

# **CALIFORNIA: THE VIEW FROM TEXAS**



Chuck-DeVore) by CHUCK DEVORE (/COLUMNISTS/CHUCK-DEVORE) 7 Apr 2014 190 POST A COMMENT (/BREITBART-CALIFORNIA/2014/04/07/CALIFO DREAMING-TEXAS-CHUCK-DEVORE#COMMENTS)

America's biggest state is now getting its own Breitbart page. Or is it its second, counting Big Hollywood? Or its third, given Big Government's content? If California is to make its way back to more liberty and less government--and America needs her to find her way back--then a Breitbart site dedicated to this proposition is a requisite.

As part of this inaugural effort, I was asked to pen a California refugee's perspective.

Our family moved to Texas in December 2011. Moving 1,300 miles wasn't a lightly-taken decision. Other than a couple of years working for President Ronald Reagan in the Pentagon, I spent my adult life in California. I moved from Washington State to the Eastern High Sierra in 1976 to attend high school in Mammoth Lakes, went to Cal State Fullerton and graduated from Claremont McKenna College, got married, and began a lucrative career in aerospace.

During six years' service in the California State Assembly, I voted "no" a lot more frequently than my 119 colleagues as I opposed the relentless expansion of government in California's capital. I suppose I should have seen the move to Texas coming, given the regularity with which I made reference to Texas on the Assembly floor as a model for California to emulate.

While running for the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate in 2010 I traveled 100,000 miles up and down the Golden State, from Redding to El Centro, and Bishop to Lakeport and points in between. I'll never forget the rally in Modesto's Tenth Street Plaza on April 15, 2010 when I recited the Declaration of Independence's preamble, "We hold these truths to be self-evident ... " and was stunned to hear the crowd speak it too; showing that the "ancient faith (http://www.nps.gov/liho/historyculture/peoriaspeech.htm)," as Abraham Lincoln called it, still beat strong in the hearts of Middle America. (I quipped that there must have been a bunch of homeschoolers in the audience for this to happen; the laughter from several parents and children, out in public during school hours, confirmed it.)

The campaign had its inspirational moments, but I also saw depressed communities, suffering under crushing unemployment and stifling regulations. The other California--the one more than an hour away from the cool waters of the Pacific--was deeply distressed then and remains so today. It is this other California that demands to be considered as pols and pundits rightly lavish praise on Google, Facebook, eBay and THE NEXT BIG THING. California isn't just a coastal strip where the beautiful people live, and the titans of information accumulate billions in net worth.

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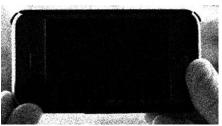
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In November 2010 the (then) six-year limit on my term in the State Assembly ran out. At the same time, my wife and I took in her parents. Our house in Irvine, adequate for two adults and two children, became crowded. Taking a flight of stairs to reach a full bath was especially problematic. I looked into returning to aerospace, but the last of the big headquarters where I performed most of my work had decamped to greener, less taxing pastures. Working in my old profession would mean living out of a suitcase in places like Virginia and Florida.

It was then that a former staffer, a native Texan, suggested I look into applying to work at the <u>Texas Public Policy Foundation (http://www.texaspolicy.com/)</u>, America's largest state-level free market think tank. I <u>wrote a book (http://www.amazon.com/Texas-Model-Prosperity-Lessons-America/dp/1494859033/ref=la\_B007RXT310\_1\_3?</u> <u>s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1395674259&sr=1-3</u>) for them, the research for which became my due diligence, and months later we moved to the Texas Hill Country between Austin and San Antonio. Half of my neighbors are former Californians. Best of all, I'm able to pursue my passion: advocating for policies that promote liberty and its fruit, prosperity-and do so while living in a house that's 70 percent larger, has a full bath downstairs for my in-laws, and costs \$110,000 less than our old California home.

I've come to a greater appreciation about California's many paradoxes after living for two years and four months in the Lone Star State:

- California is beautiful, but that beauty comes at a cost in earthquakes and air pollution. Earthquakes help make the mountains, but the mountains and the cold Pacific waters conspire to create pollution-trapping inversion layers such that the U.S. EPA notes California as having 19 of the 25 worst metro areas for either particulate or ozone pollution in 2012 compared to only 3 in Texas.
- That California's taxes are so high that it collected 52 percent more as a share of income in taxes at the state and local level than did Texas in 2011; further, that if California completely eliminated either its income tax or its sales tax, it would still tax more income than does Texas.
- Tax a lot, spend a lot: as a share of the private economy, California spent 48 percent more than did Texas at the state and local level in 2013.
- California has America's greatest concentration of poverty, with some 23.8 percent of the population considered poor by a new <u>U.S. Census Bureau calculation</u> (<u>http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-247.pdf</u>) that takes into account the value of government benefits such as Medicaid and food assistance as well as taxes and the cost of living. This compares to 16.4 percent in Texas and means that proportionately, there are 45 percent more Californians living in poverty than there are Texans.
- As for welfare, California dominates the nation, with 33.2 percent of the national Temporary Assistance for Needy Families caseload in 2013. By comparison, 12 percent of Americans live in California.
- The role of unions is vastly different in the two biggest states: in California, they dominate; in Texas, a Right-to-Work state, they play a more modest part.
- California's renewable energy policies have led to higher electricity prices: <u>California's</u> electricity prices were 45 percent higher than the national average on 2013 (http://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/current\_year/february2014.pdf), up from 38 percent higher in 2012; Texas' electricity prices were 13 percent below the national average in 2013. Former State Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) was a big booster of the policies that have driven California's electricity costs higher, saving at a Santa Cruz town hall in 2009 that his renewable bills would: "clean the air" "deal with the issue of global warming right now in a serious way" "we can diversify our energy portfolio so that we're not at risk the way we were back in 2001" "and those green jobs that everyone keeps talking about, they can come to California ... " (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCDXYVtI9iU). In 2000, California's retail electricity was 26 percent more costly than the U.S. average (http://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/archive/pdf/02260103.pdf)--but the highend residents of Santa Cruz and Palo Alto who live in a mild climate don't much care about electricity bills or their effect on factory workers in Stockton. Ironically, back in 2002, California imported 23 percent of its electricity, now, after years of renewable "diversification," California imports 30 percent of its electricity.
- The cost of living in California is a big deal, and not all of it is driven by California's good weather, rather, restrictive zoning, development fees, taxes and other regulations add up to 60% to the cost of housing which, in turn, affects the cost of living. In 2013, California's cost of living was 128 percent of the national average which is a big reason why California's <u>supplemental poverty rate was the nation's highest</u>



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(http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-247.pdf).

• Lastly, it's illuminating to note that about 18 percent of the lawmakers in California's majority party in the last term had experience in business, farming or medicine before their election. This compares to 71 percent in Texas. The most common professions among California lawmakers: trial attorney, government employee, and community activist.

But not all is lost. The <u>recent uprising among California's largely quiescent Asian</u> <u>community over a crass attempt to use reverse discrimination to deny largely Asian</u> <u>students' access to California's elite universities (http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2014/03/17/Asian-Americans-Show-Clout-as-Latinos-Become-California-<u>s-Largest-Minority</u>) points to an inherent weakness in the governing coalition. The weakness being that California's governing coalition is based on group allegiances that will increasingly come into conflict with one another.</u>

Power, perks and privilege can only be spread so thin before groups begin to perceive the costs as outweighing the benefits.

*The Hon. Chuck DeVore is the Vice President of Policy at <u>Texas Public Policy Foundation</u> (<u>http://www.texaspolicy.com/</u>). <i>Follow him on Twitter* <u>@chuckdevore</u> (<u>https://twitter.com/chuckdevore</u>).

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190 Comments Breitbart News Network

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# rhamilton • a day ago

I almost forgot -- I, too, moved from California to Texas. I was only 9. But even at that young age I could already tell that Californians were crazy. (My parents were from Kansas and Ohio. We lived in Calif about 3 years.)

19 🔨 | 🗸 · Reply · Share >

# Fister → rhamilton • 16 hours ago

rhamilton--any theories on why most of our earlier exchanges were deleted?

### Misty Turco • a day ago

Great article. We left for many of the same reasons. I like to think of us as Californians in grateful exile.

19 🔨 🛛 🗸 • Reply • Share >

# Liberius Cato A Misty Turco • 4 hours ago

I'm a transplant myself, originally from Florida, but I'm a Texan now. I moved for economic reasons after a succession of Democrats and RINOs ran the state into the ground, but I always knew that what made Texas strong was the free mentality of its people. As transplants, it should be obvious to all of us that freedom is the wellspring of Texas's prosperity, and that if we saw fit to move here for it, we must embrace it with the same fervor native Texans do. If we do not, it may not last, the same way Florida's and California's didn't.

∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >

# Misty Turco - Liberius Cato • 2 hours ago

Amen, even though we are automatically distrusted, and rightfully so, as outsiders from Bad Places.





whodat1 · a dayago
"Half of my neighbors are former Californians."

## As a Texan, this statement alarms me.

76 A V · Reply · Share >

This comment was deleted.

This comment was deleted.



Mark Towe → Cody • a dayago

Not all of us are bad, I plan on moving to Texas and plan to keep that state RED :) 36 < | < • Reply • Share >

Ryan O → Mark Towe • 20 hours ago Glad to hear it 4 ∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >

This comment was deleted.



This comment was deleted.

#### Mikey A Barry • 21 hours ago

Did you read the article donkey Barry. It was nothing about Mexicans or their immigration. If anything, it alluded to the fact that there is just as much immigration in Texas, yet they are much smarter than Californians. Why is it when a donkey cannot rebuff with an intelligent rebuttal they change the subject to something totally unrelated. It must be that donkey brain.

3 🔨 🗌 🗸 • Reniv • Share 🤉

отта кору опого,

## Barry A Mikey • 21 hours ago

"Did you read the article donkey Barry."

Yes, I did, but I wasn't responding to the article. Disqus shows me responding to myself, but I was actually quoting and responding to what RHamilton said.

∧ ∨ • Reply • Share >

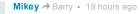
#### Mikey A Barry • 20 hours ago

True, but the article and topic isn't about borders or immigration, its about State money management, and how much smarter they are in Texas about it. And you reply to him, asking what is he afraid of; Then off you go about non-topic open-borders. Bush, McCain, Perry, etc. Not at all related to the subject matter.

∧ ∨ • Reply • Share >

# Barry → Mikey • 20 hours ago

Again, it doesn't matter what the article was about. I was responding to what RHamiton said about something else. Apparently, both his comment and mine have now been deleted.  $\land$  |  $\checkmark$   $\land$  Reply  $\land$  Share  $\land$ 



Again, you must be high. It does matter what the article is about as that's what RHamiton's comment was about and what you responded to, however off the topic.

∧ V • Reply • Share >

#### Barry A Mikey • 17 hours ago

I have both RHamilton's comment and my response to it sitting here in front of me. I firmly believe that my response to him was directly related to what he said. You disagree.

I don't know why Breitbart deleted our comments, but I don't intend to debate them after they were deleted by Britbart for whatever reason.

∧ ∨ • Reply • Share >

#### Mikey A Barry • 16 hours ago

And what he said is directly related to the article. Not Mexican immigration. No mention of illegals except by you.  $\land | \lor \land \text{Reply} \land \text{Share} >$ 

c | • • Reply • Onare /

 neyney → Barry • 21 hours ago

 You ARE High!

 1 ∧
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#### Barry Aneyney · 21 hours ago

John Grimes → whodat1 • a day ago correct 7 ^ | ∨ • Reply • Share >

#### Woebringer A whodat1 • a day ago

Much like Criminal Invaders in that regard. If they will ASSIMILATE and bust their backsides to becomes Texans we will get along just fine.

So often people leave a place of their own free will, admitting their situation was poor and not to their liking. Rather than assimilate and join up with the denizens of their newly chosen home, they repeat the same behaviors that made "LifeSucksistan" such a wonderful place to flee. Ya think they would learn and do things differently, emulating the behaviors of the place that they perceived as better for them in the first place...

Refugee from Commiefornia? I don't blame you one bit, who needs to stick around for that Fustercluck. Glad to have ya. But don't for one second try to replicate that place here in The Great State of Texas.

32 A V · Reply · Share >

## Renn Burling A whodat1 • a day ago

It's okay to be in Texas and not be a Natural Citizen of the Great Republic of Texas, but you damn well better learn about our country (Texas), her history, the wars we fought for independence and the values that make us so attractive and (rightfully) proud. THEN, with the deep appreciation you've garnered from these pursuits, we welcome you to ACT like a Texan or GTFO. If your ideas and "values" worked so well back in your "home" state, you'd still be living there.  $27 \land | \lor \mathsf{Reply} \mathsf{Share}$ 



neyney → Renn Burling • 21 hours ago Amen! 2 ∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >

#### Curtis Messenger → whodat1 • a day ago

I'm not sure if this puff-piece did any good to advocate for California to change its ways, but it most likely has persuaded other California people to make the move.

As long as each individual comes to Texas with the idea that we all earn our keep so we don't have to rely on the government to give it to us, that's fine with this Texan.

16 🔨 🛛 🗸 • Reply • Share >

#### Marco127 A whodat1 • a day ago

Yes. Mark Levin calls progressives "locusts," in the sense that many of them, having destroyed one state, move to a conservative state and carry with them the same destructive, short-sighted, un-scientific, control-freak, and un-compassionate mindsets that have led to the sad situation in (in this case) California.

And a good number of them will carry these values mindlessly right into the Texas voting booth.

May God save Texas from such people.

28 A V · Reply · Share >



# Roguewave1 A Marco127 • a day ago



#### rgbintx → Roguewave1 • 21 hours ago

I remember the day when we were under assault from the rust belt, too. I saw bumper stickers like: "Yankee Go Home", and "Welcome to Texas, Now GO HOME". We'd often say "Quite frankly, I don't care how you did it up north."

It was the same thing then as now. I/We don't care so much that they come here as long as they leave their negative baggage at the border. They won't. Therefore, we repeat the refrain. "Welcome to Texas, Now GO HOME".

5 A V • Reply • Share >



Sean Ward → whodat1 • a dayago I agree! 2 ∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >

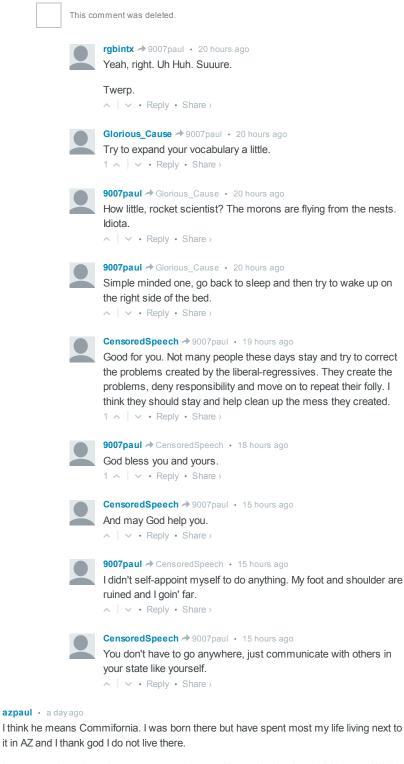
#### Zincwarrior A whodat1 • a day ago

Agreed. There's sparse little I want from California. Austin has already been turned from "Keep Austin Weird" to Generic Northern California City. 11 ~ | ~ + Reply + Share >

This comment was deleted.



rgbintx → 9007paul • 21 hours ago Good. Stay there in your leftist he!!hole of your own making. We don't want your kind around here. 1 ∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >



I use to vacation there, but not any more, I started boycotting it when it did it to us. Which I thank it for doing it anyway, because a lot of illegals lost their service industry jobs here when the tourist industry when down.

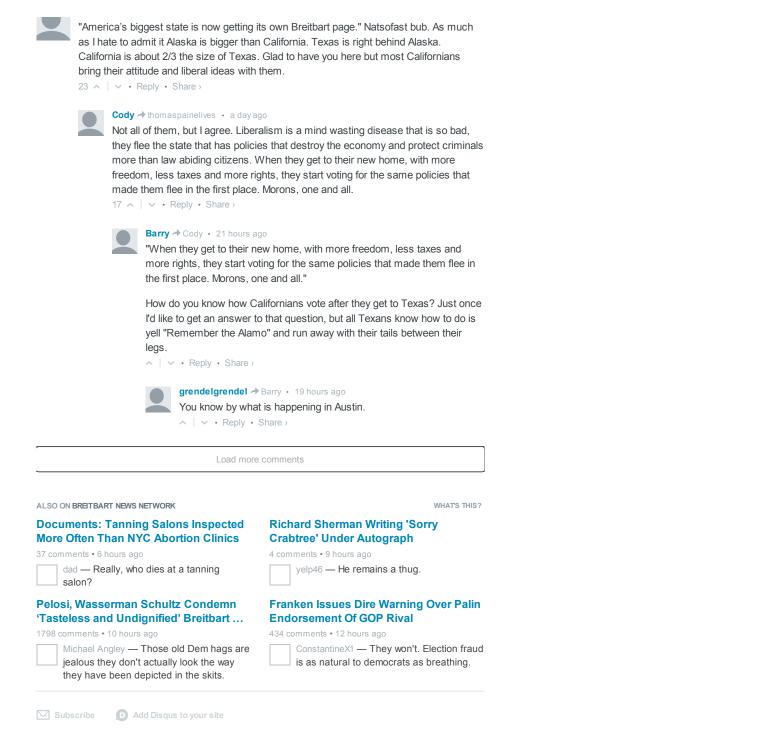
I've made many trips to TX. My wife is from there. I feel at home there. Houses are cheaper, pay is better. I've tried to transfer a few times to TX but to no avail.  $11 \land | \lor \land \text{Reply} \land \text{Share} >$ 



Cody A azpaul 🔹 a day ago

Keep trying man, we need more like you here and less of them. Texas would welcome you. 9 < | < • Reply • Share >

John Grimes → azpaul • a day ago leave your lollywood crap out there....... 4 ∧ | ∨ • Reply • Share >



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