance Reform*);
- Work to reduce the cost of gasoline (see the *Switch and Drill Plan*);
- Work to end earmark spending;
- Introduce and work to ratify the Freedom Amendment; and
- Introduce and work to ratify a Right to Life amendment.

Sincerely,

Roger Thoney

Discussion of Glenn Beck's 5 Pledges

1. **I believe in a balanced budget and therefore will vote for a freeze in government spending until that goal is realized.** *I believe in balancing the budget, but I will not commit to freezing government spending as the way to achieve it. There are better ways and committing to a freeze may preclude me from supporting them. Also, I have pledged to "put the people first ahead of self and party." Freezing government spending can be draconian. For example, if interest on the debt and war spending were to increase, then spending on Social Security, Medicare, etc. would have to decrease in the face of possible inflation and at a time when more seniors are drawing on the programs as the baby boom generation ages. Real people depend upon these programs and we cannot just blindly cut them. We must reduce spending in such a way as to not put current recipients in a financial squeeze. This is "putting the people first."*

President Reagan showed us that the best way to balance a budget is to expand the tax base by creating more jobs. To create more jobs, we must reduce the cost of living and cost of doing business to make us more competitive in the global economy by reducing the cost of government taxation, regulation, and litigation. This includes eliminating the taxes on business profit and capital gain. If I am presented with a budget that eliminates the taxes on business profit and capital gain, I will vote for it regardless of whether it freezes spending because creating more jobs is the key to solving our economic-related problems, including the budget deficit, the national debt, the trade deficit, the weakening dollar, and poverty. As people move from social programs into jobs, government spending will decline and tax revenue will increase.

If the cost of living declines, then government spending can decline even more. For example, if we reduce the cost of living by 10%, then Social Security payments can be reduced by 10% without adversely affecting recipients. If health care prices decline by 40%, which is possible if we implement The Freedom Plan for Health Care Finance Reform, then we may reduce spending on Medicare by 40%, too. The Freedom Plan for Health Care Finance Reform also will reduce spending on Medicaid and SCHIP by as much as 90% in the early years, helping to balance the budget.

The Freedom Amendment includes a requirement to balance the federal budget, so ratifying it is another way to achieve a balanced budget. The Freedom Amendment will establish a competition among the states that will pressure state legislatures to reduce spending at both the federal and state levels, keep taxes low, and make each state more business friendly.

There are better ways to balance the budget than by freezing government spending; and I cannot support a pledge that has the potential to inflict great financial pain on people who have become dependent upon social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.

2. **I believe government should not increase the financial burden on its citizenry during difficult economic times therefore I will oppose all tax increases until our economy has rebounded.** *I will oppose tax increases even after our economy rebounds. This pledge conflicts with the Americans for Tax Reform pledge which I have signed. I pledged to ATR to “oppose any and all efforts to increase the marginal income tax rates for individuals and/or businesses.” I cannot sign a weaker pledge and still maintain credibility with ATR.*
3. **I believe more than four decades of U.S. dependence on foreign oil is a travesty therefore I will support an energy plan that calls for immediately increasing usage of all domestic resources including nuclear energy, natural gas, and coal as necessary.** *This pledge lacks focus. What measures will bring about an “immediate increase” in usage? Government subsidies or mandates? I will not support a rushed “shotgun” approach to energy because it will be highly inefficient and costly to taxpayers and consumers. I will support an effort to accelerate the introduction and use of hydrogen to fuel our cars and trucks and mandates to install natural gas and hydrogen pumps in service stations and to require that all gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles be capable of running on a 100% alcohol fuel. For other energy sources, I will work to eliminate subsidies and reduce regulation and let the market determine how much of each we use.*

Our dependence on oil itself is a major security threat to our country, not just foreign oil. I am proposing that we implement the Switch and Drill Plan which will make the U.S. a net exporter of oil and restrain OPEC's ability to manipulate oil prices. The plan calls for reducing our demand for oil by about 50% by switching to non-oil-based fuels to run our cars and trucks and increasing our production of oil by about

33%. The focus should be on reducing the use of oil, not on increasing the use of "all domestic alternatives" because some alternatives, like nuclear energy, will not displace the use of much oil. Nuclear, solar, and wind energy are global warming solutions, not substitutes for oil.

4. **I believe in the sovereignty and security of our country and therefore will support measures to close our borders except for designated immigration points so we will know who is entering and why and I will vehemently oppose any measure giving another country, the United Nations, or any other entity power over U.S. citizens.** *The need for a closed border with Canada has not been demonstrated and may prove to be cost prohibitive. I will support measures to protect the sovereignty and security of our country and oppose measures designed to turn it over to another entity. I will support a border fence on the Mexican border and increased immigration law enforcement to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the U.S. I also will support efforts to return illegal immigrants to their country of origin.*

5. **I believe the United States of America is the greatest country on earth and therefore will not apologize for policies or actions which have served to free more and feed more people around the world than any other nation on the planet.** *I agree with this statement.*