

Gov. Perry, Sanchez square off about vetoes, savings and loan

DALLAS (AP) — Republican Gov. Rick Perry and himself Thursday night repeatedly defended the healthcare and education bills he vetoed last year when he killed a record 82 pieces of legislation.

Democratic challenger Tony Sanchez, facing Perry in another televised debate, again had to justify his leadership of a failed Laredo savings and loan where suspected drug money was laundered in the 1980s.

Sanchez accused Perry of becoming "obsessed" with Tesoro Savings and Loan, which he closed in 1988, and said two federal agencies and two federal officials in the state were involved in the money laundering matter.

legislative session that would have reduced paperwork for school teachers. Educator groups have criticized that veto.

Perry said the bill would have taken away local control. He said he has been a supporter of teachers and noted that in 1999 when he was lieutenant governor, the Legislature passed a \$3,000 pay raise for teachers.

Sanchez emphasized that the two largest teachers organizations have endorsed him.

"He vetoed the (teacher paperwork) bill knowing full well that it's very important to them," Sanchez said. "That's another example of what he says is not what he does."

Perry denied that he didn't communicate well with the Texas Legislature last year after ascending to the governorship after George W. Bush resigned to become president.

"The vast majority of the cases where the vetoes occurred, there were signals sent. In some, very strong signals," Perry said.

In the savings and loan exchange, Perry said that Sanchez as leader of the savings and loan should have known that suitcases full of cash from Mexico were flowing into Tesoro in 1983 and 1984.

Perry pointed out that Tesoro's failure required a \$161 million federal bailout and questioned whether someone who doesn't know what's going on at his own bank should lead the state.

When asked about the impending state budget shortfall, estimated to be \$5 billion or more for the coming two-year cycle, neither candidate provided specific cuts they would advocate.

Both said they wanted to approach the budget problem without imposing new taxes.

It was the second and final televised debate between Perry and Sanchez.

Sanchez, a multimillionaire who has never held elected office, is hoping to sway undecided voters in his effort to oust political veteran Perry and become the state's first Hispanic governor.

The two clashed in their first debate Oct. 9 in Houston.

A poll by *The Dallas Morning News* released last weekend showed Perry favored by 50 percent of likely voters surveyed. Sanchez was backed by 35 percent, and 14 percent were undecided. The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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— Tony Sanchez
Democratic gubernatorial candidate

This is something that took 20 years ago or more. I have an opponent who has become obsessed with this issue, and he's very deceptive and untruthful about the facts," Sanchez said.

Sanchez criticized Perry for vetoing a Medicaid restructuring bill that proponents say would have brought more than \$400 million in federal dollars into the state over five years.

He also said Perry should not have killed a "prompt pay" bill that would have required insurance companies to pay claims to doctors quickly.

"We can't continue to go on like this," Sanchez said, noting that some doctors are leaving the field for financial reasons. "We should be very worried that doctors are closing their offices."

Perry said he vetoed the Medicaid restructuring bill because it called for "overly cumbersome" restructuring at the state Department of Health and Human Services. He said even without the bill, he has managed to find money for the state to fund breast and cervical cancer treatment programs.

The wide-ranging Medicaid restructuring bill Perry vetoed contained several proposals, including a women's health care program that would have allowed the state to get \$9 in federal money for every state dollar spent on prevention of diseases such as breast and cervical cancer.

Some conservatives opposed the program because it included birth control, although Perry said he didn't bring that up Thursday night.

Perry defended his veto of a bill after the 2001

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.74	G	VS ₂	2850 ⁰⁰	.61	G	VS ₁	1450 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
.73	E	SI ₂	2625 ⁰⁰	.61	H	VS ₁	1325 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
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.71	K	I ₁	950 ⁰⁰	.60	G	VS ₁	1375 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
.71	H	SI ₁	2450 ⁰⁰	.59	G	VS ₁	1500 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
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.64	E	VVS ₁	2700 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.	.57	G	VS ₁	1285 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
.64	G	VS ₁	2850 ⁰⁰	.56	D	VS ₁	1680 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
.59	I	SI ₃	950 ⁰⁰	.56	H	VS ₂	1250 ⁰⁰ EGL Cert.
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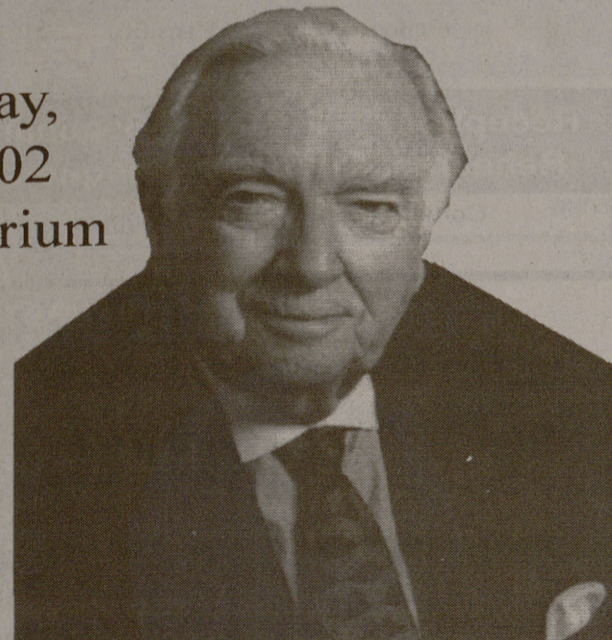
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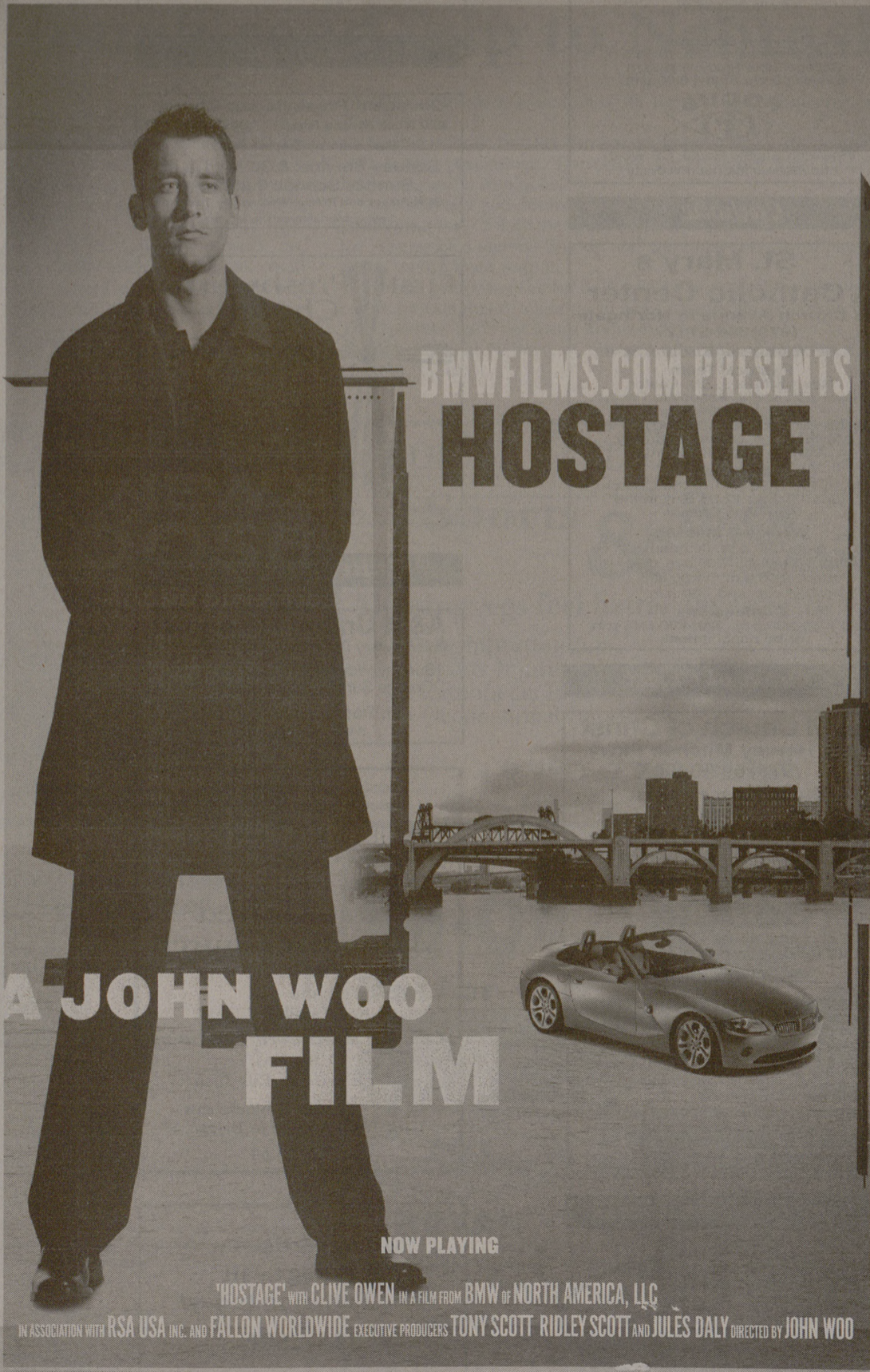
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