



# Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas  
President of the Senate

## **Remarks by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick** *January 20, 2015*

If not for the grace of God, you, and millions of Texans, I would not be standing here today. Proverbs 21:31 says: “the horse is made ready for battle, but the victory is the Lord’s.” I worked hard, but the victory was His. I’m humbled, grateful, and blessed beyond belief for your trust in electing me as the 72<sup>nd</sup> Lt Governor of Texas.

In Matthew 20:26 the Bible says: “whoever wants to be a leader among you must first be your servant.” I stand here with a servant’s heart, respectful of all faiths, but as a Christian first, a conservative second, and a Republican third.

Using Robert Greenleaf’s model for business servant leaders, I believe many of his core principles apply to those in public office. First, a servant leader must listen, to identify and hear the will of the people. Second, a servant leader must rely on the power of persuasion, not the power of authority. A servant leader must embrace Conceptualization – the willingness to dream big dreams, to accomplish what others say cannot be done, and at the same time balance that with a focus on day-to-day problem solving for the matters at hand. They must have foresight to learn from the lessons of the past, assess the realities of the present, and the likely consequences of how a decision we make today can impact the future.

A servant leader must be trustworthy, encouraging to others, and humble. These are my goals and my commitment to you, the State of Texas, and the members I serve as the President of the Texas Senate.

At this time I would ask every member of the greatest legislative body in the country, the Texas Senate, to rise and be recognized. Ladies and Gentlemen this is your Texas Senate for the 84<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature.

In my campaign I pledged to: secure the border; lower property and business taxes; prioritize, reform and improve education; build our infrastructure and protect life, family, and the second amendment. That is what I pledged to do as a candidate and what I will do as Lt. Governor. My goal is to be the best Lt. Governor in the history of Texas. It's not about my legacy; it's about you, your family, and the future of Texas.

As Conservatives we have done many great things over the last 12 years since taking the majority, but it's time to take it to the next level. You have given us a mandate and you have been very clear about what you want us to do. As my friend and Senator Jane Nelson likes to say, "It's a new day in Texas."

What day is it? It's a new day in Texas. Remember that as I continue in my remarks to join in.

First I want to talk about education. Yesterday the nation celebrated Martin Luther King Day. On August 28, 1963, Reverend King gave one of the greatest speeches in our nation's history, the "I Have A Dream" speech. I don't think he could have dreamed that 52 years later that many of our inner city schools would still be failing our children, that we would have a 40% drop out rate or higher in many of our city schools and over half of our inner city children would be living in poverty. It is immoral to tell parents they must send their children to a perennially failing school. Parents deserve the right to pick the best school for their child. Some in Austin tell me school choice will never pass, but Dr. King is not the only one who can dream, I dream of the day when every parent has the choice to send their child to the school they pick because they believe it's best for their child. I dream of the day every child gets a quality education so they can break the binds of poverty and live the Texas and American dream.

For the naysayers, remember we already have school choice in Texas. If you're rich enough you send your children to private school – if you're mobile enough you move to the suburbs for a good school but if you're one of the working poor in our inner cities, you don't have money for private school, and you can't move to the suburbs for a better school because you rely on the bus to get to work.

This is not an indictment on every school. We have many great schools in Texas. The majority do a fine job. We have many great teachers. My wife of 39 years, my mother-in-law, and my daughter-in-law all were teachers. Being a teacher today is a tough job. Thank God we have dedicated individuals who are willing to take on this most important and noble profession. But where we have failing schools and failing teachers, we must have change, and parents must have choice.

We must also continue the reforms we began last session when I served as Education Chair to continue to focus on preparing students for work and college by putting emphasis on job

training, we must ensure every student is at reading level by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and we must ensure that schools follow the laws we pass. Last year we passed a law on a bi-partisan basis keeping Common Core out of Texas. We need to keep the Federal Government out of our schools.

We are going to accomplish these goals because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

In Higher Education we must reduce the cost of skyrocketing tuition that is pricing many middle class families out of college, and saddling students with huge debt upon graduation. We're going to reduce costs because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

Taxes ... It's time we reduce current property taxes and reform the system of taxing based on value growth. Homeowners cannot afford their taxes to go up 8% or more each year if their salaries are going up only 3% a year or less. And we are going to give businesses the tax relief they need to keep our economy strong and continue the job creation that has made us a leader in America. We will accomplish all of these goals because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

We are going to fund our infrastructure because it's vital to our economy. We are finally going to end the gas tax diversion. And one of my big dreams is for Texas to lead the nation in natural gas vehicles for all government entities. It's clean, its cheap, it will save taxpayers money, and it's right here in Texas. We will accomplish these goals because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

The most important responsibility for any lawmaker is to keep you and your family safe. To that end the Senate will fund border security at the highest levels in state history. We are going to secure our border through the use of technology, air and river power, the DPS, the Texas Rangers, game wardens, local law enforcement and when needed the National Guard. The threat from terrorists, drug cartels and gang members crossing the border is high. National security starts with border security, and in Texas we are going to protect our citizens. We are going to accomplish these goals because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

And while speaking of law enforcement I want to thank the men and women all across Texas who protect us. They along with our brave firefighters, have the only job I know of where when they go to work each day they are willing to give up their life to save others. Like all professions they must be held accountable for their job and they expect to be. But this is Texas, not New York; we stand by our law enforcement officers. We have their back and because they have ours.

The world needs America to be strong and America needs Texas to be strong. If Houston, Austin, Bowie and Crockett were alive today, I think they would be proud of what the

people of Texas and its government have accomplished, but they would warn us that we can never take our success or liberty for granted.

We the people of Texas and we as servant leaders in our Capitol have a responsibility to do whatever it takes to keep Texas strong and an example for the rest of the country and the world to follow. We have no choice. As my friend, Senator Donna Campbell likes to say, "There is not another Texas to move to."

Texas is one-of-a-kind, blessed by God, fought for by patriots, and home to the greatest people God ever put on this earth who are willing to fight back against an ever encroaching federal government.

"Come And Take It" is not just a motto, and a flag from the distant past. It remains our way of life in Texas to this day.

We have a lot to do but we're going to get it done because - What day is it? It's a new day in Texas.

God Bless you, your family, and the Great State Of Texas.