

1. Why do you want to be President?

I am running for President because I am optimistic about the future of America, and believe our greatest days are still ahead. I am the only authentic, consistent conservative in this race with executive experience (ten-and-a-half years as Governor) and a record of innovative leadership.

When people ask why I want to be president and face all the tough issues confronting this country, I tell them that deciding what to do really isn't that difficult. When you review the alternatives, the right thing usually jumps out at you. The challenging part is getting it done. Doing the right thing requires competence and courage and conviction, all of which seem to be in short supply in Washington. Instead, we have cronyism and corruption and cupidity, the sworn enemies of the right thing. I have the experience and the courage to confront these issues.

I have a very strong vision of how I want to fight the war on terror, secure our borders, fix health care and education, promote economic growth, become energy independent, and make globalization lead us to greater prosperity rather than into decline. I believe that I have the communication and negotiation skills that make me best-suited to use the Bully Pulpit to explain to the American people what we must do and then work with Congress to get it done.

2. What is your mission statement for America and the three most important goals you intend to achieve as President?

America's mission is to retain our military, economic, and moral supremacy. To retain our military supremacy, we must increase the size of our active armed forces and increase our defense budget back up to the 6% of GDP it was under President Reagan. We must continue with the anti-missile defense system and fight nuclear proliferation and acquisition of any nuclear materials and knowledge by terrorists.

To retain our economic supremacy, we must break free from outdated systems that worked fine in the last century, but won't see us through the twenty-first. Rather than dooming us to decline, I know that globalization, done right, can be a Golden Age for America. Instead of looking over our shoulder at China and India, I want to look in the mirror, face ourselves, and fix ourselves.

Big ideas don't mean big government – on the contrary, my ideas will strengthen our free market and make it more vibrant. We need to reform our tax system by abolishing our existing personal and corporate tax system and moving to the Fair Tax, which will make our businesses more competitive overseas, bring home trillions of dollars that have moved off-shore for tax reasons, and bring foreign investors here. We need to reform our education system to give our students the knowledge, skills, and creativity they need for the jobs of this century. We need to reform our health care system to move from an employer-based system to a consumer-based system that will free our businesses from the burden of health care costs, focus on prevention rather than intervention, and allow Americans to own their health care. I want to lead the technological breakthroughs that will allow us not only to end our dependence on fossil fuels and clean up this planet, but also sell those technologies all over the world.

To retain our moral supremacy, we must champion our culture of life, which stands in stark juxtaposition to the terrorists' culture of death, and we must protect and strengthen our families.

The three most important goals I intend to achieve as President are winning the war on terror, securing our borders, and becoming energy independent.

3. Describe your education and preparation to serve as President.

Ouachita Baptist University, B. A., 1975

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, M. A., 1980

A) Who and what have informed your intellectual preparation to be President?

As for the "who," I was strongly influenced by Phyllis Schlafly, Paul Weyrich, Howard Phillips, Francis Schaeffer, C. S. Lewis, Thomas Sowell, George Will, and William F. Buckley, Jr. As for the "what," my faith defines me and informs all of my decision-making.

B) What has practically prepared you and informed you to be President?

Being Governor provides the best preparation for being President because it's executive experience. In Congress, you can pass the buck 535 times, no one is really responsible for anything. As a Governor, you have to lead, you have to balance budgets and provide services to your people. I led the effort to reform our education, economic, and health systems to gain high-paying jobs, high-achieving schools, and high-quality health care, all with a legislature that was overwhelmingly Democrat. Under my leadership, we had a decade of progress, not polarization.

I cut taxes 94 times, including the first broad-based tax cuts in Arkansas history. I eliminated the marriage penalty and capital gains on home sales. I doubled the standard deduction and the child care tax credit. I left office with a surplus of almost \$850 million, setting the stage for additional tax cuts. I led the successful effort to amend our state constitution to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman. I make Arkansas only the third state to adopt "covenant marriage." I passed all the pro-life legislation I could – banning partial birth abortion, requiring parental notification, requiring informed consent before an abortion, requiring the option of anesthesia for the baby during an abortion, allowing a woman to give birth and leave her baby safely at a hospital, and making it a crime to injure or murder an unborn baby.

As Chairman of the National Governors Association, I had the opportunity to change national policy. When I became Chairman, Medicaid spending had passed spending on elementary and secondary education to become the largest single item in state budgets. Through patient but persistent negotiation, I got the governors to agree *unanimously* on a plan and then got the plan through Congress. Our plan didn't just save the taxpayers money, it made basic care available to more people and gave the states more authority to design and administer their programs, since we know the needs of our citizens better than the federal government does. Also during my



chairmanship, the National Governors Association took my Healthy Arkansas Initiative and turned it into the Healthy America Initiative, promoting wellness and health care savings through good nutrition, exercise, avoiding tobacco, and maintaining proper weight.

Hurricane Katrina prepared me to be President because it gave me experience in crisis management, when I directed the rescue and relief of 75,000 people. As Governor, I had dealt with severe ice storms, tornadoes, and other emergencies within Arkansas, but Katrina was a major national disaster, one of the worst in our history. The scale and scope of that undertaking was the type of challenge I will face as President, and I met that challenge. Even though these people were displaced by a hurricane, the results were the same as if Al Qaeda had blown up the levees, so it was experience relevant to coping with a terrorist attack as well.

We had plenty of state facilities, like armories we could have used – big, cavernous, impersonal places -- but to me that wasn't housing people, that was *warehousing* them. In looking for alternatives, I thought of our church and scout camps, which had just closed for the season, and I invited their leaders to my office to ask if they would re-open for us. Not a single one said no. I had a clear vision of how I wanted to welcome and care for these people: they were beyond hungry, thirsty, dirty, and exhausted, they had been traumatized and dehumanized, and we brought them back to life. I have been tested, and I have proven my ability to provide creative, decisive, and effective leadership during a major catastrophe. My crisis management ability is one of the reasons *Time* magazine named me one of America's five best governors.

4. Please describe your philosophy of what it means to be a conservative President: What is conservative governance in your view and how would your philosophy manifest itself in your principles, policies, plans, and priorities as President?

To me conservative governance means following the “original intent” of the Founding Fathers, it means recognizing that Jefferson won the debate with Hamilton, and that we want very strong, energetic, innovative states, with government both as limited as possible and as close to the people as possible. The states should not usurp functions that can be handled locally, and the federal government should not usurp functions that can be handled by the states. An important part of being a conservative President for me would be strengthening federalism. Conservative governance also means an emphasis on personal responsibility and letting the free market function unencumbered, so that Americans have tremendous opportunity, but not a guaranteed outcome. It means smaller, more efficient government; lower government spending; lower taxes. It means keeping the government out of our lives and letting families keep as much of the money they earn and make as many of their own decisions as possible. It means allowing younger workers to have personal Social Security accounts. It means getting entitlements under control.

5. What are the most important governing principles that you would rely upon as the framework for your presidency?

I believe that our rights come from God, not from our government; that the people should retain as much power and be left alone as much as possible; that the federal government should not do



what can be done at the local or state level; that our government belongs to the people, not the lobbyists and special interests; that government at all levels exists to serve the people and not the other way around; that we must respect the separation of powers and no branch should usurp the authority of another; that my greatest responsibility is to protect the American people from all threats; that the free market, low taxes, and minimal regulation are the keys to economic growth and prosperity; that Americans are owed equal opportunity, but not an equal outcome; that we are a culture of life and recognize that each individual has intrinsic value and worth; that we are only as strong as our families; that we owe a huge debt to those who have given their lives for this country to protect the freedoms and way of life for which they sacrificed.

A) Describe how those principles would guide your decision-making process in conducting the affairs of the nation as President.

I would weigh all of my decisions in the context of those principles to assure that I am doing the right thing and not the popular or expedient thing. I will always err on the side of protecting life, strengthening our families, and protecting our citizens and our country from possible threats to their safety.

B) Relate each of your governing principles to the U. S. Constitution and the vision of the Founding Fathers.

The Founding Fathers shared my vision that our rights come from God. I share their concern that we never become victims of tyranny, and I will scrupulously honor the separation of powers and checks and balances they conceived for us and will staunchly defend all of our individual rights, including the Second Amendment, which some don't take as seriously as our other rights. I will appoint judges who will uphold the original intent of the Founding Fathers and preserve their wisdom.

6. Discuss your philosophy of and vision for the federal government in the 21st Century – its structure, personnel, operations and functions.

The federal government must be as small and efficient as possible. We must cut and consolidate by ruthlessly ferreting out unnecessary or duplicative functions and positions. Appointees must be chosen entirely on their credentials and not their crony connections, they should inspire and raise the morale of those who work under them by their dedication and professionalism. I strongly support reviving the line-item veto in a way that will pass constitutional muster.

A) What are the innovations you envision to modernize and restructure the federal government in keeping with the governing principles you described in your response to question #5 above.

I would always question whether some of the functions the federal government performs should be done by government at all and whether some of those functions that should be performed can be returned to the states and localities. For example, if states want tougher standards to protect



their chemical plants from a terror attack, I would not support the federal government pre-empting those standards. I wouldn't walk into the Oval Office and assume that the government I find is the government we should have. I would always seek to eliminate and to consolidate. I would have outside experts review each department because no cabinet secretary is ever going to tell me that his budget should be cut. I would make certain that the government has the same resources as our top corporations – that the FBI, for example, finally has the state-of-the-art computer system that it needs to face 21st century threats.

When Congress put FEMA in the Department of Homeland Security, they moved its director too far down the food chain. I will restore FEMA to cabinet status, so that the Director reports directly to me. I will reassess and strengthen the focus and mission of the Department of Homeland Security. The Department brought together 180,000 people from 22 agencies. Its size and structure are unwieldy and inefficient. We must create a leaner structure with a passionate *esprit de corps* dedicated to identifying threats and foiling attacks.

I will fight to enact the Fair Tax, a simple tax on consumption, which would eliminate all existing federal taxes, personal and corporate, and eliminate the IRS. The Fair Tax will reward productivity instead of punishing it. The Fair Tax will lower the lifetime tax burden on all Americans: single or married; working or retired; rich, poor or middle class – no more tax loopholes for those with high-priced lawyers and lobbyists, no more tax evasion by the underground economy. The Fair Tax will take embedded corporate taxes out of the prices we pay, so everything we buy will be cheaper.

This reform is needed to make us competitive globally, so that instead of exporting our jobs and even whole industries, we will export our goods. Other countries rebate taxes on their exports, giving their products an advantage of about 18% on the world market compared to our goods. We are the square peg trying to fit into the round hole of international trade. The rest of the world isn't going to change – it's time that we do. Under the Fair Tax, trillions of dollars that have been moved offshore for tax reasons will come home. American companies will be far less likely to move overseas and foreign companies will be far more likely to come here, hiring Americans to build and work in their new plants. We can become the world's tax haven.

7. Describe your view of the meaning of American sovereignty. How would your administration approach issues related to preserving and protecting American sovereignty in the 21st century? Please provide specific examples related to such things as the World Trade Organization, the United Nations, UNESCO, international treaties, etc.

I will never relinquish one iota or one inch of our sovereignty. I was the first presidential candidate to oppose the Law of the Sea Treaty. I don't have much faith in the U. N. except for some humanitarian missions. I oppose the U. N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, the North American Union, and the Kyoto Treaty. I will never appoint judges who rely on foreign case law in reaching their decisions.

8. Describe the principles on which your administration would conduct foreign affairs and diplomacy, relating specifically to your philosophy of the National Security Council, the State Department, as well as military affairs and the Pentagon.

My foreign policy would be based on my clear understanding that we cannot negotiate with the Islamofascists or appease them, we must eliminate them. Our biggest challenge in the Arab and Muslim worlds is the lack of a viable moderate alternative to existing repressive regimes and the extremists seeking to overthrow them. We can't "export" democracy as if it were Coca-Cola or KFC, but we can nurture moderate forces in all these countries where terrorists seek to replace modern evil with medieval evil. This moderation may not look like or function exactly like our system, it may be more of a benevolent oligarchy, it may be more tribal than individualist, but both for us and for the people of those countries, it will be better than either the dictatorships they have now or the theocracy they would have under the radical Islamists. My goal is to correctly calibrate a course between maintaining stability and promoting democracy. As for the existing terrorists, I will use the CIA and our special forces to track down and eliminate terror cells all over the world with swift, surgical air strikes and commando raids.

I want a strong National Security Council, rather than one in the pocket of either State or Defense. I don't want an administration where the State Department dominates the Defense Department or vice-versa. My generals will be independent advisers to me, always free to speak without fear of retribution or dismissal. I will give great weight to those with mud and blood on their boots, rather than the civilians in silk suits and ties. If I ever have to undertake a large invasion, I will follow the Powell Doctrine and use overwhelming force. The notion of an "occupation with a light footprint" that was our model for Iraq always struck me as a contradiction in terms. I will increase the size of our active armed forces and not rely so heavily on our National Guard and Reserves, whom we have worn out. We have to stop using our active duty forces for nation building. The State Department should be in charge and coordinate with the relevant departments, like Energy, Housing, Education, Treasury, Justice, and Transportation.

I will put a renewed emphasis on consultation with our allies and diplomacy with friends and foes -- I believe in having conversations with our enemies. The wisdom of Sun-tzu from almost 2,500 years ago is relevant today: keep your friends close and your enemies closer. All of us know that when we stop talking to a parent or a friend, it's impossible to accomplish anything, impossible to resolve differences and move the relationship forward. The same is true for countries.

9. What principles would your administration adhere to in the realm of energy, the environment and America's economic future? How would your administration relate those principles to the philosophy and issues described in your responses to questions #7 and #8 above?

Energy independence has become a national security issue, it is part of the war on terror. None of us would write a check to Osama bin Laden, slip it in a Hallmark card, and send it off to him.



But that's what we're doing every time we pull into a gas station. We're paying for both sides in the war on terror – our side with our tax dollars, the terrorists' side with our gas dollars. The first thing I will do as President is send Congress my comprehensive energy plan. We will achieve energy independence within ten years of my inauguration.

We have to explore, we have to conserve, and we have to pursue all avenues of alternative energy: nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, clean coal, biodiesel, and biomass.

While I want to reduce our dependence on oil, I especially want to reduce our dependence on *imported* oil as fully and quickly as possible. We need to get oil and gas from ANWR and our continental shelves. We need safe, clean, and economical nuclear power. I would provide loan guarantees to get our nuclear industry going again and ease the process for getting these plants licensed and built.

I support the increase in fuel economy standards to an average of 35 MPG by 2020, which the Senate passed, but the House did not consider. We need more flex-fuel cars that can run on biodiesel or on E85, which is 85% ethanol, and the pumps to serve them. Right now we have six million such vehicles, but only 2,000 pumps for those fuels in a country with 170,000 gas stations. We need more hybrids and more work on hydrogen cells.

I support the requirement that 15% of our electricity be generated by renewable energy by 2020, which the House passed, but the Senate did not. About half our states already have such renewable energy standards. I would expand these standards to provide for “alternative energy” rather than “renewable energy” because that would include all “clean” sources, letting us add clean coal and nuclear to the mix. That would keep prices down for consumers, be fair to parts of the country that, for example, don't have a lot of wind, and allow us to raise the standards to an even higher percentage and do it sooner.

I believe that we must be good stewards of the earth, and I support “cap and trade” of carbon emissions, but at a reasonable level that does not adversely impact our economy. I believe that some allowances should be given out and some should be auctioned off to ease the burden on businesses. I am opposed to a carbon tax and to the Kyoto treaty.

10. Describe your general strategy for accomplishing your objectives and goals for governing America.

I am a conservative, but I'm not angry at anybody. I believe that I would be able to work well with Congress to find the common ground that will take all of us to higher ground. The American people want action on the issues they discuss around the dinner table – issues that don't focus so much on left or right, but in lifting all of us up. I call this “vertical politics,” and having practiced it both as Governor and as Chairman of the National Governors Association, I am confident I can practice it as President. I also would communicate more effectively and more often to the American people, both in general and specifically about the war on terror. I don't believe the Administration has done an adequate job explaining the theology and ideology behind Islamic terror or convincing us of their ruthless fanaticism.