



Elizabeth Berry – Independent Candidate for U.S. Congress

Note: This is the initial release of my platform. Most likely I will adjust it over time in between now and March 7, 2012 when I begin to gather the required signatures to secure my name on the ballot for U.S. Congressional Representative from Texas 32 U.S. Congressional District.

Platform for US Congressional Representative 32 Congressional District of Texas

I will support and promote all legislation to end the wars and invest at home. Our troops have done everything that has been asked of them. It's time to bring them home to good jobs here. We are sending \$3 billion each week overseas that we should be investing to rebuild America.

- I support what 64% of Americans support who say that the war in Afghanistan is just not worth fighting.
- I support the bipartisan U.S. Conference of Mayors who passed a powerful resolution calling on the U.S. government to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and bring these war dollars home. Keeping one soldier in Afghanistan for a year costs us \$1million.
- More important, we have data now to prove that wars don't make us safer. In fact, they have made us less safe. As far back as 2005 the CIA's National Intelligence Council has been telling us that.

I will support and promote all legislation regarding the rebuilding of the crumbling infrastructure in the USA because we can't afford not to do so.

- More than 25% of bridges in the USA need significant repairs and most of them are handling more traffic than they were designed to carry. [Christian Science Monitor and U.S. Department of Transportation]
- By 2020 the nation's deteriorating surface transportation infrastructure will cost the American Economy more than 870,00 jobs and will suppress the growth of GDP by \$3.1 trillion [ASCE]

I will support and promote legislation that paves the way for investment in American businesses that can power our country with innovative technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines, electric cars, and next-generation batteries.

- Our dependence on energy sources from unstable foreign countries puts our national security at risk. [Scientific American]

I will support and promote legislation that strengthens the public school system in the United States. A high quality public school system is essential to Democracy and to the prosperity of our nation and its people.

- By 2025 the USA will need about 30 million more workers with at least some postsecondary education. The Center on Education and Workforce estimates that we will fall 8 million workers short without some serious changes to our current higher education and workforce training policies.

I will support Medicare for all. We can save trillions of dollars by joining every other industrialized country -- paying much less for health care while getting the same or better results.

- Medicare for all is the solution to out-of-control health care costs and better quality care. It is stronger and more sustainable than private insurance, and it treats everyone equally, regardless of age, health, or gender. [*Private insurers spend far more of our premium dollars on administrative costs, including profits, than Medicare – 6 to 15 times more today, and as much as six times more under the ACA. Campaign for America’s Future. It is a myth that private insurers are more efficient.*]

I will support the right for all Americans who work to be paid a living wage and to earn equal pay for equal work because it is good for the economy and for all Americans.

- We need to raise the bar on wages. We used to do better. If American’s wages had kept up with inflation, today’s workers would make \$10.38 an hour and over \$21,500 annually for full-time work. Instead, they earn just \$7.25 or \$15,000 a year. [Bureau of Labor Statistics]
- Contrary to conservative propoganda, raising the minimum wage does not result in job losses or slow rehiring. Increasing it now would give a boost to our stalled economy by putting more money in the hands of those who would spend it to support their families. [National Employment Law Project, Chicago Federal Reserve]

I support legislation that strengthens the rights for American workers to form unions. Unions are nothing more than lobbyists for everyday Americans. Corporations have over 17,000 Federal lobbyists representing them in DC. Without Unions, the American worker has no one.

- Forming a Union is an American right. More unions mean better work for everyone. You have unions to thank for your 40-hour work week whether you approve of them or not. Unions are the lobbyists for the everyday Americans. If corporations had their way, we would have corporate lobbyists representing them and no one representing the worker.

I will support all legislation designed to keep Social Security sound and strengthen its protections that Americans earn through their hard work. I support removing the cap on the Social Security tax so that upper-income people pay into Social Security on all they earn—just as the rest of us do.

- The modest benefits of Social Security are more important than ever. Traditional private pensions are disappearing. 401(k) plans are proving inadequate and unreliable. Furthermore, middle-class Americans have lost home equity and other wealth through Wall Street scams. Just ask the victims of Enron and Bernie Madoff to name a couple.

I will support all legislation designed to promote fairer tax rates. This includes ending the Bush era tax giveaways for the rich, which the rest of us or our children will have to pay for. I support legislation to outlaw corporate tax havens and tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas. Millionaires and billionaires take a growing share of our nation's wealth and they should be taxed accordingly.

- We lack the revenue to pay for the vital public systems and structures that we all benefit from. Federal revenue is at its lowest level since 1950. The myth of taxes “spiraling out of control” is just that—a myth. [CBPP]
- Our tax system rewards wealth over work. Income from Wall Street—capital gains (selling stocks, real estate and other investments) and dividends (earnings from stocks) is taxed at just 15% while income from work is taxed at a top rate of 35%. [UFE]
- Tax changes, loopholes and havens have shifted taxes off corporations and onto middle-class and small businesses. The share of revenue from the corporate income tax has been slashed in half over the last 60 years [TPC] Billion-dollar corporations like Verizon, Bank of America, Exxon and General Electric pay zero or shamefully low taxes. [IPS]

I support clean fair elections. I will support any legislation to ban anonymous political influence and support publicly financed elections. Corporations should have no rights as people when it comes to our elections.

I support comprehensive immigration reform to strengthen our economy, national security and to renew the American Dream. I support the Dream Act.

I support the right of all consenting adults to legally marry the partner of their choice; furthermore, in a Democracy, as long as the choice is a consenting adult, no American should be forced into silence regarding their true nature.