

COMMENTS OF U.S. SENATOR PHIL GRAMM (R- TEXAS)
AT TPPF'S 11TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER, APRIL 28, 2000
(An excerpt)

The Texas Public Policy Foundation is important because ideas are important. Whenever in Washington, DC somebody says "I have an idea," (and I always try to be that person), I step back and take a deep breath because I know something very good or very bad is about to happen. As a famous old economist once said, ideas, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are far more important than is commonly understood. Mad men in authority who hear voices in the air are the slaves of some defunct economist. You'd think that Austin and Washington are places where politics reign; but if you do, you are wrong.

They are places where ideas reign. Ideas, not vested interests, determine the outcome of public policy debates because ideas determine vested interests.

The Republican Party dominated America in the 1980s because we dominated the political and economic thinking of America in the 1970s. Our ideas are dominating state government in Texas today because in the 1990s, we dominated political and economic thinking about state government. If we are going to dominate the future, we must dominate in the debate for ideas, and that's why what you are doing is so important.