



Carson and Kasich: Time to go home

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It's time for Dr. Ben Carson and Gov. John Kasich to leave the race for president of the United States. The high-speed train for the 2016 GOP nomination has left the station, and these two aren't on it.

In the case of Carson, it pains me to say it. I was among the thousands of people who urged him to run. In fact, I still have a Carson bumper sticker on my car that has yellowed with age. My husband and I have donated more to his campaign than we have to any other candidate.

Carson maintains that he is staying in the race because his supporters don't want him to drop out. Well, take my name off the list. It's not because I don't believe that he would make the best president, perhaps the best we've ever had. His goals for this nation are deeply held and well thought out, not like the current front-runner, who seems to be making them up as he goes along and, yes, feels free to change his mind on any given issue on a moment's notice.

I want Dr. Carson to drop out because his message is important, and I don't want it to be lost in a sea of inevitability. Dr. Carson is a brilliant person. He knows that in this stepped-up primary process (some say rigged) he is not going to win.

Let's face it: The public has a short attention span, and voters are angry. They are tired of being sold down the river by their elected representatives. They are tired of shouting at the TV, and they are ready to support someone who shouts back, even if it is often done in a tasteless manner.

If Carson leaves the race now, he doesn't have to leave the stage. He has an important message and will have the opportunity to carry it forward. If he leaves the race now, he will have greater influence over the eventual nominee and can build for the future. If he keeps on at this point, it will cast doubt on his judgment.

The next president would do well to tap Dr. Carson to head the Department of Health and Human Services and give him the responsibility of rebuilding our broken welfare system and replacing Obamacare. He would have the bully pulpit necessary to get that accomplished.

It is also time for John Kasich to get out and work to unite the party around the eventual nominee. Kasich believes, as the last governor standing, that voters eventually will come to their senses.

On the surface, his record in Ohio is impressive. He is fond of telling us that during his time in office, the state went from an \$8 billion (more like \$6 billion) deficit to a \$2 billion surplus – and he cut taxes \$5 billion. In addition, his state has fewer employees and has slowed Medicaid growth.

However, the Cato Institute, a free-market think tank that produces a biennial scorecard on the nation's governors, gave Kasich a "B" in 2012 and a "D" in 2014. What gives?

Cato reports that state spending under Kasich from 2012 to 2015 increased a whopping 18 percent.

He simply used federal dollars for transportation, education and Medicaid to hide the overall growth. That's why he earned the worst score of any Republican governor.

Also, a white paper on Kasich from Club for Growth points out that the governor's record is a lot better than it would have been if he hadn't been stopped on numerous occasions from going overboard on taxes by a Republican legislature.

Kasich also brags about being the architect of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 while head of the House Budget Committee. True, but hidden in that budget deal was the No. 1 goal of the Clinton administration: the S-Chip program, which now provides government health insurance to children in a family of four making up to \$95,400 per year. Hillarycare had been soundly rejected by the voters, but after that defeat, Kasich let what amounted to this camel's nose under the tent, through his backdoor.

Kasich is also fond of telling us the BBA led to surpluses for the next four years. Also true, but those surpluses were not a result of a decrease in spending, but of the growth that occurred after the capital gains tax cut.

Kasich has not been challenged on his record, but should he begin making headway in the swing states, he most assuredly will be.