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Perry Outlines Budget Reforms

5-Point Plan Would Lead to Less Government Spending, More Accountability for Taxpayers

DALLAS – Gov. Rick Perry today outlined a sweeping, detailed plan for budget reforms that will promote fiscal responsibility in state government.

“Today I am announcing five key budget reforms that will restrain spending, open the state government checkbook to the public, and end the disingenuous money-shifting shell games that allow funds to be spent on priorities other than what was promised,” Perry said. “I believe it is time to create a state spending limit in Texas that is real, that requires fiscal discipline and that more closely mirrors population growth and inflation costs.”

Perry said he is proud to be the only Texas governor since World War II to sign a budget that reduced state spending. He has also line-item vetoed more than \$2.5 billion in proposed spending since becoming governor, nearly six times as much as the last four governors combined. The governor said his budget reform initiative is needed to ensure that state government is fiscally responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Perry’s 5 point plan would:

- Impose a real spending limit on state government. “It is time to create a state spending limit in Texas that is real, that requires fiscal discipline, and that more closely mirrors population growth and inflation costs,” Perry said. “The spending limit in effect today is hardly a limit at all because it is tied to personal income growth. Tying how much we spend to how much we make is a recipe for runaway spending.”
- Require dedicated funds to be used as intended, or refunded. “It is time for a truth in spending initiative that ends the fraud where money raised for one purpose gets spent on something entirely different. If you are charged a fee for a specific purpose, the money ought to go to that express purpose – or be returned to the taxpayer who has been fraudulently charged,” Perry said.
- Require detailed budget line-items instead of lump sum line items. “Hiding wasteful expenditures behind worthwhile expenditures is a budgetary sham that makes government more bloated, less accountable and less transparent,” Perry said.
- Require all state agencies to publish expenditures online in a clear, concise and consistent format. “I have a simple philosophy about transparency in government: if the taxpayers are picking up the bill, they ought to be able to look at very item on the receipt,” Perry said.
- Amend the constitution to allow the state to return surplus revenue to taxpayers.

“If Texans elect me to another term as governor, I will fight to end the budgetary games, the funding diversions that charge a fee for one purpose and fund another purpose and I will stand for an effective spending limit that requires Austin to budget like working families do everyday,” Perry said.

Full details of the plan are available at <http://www.rickperry.org/pdf/BudgetReformProposal.pdf>