



The Barr Code (<http://blogs.ajc.com/bob-barr-blog>)

## Lone Star Governor May Become All-Star Candidate

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Anyone who watched the Republican presidential debate last Monday evening understands why there clearly is room for at least one more candidate – someone who is a proven conservative who can appeal to both the establishment GOP and to Tea Party activists. That potential candidate just might hail from the very same state that gave the country its last Republican president, the conservative-in-name-only (“CINO”) George W. Bush.

Already, the GOP has several candidates; each appealing to a particular segment or segments of the Party. Ron Paul clearly appeals to the libertarian wing. Former Gov. Mitt Romney’s obvious appeal is to the Republican establishment. Congresswoman Michele Bachmann excites the Tea Party faction. Rick Santorum is a darling of evangelical Right-to-Lifers. Businessman Herman Cain has a small, but perhaps growing following among Tea Partiers. Former Gov. Tim Pawlenty enjoys support scattered among establishment types and some Tea Party activists; but is not yet a comfortable fit in either camp. Finally, there is former Speaker Newt Gingrich, fighting desperately for recognition as the Thinking Man’s Republican candidate.

Former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman will announce his candidacy tomorrow; but other than perhaps posing challenging Romney as the most handsome male candidate, it is unclear exactly where he will find a strong base of support in the GOP. Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, who should be on the stage challenging Paul for the libertarian-leaning voters within the GOP, was unfairly not invited to the debate.

Still on the sidelines is Sarah Palin, who has a proven ability to excite both the Tea Party wing of the GOP and many grass roots Republican activists (but not necessarily the establishment crowd). The longer she waits to decide to become a candidate, however, the less she will be able to translate that personal appeal into primary voters (who increasingly will be sopped up by declared candidates).

Enter Rick Perry, the sitting Governor of Texas; who, with his rugged good looks and even more impressive record as chief executive of the country’s second most populace state, could pose the most serious challenge yet to every other Republican candidate. Unlike other Republican candidates, Perry’s appeal would be both wide *and* deep.

His conservative-libertarian credentials are well-known; as reflected, for example, is his having received high marks from both the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute, and from the establishment *Wall Street Journal*.

Perry has been vocal on the need to restore the Bill of Right’s Tenth Amendment, which is designed to protect state sovereignty on issues not expressly tasked to the federal government. He is on record in favor of repealing the income-tax-authorizing Sixteenth Amendment; and his record of support for the Second Amendment is outstanding.

Even more important than Perry’s philosophical credentials, are the very tangible fiscal accomplishments to which he legitimately can claim credit. From June 2009 to April this year, while states from California to Georgia have suffered high unemployment and significant job losses, some 265,300 jobs have been *added* to Texas’ employment rolls; accounting for “45% of net U.S. job creation” in that period, according to the *Wall Street*

*Journal.*

This impressive fiscal and job-creation scenario has not happened by chance. As Richard Fisher, chairman of the Dallas Federal Reserve, noted, Texas' success can be attributed to "reject[ing] the economic model that now prevails in Washington." What better platform for a head-to-head with President Barack Obama?

Rick Perry just may be the GOP's right man in the right place – and for the right reasons. His actual record offers hope that were he to run and be successful in challenging Obama in November 2012, he would be a far better president than the last one hailing from Texas. Rick Perry clearly is not a CINO.

by Bob Barr — The Barr Code

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