

George W. Bush launches campaign Gubernatorial candidate challenges Richards' effectiveness

The Associated Press

AUSTIN — Republican George W. Bush kicked off his gubernatorial campaign Monday with promises to change the status quo and a slap at Democratic Gov. Ann Richards.

Bush, 47, eldest son of the former president and managing partner of the Texas Rangers baseball team, said he was running because he's not happy with the direction Texas is taking.

"I worry Texas is changing and not for the better," he said, adding that he sees property taxes going up, the quality of Texas schools going down, crime threatening all Texans and government growing rapidly.

Bush, whose brother Jeb is running for governor of Florida, said Richards may be popular but she's not effective.

"Our leaders should be judged by results, not by entertaining personalities or clever sound bites," Bush said.

"What are the results?" he asked. "Since 1990, are our schools better? Is the (school) funding system fair, or even understandable? Are your streets safer? Are you happy with your property taxes? Do you feel Texas is getting the leadership it needs?"

Bush criticized what he said has been a 47 percent increase in state government. He said two-year state spending had risen from \$48 billion when Richards entered office to \$71 billion for 1994-95.

"That's four times as fast as the rate of inflation, nine times as fast as population growth, 11 times more than the average of the other 49 states, more than twice as fast as our paychecks grew, and more than 4 1/2 times as fast as our federal budget is projected to grow," he said.

Bush proposed a study to determine the costs of a solid, basic education and having the state pay for that. He called for abolition of the regulatory powers of the Texas Education Agency.

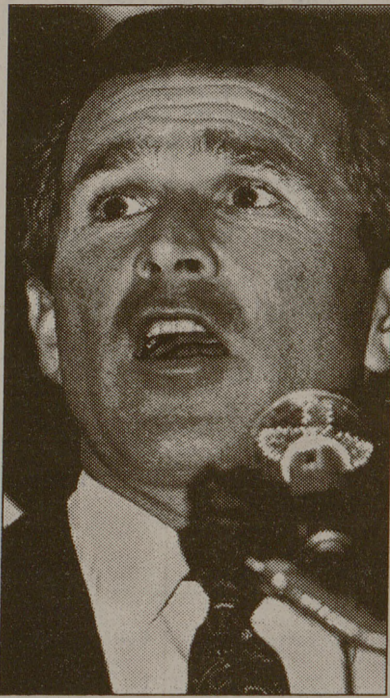
He urged no parole for sex offenders and said he favored making it illegal for anyone under age 18 to have a gun without adult supervision.

Responding, Richards' campaign said the governor has a solid record of meeting the state's needs and streamlining government bureaucracy.

"The growth that has taken place has been in those areas where the state was operating under federal and court mandates — prisons, health and human services, and mental health," said Chuck McDonald, a spokesman for Richards.

McDonald said Texas ranks 45th in the number of state employees per capita and state spending ranks 47th.

"I suspect Mr. Bush knows all this," McDonald said. "I suspect he is also aware that many of these federal mandates that have cost Texas so much money were enacted under the Republican administrations in Washington."



BATTALION file photo

George Walker Bush, eldest son of the former president, is seeking the Republican nomination for governor of Texas.

Flight attendants forced to move up strike date

The Associated Press

ARLINGTON — American Airlines' flight attendants' union Monday pushed up the date they will strike if they cannot come to new contract terms. The new deadline: Nov. 18, only nine days away and one week before Thanksgiving.

The 21,000-member Association of Professional Flight Attendants had been threatening to strike "on or before" Nov. 22 after a year of negotiations broke off between the union and the carrier Oct. 30.

The group already had been considering moving up the walkout. But union president Denise Hedges said the Federal Aviation Administration forced their hand by approving American's request to cut its flight attendant training time from seven weeks to eight days.

"We will not play a waiting game that allows the company time to train quickie replacements to carry out their threat to permanently replace us when we strike," Hedges said at an Arlington news conference.

Hedges alleged the shorter training period "jeopardizes the safety of the flying public," and said the union is lobbying the Clinton administration to change its mind on the eight-day course.

"This incredibly ill-timed and ill-advised decision also undermines our negotiations by strengthening the company's strike-breaking plans and compressing the time we have left to reach a settlement," she said.


Richard Mintz, spokesman for Transportation Secretary Federico Pena, said Pena is not considering reversing the training decision.

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