

Why I like Mike – Raymond Rodrigues

The 2008 presidential primary is the most open primary in my lifetime. As we head into our Florida primary and then Super Tuesday, no candidate has achieved even 40% in a primary or caucus to date, nor has any candidate won more than one contested primary or caucus. As we prepare to vote, I would like to share some reasons why I will vote for Mike Huckabee to be the Republican nominee for president.

The first reason why I like Mike is that I respect his experience as a state governor. The Republican Party has only elected one Washington insider as President since Herbert Hoover in 1928. That one, George Herbert Walker Bush had the singular experience of serving as the Vice-President to Ronald Reagan, the best President of the last century. Reagan's coattails had as much to contribute to that election as Bush 41's experience. Clearly voters do not view Washington insiders as equipped to serve as the executive of the U.S. government. Just like Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, Mike Huckabee has prepared himself for this position by successfully governing a state. During his tenure, both Time and Governing Magazine recognized him as one of the top governors in American. He was elected by his peers to serve as the Chairman of the National Governors' Association. This valuable experience away from Washington is one of the reasons that Mike earned the endorsement of Senator Dan Webster, the Republican Majority Leader of the Florida state senate and former Speaker of the Florida state house. Like Senator Webster, I also believe his experience away from Washington will prove attractive when contrasted with the Democrat's nominee of a Washington insider.

The second reason why I like Mike is that of the Republican candidates, who are not Washington insiders, he is the only one who has consistently valued the sanctity of life. When one looks at the 2000 and 2004 elections, the Republican Party won because "value voters" turned out in force. The sanctity of life is the top issue for these voters. If we are to have any chance to win again in 2008, then we need a candidate who has consistently supported this principle (and official plank of the Republican platform) to energize these "value voters" to turn out again. If the base stays home, then we are looking at a repeat of 1996, when we failed to defeat a scandal-riddled Clinton because our nominee did not energize our "value voters." This strong support for the value of every human life is one of the reasons that the Republican Speaker of the Florida state house, Marco Rubio has endorsed Mike. Like Speaker Rubio, I believe it is important to nominate a candidate who will energize our Republican base. This election is too important to run the chance of losing to another Clinton because our base stayed home.

The third reason why I like Mike is because he is the only candidate who is right on the tax issue. Our current IRS and tax code is broken beyond repair. Did you know that the Internal Revenue Code is 16,845 pages and contains over 7 million words? To put that in perspective, the Bible is only 1,290 pages and 774,746 words. The administration of payroll taxes is an albatross around the neck of small businesses. Mike Huckabee is the only candidate who proposes abolishing the IRS and implementing the FAIR tax. This would move our taxation system from one based on how much you earn, to one based on how much you consume. This would end the largest bureaucracy in our government and stop penalizing Americans for productivity. This sales tax system is used on the state level by both Florida and Texas and has proven to work effectively. It's time to make our federal government smaller and the IRS is the place to start.

The final reason why I like Mike is because he has the most comprehensive immigration plan. Huckabee's plan would build a border fence, require illegal immigrants in the country to return to their country of origin before trying to return, and increase fines on employers who hire illegal immigrants. This strong stance against illegal immigration is why Mike Huckabee is the only candidate to earn the endorsement of Jim Gilchrist, the founder of the Minuteman Project, the group that has been roaming our borders for the last several years operating effectively as an independent border patrol. Mike Huckabee recognizes that illegal immigration has reached the level of a national emergency and will take the necessary steps to secure our borders.

Mike Huckabee's experience as a successful governor, unwavering commitment to the value of every of life, visionary approach to lowering taxes and strong stand against illegal immigration make him my choice to be the Republican nominee for President.