

Forrester for Chairman  
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*“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. “*

**George Santayana**

**December 27, 2008**

Dear State Democratic Executive Committee Member:

I know that you have received the recent letter from Gov. Bredesen, several members of the congressional delegation, and several past chairs of the Party on behalf of Charles Robert Bone.

First, I want to go on record stating that I have run a positive campaign for Party chair and I intend to continue doing so. I have respect and admiration for both Charles Robert Bone and Charles Bone and all that they have done for Democratic politics in Tennessee. In fact, I gave Charles Robert one of his very first jobs in Tennessee politics in 1990 when I was Al Gore's US Senate campaign manager.

Second, I want to make it clear that I respect everyone who signed the endorsement letter. Most of them I have campaigned for personally over my 20 years of involvement in Tennessee Democratic politics. Most of these chairs I have served under. And, when this campaign is over, we must all come together completely unified behind the Democratic Party, if we are to be successful in 2010.

But their letter requires that I write to you, as a member of the state Democratic executive committee, because it demonstrates as clearly as anything I could have written myself, why I am running for Chair. It clearly shows the choice you have between Charles Robert and me.

This year our Party in Tennessee suffered its worst political defeat in decades, ironically while most of the country was seeing a resurgence in support for Democratic candidates as evidenced by the election of Barack Obama and the dramatic expansion of the Democratic majorities in the U.S. House and Senate.

Our state Party was led this year by the very people who have now signed the endorsement letter for Charles Robert Bone. They set the strategy for this year's campaign in Tennessee.

Our state Party did not suffer from a lack of funding, I know because as Treasurer I signed the checks. What our Party suffered from this year was a lack of a grassroots organization that involved everyone that believes in and supports the values of the Democratic Party.

You cannot build a viable political party from the top down, no more than you can improve the economic well being of our country with "trickle down" economics as failed Republican administration policies, tragically for our country's working men and women, have so vividly shown us these past 8 years.

And while I respect everyone who signed the endorsement letter, if these elections have taught us anything, they should have shown us that the “top down” approach does not work any longer in Tennessee.

My commitment to you, therefore, if elected Chair, is to broaden the involvement of everyone who believes in the principles of the Democratic Party. We will create the most open, the most transparent, the most accountable, and the most inclusive party that we have ever had in Tennessee.

As Governor Ned McWherter taught me so many years ago, with your help, we can make the Democratic Party here in Tennessee the “big tent” that our Party is supposed to be. We will bring everyone to the table for 2010: state executive committee members, county parties, the House and Senate Democratic caucuses, all Democratic office holders including the Governor and the Democratic Members of Congress, labor, teachers, trial lawyers, the Obama volunteers in Tennessee, College Democrats, Young Democrats, state employees, Democratic activists, the Democratic women, the Hispanic and African-American community, the disadvantaged and disabled—the constituencies that make our Party the strongest when we are all involved and united in our support for Democratic candidates. A team like that gives us all we need to win!

There is now a clear choice and it is up to each of you and only you, to make it. Many of you have already committed (44 to date publicly) because you and I have discussed this vision for the Party and you believe in it as much as I do. And for those committee members still thinking about which candidate to support, there is now a difference.

Someone whom we know quite well recently said, and I am paraphrasing slightly for editorial effect, “If you want 4 more years of the same policies and leadership that the current administration has provided, then just vote for my opponent. If you want a change, from the grassroots up, and an entirely new way of conducting business then vote for me.”

In sum, I believe we have a choice for the future of the Party. We can build a grassroots-based Party including everyone, or we can continue our top-down dominance. We can change the direction we are heading, or we can maintain the status quo. We can learn from history, or we can repeat it.

**May God bless you & your family as we enter the New Year—2009!**

Warm regards,

Chip Forrester  
Treasurer  
Tennessee Democratic Party

**State Democratic Executive Committee Members in Support of Forrester for Chair**

House Democratic Caucus Chair Mike Turner (Ex-Officio), Vicky Harwell, TFDW President (Ex-Officio), Leah Kirk, College Democrats (Ex-Officio), Tom Jesse District 3, Bruce Seal District 4, Harold Woods District 6, Bill Owen District 7, Dan Lawson District 8, Jimmy Bilbo District 9, Weldon Markham District 10, Terry Lee District 11, Fred Hobbs District 13, John Wiseman District 16, Bill Bassett District 18, Jerry Maynard District 19, Chip Forrester District 20, Will Cheek District 21, Keith Jackson District 22, Jon Fail District 23, Robert Patterson District 24, J.W. Hampton District 25, Mike Kiddy District 26, J.M. Bailey District 28, Henry Hooper District 29, David Upton District 30, Pam Harris District 3, Sylvia Woods District 6, Barbara Wagner District 8, Sandra Perkinson District 9, Charlene Kilpatrick District 10, Mary Anglin District 11, Brenda Ables District 13, Geeta McMillan District 15, Karen Garner District 16, Inez Crutchfield District 19, Martha Brooke Perry District 22, Elisa Parker TDP Vice Chair & District 23, Martha Shepard District 22, Diane Davis District 26, Patsy Johnson District 27, Joyce Adams District 29, Hazel Longstreet District 30, Leslie Byrd District 31