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Subject: TFRO Chairman Bill Calhoun Endorses Woodfill For RPT Chairman
Date: March 3, 2015 at 5:07 PM
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TFRO Chairman Bill Calhoun Endorses Woodfill for RPT Chairman

From the Desk of Bill Calhoun



I've often heard outgoing SREC Chairman Steve Munisteri say, *"If we believe so strongly in our values, then we have a moral imperative to carry them to every voter who normally doesn't vote for us."*

Steve repeated this statement before the attendees at our **Fall 2014 Voters For Prosperity (VFP) Summit** and the audience applauded with approval. One person came up to me afterwards and said, *"Why can't we get more Republican elected officials to go out with us and repeat that same message? If we did, we could persuade a lot more black voters to vote for our candidates."* I replied, "I'm working on it." I suspect she expressed the feelings of many in the audience that day.

As a voting member of the SREC, you are about to help elect the next RPT Chairman. There are 4 candidates running and I know each of them--they're all good men. Regardless of who wins, as *Texas Federation for Republican Outreach* Chairman, I will follow his lead. However, there is one candidate that I know better than the others--Jared Woodfill.

Since TFRO is headquartered in Harris County and Jared was the chairman of the Harris County Republican Party for 12 years, it was a privilege to work with him during his entire tenure.

What he discovered was the unique way in which TFRO identified African American Republican voters in order to recruit members to build a club, or run for Precinct Chairman. He understood that our process was more difficult than that of other auxiliaries.

TFRO cannot use a "first name", or a "last name", or age, nor gender to ID voters even though all of these fields are available in the public voter file. Instead, to ID black voters and engage them requires some unique steps. The "race" of a voter is not a part of the Texas voter file; however, it is included in many other states.

Conducting outreach at a church where 50% of the attendees may not be registered, and 95% or more of those who are registered did not vote in our primary, is inefficient and ineffective. Ditto for Urban League events, NAACP events, and the events of most of the social and civic organizations.

This is not to imply that elected officials or candidates should skip these events--they should not. However, **micro-targeting** is the best and most efficient way to conduct outreach to black voters when it comes to party-building. It is no different with any other demographic group.

We purchase consumer lists that identify the race of the consumer. We also purchase voter registration/voter history lists from various counties. Then, we pay a database consultant to cross-reference the consumer list with each county's voter registration/voter history list to produce a quality database. This process must be repeated every 2 years in order to keep this organized collection of data current.

TFRO implemented this process to ID, engage, and recruit dozens of black voters who became Precinct Chairs in Harris County. We were successful because of Jared Woodfill's vision and support.

But, identifying Republican voters is just the first part of the process. After finding the Republican voter, we use telephone canvassing to ID General Election voters in order to determine who may be persuaded to vote in a subsequent Republican Primary.

The next RPT Chairman will hire a **Director of African American Engagement**. The real value of having a database of African American Republicans and Independent "persuadables" is its potential to make "field engagement" so much more effective.

That is why I support making "Victory" an ongoing operation between elections. However, I believe funding for African American outreach should be reviewed to either provide for a robust "field team" in specific precincts, or eliminate the director position and place all resources in the field.

TFRO did a good job of developing a database, but we lacked the resources to do the entire "engagement" part. Over the years, I have shared these ideas with several party chairs at various levels, but only 2 committed to supporting our goal of building a database of voters with whom the party could engage. Those 2 chairmen were Steve Munisteri and Jared Woodfill.

With their support, we built the database and turned it over to the RPT with more than 200,000 voters. Because of the commitment of these 2 men, we were able to provide a list of voters to Rep. James White in his first race in 2012 where he defeated a long-time Democrat incumbent in East Texas.

It is very easy to create plans, write a vision, and mission statement. But, it is something completely different to take action, especially when that action is unpopular to some.

Both Steve and Jared took flak for supporting outreach to African American voters, not because the critics were racists, but because the critics did not believe a "black voter group" was needed to win. The critics were right. Most consultants will tell you that black voters are not necessary to win races in most Republican districts, or in a red state. Yet, the Anglo vote as a percentage of the whole, drops by an average of 4 percentage points each presidential election. We conduct outreach not to win elections now, but to win them in the future.

All of the candidates are honorable men and each has special gifts. Our party is blessed to have them as leaders. However, in this life, we have to make choices and now, we have to choose the best person to lead our party over the next couple of years where growth among non-traditional Republican voters will be crucial. I believe Jared Woodfill is uniquely-qualified for the task and is equally-qualified in other critical areas.

Therefore, I humbly request that you support Jared Woodfill as the next Chairman of the Republican Party of Texas.

With gratitude for your service and consideration,

Bill Calhoun

Bill Calhoun
TFRO Chairman
Ex-Officio Member, SREC

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Message From Jared Woodfill
To inform on conservative issues and activism in Houston, Harris County and Texas
Pd pol ad by The Elect Jared Woodfill Campaign - Larry Hicks Treasurer

We're sending this message using the address: djennings@gmail.com

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