

1: Issues - MJ for Texas

Every day people are throwing away tons of single-use cups, containers and other plastic "stuff." Among the worst forms of plastic pollution is polystyrene foam (the stuff most of us call Styrofoam), which never fully degrades.

Elimination of Property Taxes If you have to pay taxes on property that you own, then you really do not truly own this property: Money that goes to the State in the form of property taxes is money that the Texas economy, as a whole, loses. I advocate dramatic property tax reform in the State of Texas.

Industrial Hemp, Medical Cannabis, and Recreational Cannabis No one should ever go to jail or be sentenced to prison over a plant. Those already incarcerated for non-violent drug offenses should be released immediately. Individuals have the right to voluntarily self-medicate as they see fit. The modern consensus is out for cannabis and I believe the data now speaks for itself. Legal cannabis will soon be one of the best tools we have in order to deal with the looming opioid crisis. It is time for Texas to bring back a crop that was once freely allowed without issue. Archaic restrictions on cannabis in Texas amount to the willing theft of an economic boom that other states like Colorado and Washington have enjoyed. Opening the market for hemp will allow new technologies to flourish: Current laws on firearms and weapons only fail the people when not implemented properly. It is time we move from a licensed open carry model to a guaranteed constitutional carry model.

Oil, Gas, Mineral and Water Rights Landowners must always have the option to recapture any water, mineral, oil, or gas rights associated with their land that they may have lost due to previous transactions at present market value.

Judicial Reform and the Death Penalty The death penalty is a savage punishment and it has no place in a civilized society. Due to the appeals process required by the Constitution, it costs taxpayers more money to put someone to death than it does to incarcerate them for the remainder of their life. I advocate for fully-informed juries and I support jury nullification of any laws that a jury deems to be unethical or unconstitutional.

Education Reform Teachers and parents have the best grasp of what our students need. I plan on working statewide with educators and the Texas PTA to address many issues, such as the role of standardized testing within our education system. I will address modern educational concerns, such as funding by looking at private initiatives, and school safety by emphasizing teacher defense.

Prison Reform The current drive to increase our prison population is contradictory to the nature of a free society. Instead, we should be reducing our prison populations to alleviate funding and personnel stresses on prison managers and constables. The quickest and easiest way to do this is to pardon non-violent drug offenders. Just that act alone will alleviate many problems related to finance and space, leaving prison exclusively and rightfully to the violent criminal.

Reforming Police We should foster a new admiration for our police officers by encouraging an environment in which every honorable person can respect the police and their commitment to protect life, liberty, and property. Texas police should not be pursuing non-violent users of drugs, whether the intended purpose of a drug is medicinal or recreational. Police officers should also not spend large amounts of time pursuing traffic offenses or moving violations which are effectively money-making schemes for the state of Texas and have little to do with public safety. Better situational training of officers can help prevent police abuses and violence against people or animals.

Decriminalization of Sex Work Sex work is work. We cannot possibly hope to legislate what someone does with their own body even if we disagree with their choices nor should we wish to. The present illegality of sex work has created an underground market that only propagates human trafficking and other hazards for sex workers.

Immigration Reform As a border state, Texas has the right to decide how it interacts with its neighbors and this certainly includes Mexico. In my view, Texas should have a healthy relationship with its neighbor. We are overdue for vital reforms between ourselves and Mexico. In terms of policy, it should be easier for Mexican citizens to come to Texas as workers. Those who are already here should be respected and allowed to live and work in peace. I believe that parents and guardians are the ones who are best suited to determine how their child is raised.

Legalize Gambling Drive a mile outside of the Texas border within the U. The State of Texas is losing millions in potential tax revenue and stifling a more prosperous economy in general by disallowing gambling on our territory. I believe there is plenty of room in Texas to allow horse racing, casinos, sports betting, and other

peaceful games and activities. Repeal Blue Laws Blue laws restrict commerce by disallowing transactions to proceed during certain days of the week. In particular, alcohol is available for sale six out of seven days of the week in some areas of the state yet many patrons wish to purchase beer, wine, or spirits on one of their two weekend days off. We should repeal blue laws wherever we can to aid our weekend economy and encourage more freedom for Texans.

2: Texas Politicians on the Issues

Tired of media reports of fundraising and poll results instead of policy issues? At Issues.org, you can see the view of every candidate on every issue.

The Austin Dam, was the first hydroelectric dam in Texas and was constructed in 1906. In 1907, the dam failed suddenly after a heavy rainstorm. Prints and Photographs Collection. Water has been a cherished, regulated resource in Texas since the San Antonio area was first settled by the Spanish. Spanish law determined that the rights to surface water from creeks, rivers, and lakes belonged to the landowners adjacent to a body of water; landowners were riparian and had the right to determine how that water was used. The climate and geography of Texas present government with more than a water management challenge. The endless cycle of relentless drought and devastating flood sets Texas apart and creates unique issues for law and public policy. Water law in Texas began early in Texas history, when the San Antonio area was first settled by the Spanish. Spanish law determined that the rights to surface water from creeks, rivers, and lakes were riparian: This doctrine remained essentially unchanged even after Texas independence and statehood. However, the Texas Supreme Court noted as early as 1845 that riparian doctrine was unsuitable as settlement moved into the arid regions of West Texas and the Panhandle. Beginning in the 1880s, Texas began to implement a legal doctrine known as prior appropriation. Simply put, prior appropriation means that the state issues water rights for surface water with multiple stakeholders. Rights may be assigned according to seniority among the permit holders, or allocated according to a complex formula between residential, industrial, and agricultural users. In 1967, the legislature created the Texas Water Commission now the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to oversee water appropriations. Prior appropriation was implemented incrementally over many decades, and conflicts between permit holders and those with existing riparian rights were a source of numerous court cases well into the 1980s. The legal complexities add to the challenge of managing this resource necessary for life and commerce, especially in times of extreme scarcity, when the water rights allocated to a particular stream exceed the amount of water available. These photos tell the story of the flooding of Old Guerrero as well as its reemergence beginning in the 1980s, when drought and increased demand for water downstream led to falling levels at Falcon Lake. Due to ongoing violence between rival drug cartels, travelers are advised to use extreme caution if traveling to the Falcon Lake area at this time. The dam was only the second hydroelectric dam constructed in Texas and was constructed to furnish power and irrigation for three rice farms. The dam and the powerhouse shown on the right burned in 1957. Completed in 1906, Buchanan Dam is an architectural rarity. At two miles it is the longest multi-arch dam in the nation.

3: Issues | Texas Values

June University of Texas/Texas Tribune Poll The latest installment of the University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll has been released. Check out the latest poll page for access to graphics for all the items on the poll.

Background[edit] Legal punishments for sodomy often included heavy fines, life prison sentences, or both, with some states, beginning with Illinois in 1830, denying other rights, such as suffrage, to anyone convicted of the crime of sodomy. In 1987, the Supreme Court struck down a law barring the use of contraceptives by married couples. In 1992, the Supreme Court expanded the scope of sexual privacy rights to unmarried persons. In 1986, the Supreme Court heard a constitutional challenge to sodomy laws brought by a man who had been arrested, but was not prosecuted, for engaging in oral sex with another man in his home. Justice Blackmun, writing in dissent, argued that Eisenstadt held that the Constitution protects people as individuals, not as family units. Lawrence and Garner had a tempestuous on-again off-again romantic relationship since 1991. Lacking transportation home, the couple were preparing to spend the night. Garner, who had been drinking heavily, left to purchase a soda from a nearby vending machine. They entered the unlocked apartment toward 11 p. In accordance with police procedures, the first to arrive, Joseph Quinn, took the lead both in approaching the scene and later in determining what charges to bring. He later reported seeing Lawrence and Garner having anal sex in the bedroom. A second officer reported seeing them engaged in oral sex, and two others did not report seeing the pair having sex. Lawrence repeatedly challenged the police for entering his home. Quinn had discretionary authority to charge them for a variety of offenses and to determine whether to arrest them. When Quinn considered charging them with having sex in violation of state law, he had to get an Assistant District Attorney to check the statutes to be certain they covered sexual activity inside a residence. In the separate arrest reports he filed for each, he wrote that he had seen the arrestee "engaged in deviate sexual conduct namely, anal sex, with another man". At a hearing the next day, they pleaded not guilty to a charge of "homosexual conduct". They were released toward midnight. Lawrence was sentenced to 30 days in jail but released early. When the defense attorneys realized that the fine was below the minimum required to permit them to appeal the convictions, they asked the judge to impose a higher penalty. Their attorneys asked the court to dismiss the charges against them on Fourteenth Amendment equal protection grounds, claiming that the law was unconstitutional since it prohibited sodomy between same-sex couples, but not between heterosexual couples. Lawrence found no privacy protection for consensual sex between homosexuals was "wrongly decided". The defendants again pleaded "no contest". Justice and Chief Justice Paul Murphy found that the law violated the Equal Rights Amendment to the Texas Constitution, which bars discrimination based on sex, race, color, creed, or national origin. Bill Delmore, the Harris County prosecutor who argued the case, called the judges "big chickens" and said: Lawrence should be overruled. On December 2, 1992, the Court agreed to hear the case. Lambda Legal coordinated the submission of sixteen amicus curiae briefs to complement their own brief. George [citation needed] while the remainder represented religious and social conservatism. Several, including that of Liberty Counsel, depicted homosexuals as self-destructive, disease-prone, and promiscuous. The states of Alabama, South Carolina, and Utah advised the Court that unlike heterosexual sodomy, homosexual sodomy had "severe physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual consequences". Smith, an experienced litigator who had argued eight cases before the Supreme Court, spoke on behalf of the plaintiffs. Rosenthal, District Attorney of Harris County, represented the state. The five-member majority opinion overruled Bowers v. Hardwick and implicitly invalidated similar sodomy statutes in 13 other states. The State cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime. It ought not to remain binding precedent. Lawrence should be and now is overruled. Kennedy said that the Constitution protects "personal decisions relating to marriage, procreation, contraception, family relationships, [and] child rearing" and that homosexuals "may seek autonomy for these purposes. The present case does not involve minors. It does not involve persons who might be injured or coerced or who are situated in relationships where consent might not easily be refused. It does not involve public conduct or prostitution. It does not involve whether the government must give formal recognition to any relationship that homosexual persons seek to

enter. Rather than including sexuality under protected liberty, she would strike down the law as violating the equal protection clause because it criminalized male-male but not male-female sodomy. Rehnquist and Justice Clarence Thomas joined. *Wade*, which some of the Justices in the majority in *Lawrence* had upheld in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. Scalia also criticized the majority opinion for failing to give the same respect to *stare decisis* that three of those in the majority had insisted on in *Casey*. Scalia wrote that if the court was not prepared to validate laws based on moral choices as it had done in *Bowers*, state laws against bigamy, same-sex marriage, adult incest, prostitution, masturbation, adultery, fornication, bestiality, and obscenity would not prove sustainable. Connecticut, but he voted to uphold it as he could find "no general right of privacy" or relevant liberty in the Constitution. He added that if he were a member of the Texas legislature he would vote to repeal the law. As governor, Bush had opposed repeal of the Texas sodomy provision, which he called a "symbolic gesture of traditional values". Board of Education of gay and lesbian America".

4: Water Issues | StateImpact Texas

Remember the Alamo! The following letter was published in the Washington Post: This is an open letter issued by John Kuhn, superintendent of the Perrin-Whitt Consolidated Independent School District.

In , the 3. On top of that, one of the worst wildfires in state history tore across the Panhandle this spring, just months before a monster hurricane ravaged the Gulf Coast. Many of the issues facing rural Texas tend to fly under the radar. They also tend to be slow-moving trends, stories that seep and creep. Some small Texas towns are doing just dandy, and not all rural areas suffer from the same plights. Access to medical care An empty room at the Bowie Memorial Hospital in January , two months after it shut its doors. Jen Reel In some parts of rural Texas – especially in spread-out West Texas and the Panhandle – access to even cursory health care can be hard to come by. Since , at least 18 rural hospitals in Texas have been shuttered, casualties of stingy Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement rates as well as the burden of serving uninsured patients. More hospitals might have to close their doors in if Congressional Republicans set their sights on gutting Medicaid and Medicare. This summer, hospitals in the East Texas towns of Crockett pop. This physician shortage is even more urgent when rural residents need specialized care, such as mental health treatment or prenatal services. Aging infrastructure A pothole in Texas. S Department of Agriculture helps some small communities get financing to build modern water treatment systems like this one in La Villa , but the burden of maintaining infrastructure in rural Texas is increasingly falling on local taxpayers, often an aging and shrinking group. Instead, his proposed budget contains massive cuts to rural development initiatives , including upgrades to the electric grid, bringing high-speed internet to sparsely populated areas and subsidies for housing projects. School funding and student homelessness The Loraine school is virtually the only public entity in Loraine providing services to homeless students. Christopher Collins As some rural tax bases shrink and state funding for education stagnates, some small school districts in Texas are struggling to stay open. Some rural schools also find themselves on the front lines of helping homeless students. A report released in November found that rural schools have some of the highest rates of student homelessness and have fewer services available for homeless youth. But beyond the bluebonnets and dirt roads lie some real environmental dangers. During the cotton harvest in the Panhandle, be on the lookout for unscrupulous crop duster pilots , who are known to release toxic chemicals in high winds, wafting them onto crops, animals and people. And in the Eagle Ford Shale, some residents have accepted the toxic emissions that accompany fracking as a fact of life. Even large chain restaurants sometimes struggle to survive; I saw this firsthand when I arrived a Dairy Queen in tiny Haskell one night this year to hear a state representative speak, only to find the restaurant had gone out of business that day. The talk was relocated to a local Tex-Mex eatery, one of the only restaurants left in town. In Haskell and countless other rural towns across the state, local economies revolve around agriculture , an increasingly high-risk and high-input endeavor. Forrest Wilder Hurricane Harvey turned Houston into a waterworld this year, but before it got there, the storm ravaged a rural swath of coastal Texas, decimating Rockport , Aransas Pass and other towns. Some agricultural producers feared livestock deaths and property damage could put them out of business. In March, one of the biggest wildfires in state history tore through a mind-boggling , acres and killed four people. The National Weather Service predicts the continuation of a stubborn drought in portions of northeast, Central and West Texas this winter, along with likely drought development across most of the state. Dearth of news coverage Hobbled by dwindling advertising revenue, newspapers in Texas and the rest of the country are struggling to turn a profit. Daily newspapers owned by Gannett in Abilene, San Angelo, Wichita Falls and Corpus Christi laid off reporters and photographers this year, leaving areas that were already sparsely covered by those organizations virtually untouched. This year, the Observer launched a project to report on rural Texas. If you live in rural Texas, or in an area where the city meets the country, I want to hear from you. Christopher Collins is an Observer staff writer covering rural Texas.

5: Issues – McKennon for Texas

But for years, the issue's been stymied in the Texas House by Democrats and by rural Republicans wary of hurting public schools that are the lifeblood of their small districts.

6: Home | Texas ISD

Texas news and current events from Dallas, Austin, Houston and more from Public News Service. Public News Service is an independent media provider of audio news stories.

7: Key Issues Facing Texas Lawmakers In Â« CBS Dallas / Fort Worth

Travelers to Texas should be aware of the state's environmental problems in order to travel responsibly. Oil spills and production, as well as polluted air and water quality, are some of the major.

8: Texas Environmental Problems | USA Today

MJ Hegar believes that one of the greatest threats to our democracy is the influence of powerful special interest groups on the political process.

9: Issues - Page 1

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