“Texas-style liberty cannot survive if its leaders are driven by a spirit of pragmatism, which divorced from principles, makes decisions based on political expediency.

The Texas House Freedom Caucus was made to be a Gideon Army.

Through the faithfulness of a few, truth, justice and freedom are kept alive, and their light pushes back against the darkness of deceit, injustice, and tyranny.

Remember from where your values, strength, and wisdom come, then – Stand Your Ground!”

December 11, 2018

Texas Freedom Caucus Members:

First, thank you for the sacrifices you and your family make to serve the people of Texas and for your past efforts to steer Texas House debates and legislative outcomes toward the limited government “first principles” that are the underpinnings of freedom and liberty.

Yours is no easy job, and the current political climate makes it all the more difficult. The media and a myriad of political voices – on both the left and the right – proclaim conservatism on its last legs – if not completely dead in Texas. The prognosis fits their self-focused, self-justifying narratives, which declare our demise – based solely on the results of one mid-term election.

Just as the political class wrongly declared that grassroots conservatives only existed to oppose President Obama, they now say that the Texas Freedom Caucus and the conservative grassroots only existed to oppose Joe Straus. These voices are working overtime to construct a narrative that will quite simply provide a glide path for more Big Government and less Texas-style Freedom. That FAKE narrative will only become true if we allow it!

While we cannot speak for you, the undersigned partners of the growing Texas Conservative Grassroots Coalition can assure everyone that we have NO intention of walking off the battlefield just because Joe Straus is gone! Anyone with a modicum of political awareness cannot honestly believe that the only thing the Texas grassroots conservative movement ever cared about was ending the reign of Joe Straus and his lieutenants. Those who cling to such ridiculous claims – while ignoring our record of consistent engagement on a wide array of public policy issues – are simply affirming their political stupidity, intellectual dishonesty, and/or wishful thinking. After all, it would be so much easier for the elite-driven
political class in BOTH parties if they could only return to the days when what happened in Austin stayed in Austin. They long for the days when not so many “outside voices” weighed in on the issues!

For the long-term good of Texas – as the beacon of freedom in this nation, the Texas Conservative Grassroots Coalition offers the following advice for Freedom Caucus members:

1) The “idol of politics” sometimes turns people into traitorous predators. When cornered, they will make any deal and sell out any friend, constituent, principle, or cause to save their own political backside and will do so with the most elaborate of rationalizations. Some will even quote Scripture while doing it. Don’t let them change who you are!

2) This Coalition is not cowed by the Austin Swamp and its mouthpieces. Instead, we are focused on advancing conservative principles. There will be NO surrender and NO retreat on conservative, limited government principles – no matter who the House Speaker is, who the committee chairs are, and no matter how loud the voices get to moderate and “just get along.” We urge you to lead with consistent emphasis on conservative principles.

3) We certainly believe Chairman Bonnen deserves a chance to establish his own brand of leadership as Speaker. Many House members assure us that he has made strong promises for positive change; however, we all know that promises come cheap at the Capitol. Results matter. We urge you and all “right of center” legislators to remember that and do what you promised!

4) Our 86th Texas legislative priorities, policy support, and focus will – as always – be based on limited government first principles of liberty. These principles and priorities do not come from some extra-terrestrial, intergalactic zip code. They are found in the Texas Republican Party Platform. We urge the TFC to refocus on these priorities and plan your strategy to advance those priorities – first within the House Republican Caucus. If they refuse, then stand your ground as Texas Freedom Caucus leaders, and do what you promised!

5) Our principles don’t change. Conservative standards are not based on what Big Media says, what consultants advise, what special interest ruling class elites want, or who the legislative leaders are. If the House Republican Caucus puts together a conservative legislative plan based on the Texas Republican Party Platform, and if those bills are allowed to come to the floor for a vote, there will be no need for this Coalition and the Texas Freedom Caucus to raise a fuss. However, based on the new partisan make-up of the Texas House, and the records of your fellow moderate Republicans, we anticipate clashes on pro-life bills, religious liberty protections, gun rights, tax hikes, spending, expansion of state government, ending magnets for illegal immigration, and watered down property tax reforms.

6) Based on a narrower GOP House majority, if at least nine liberal/moderate/progressive Republicans side with Democrats, they can kill conservative bills and pass government-growing legislation. If liberal Republican House members push tax increases (a gas tax hike is already being promoted), push drivers licenses for illegals (yes, those bills are back), work to thwart property tax and election reforms, attack gun rights, life, and religious liberty, and the House leadership and GOP Caucus just sit back and won’t fight, then they will get push back from this Coalition, and we will urge you to join us! We will not accept quashing debate and subverting conservative values for the sake of a fig leaf façade of party unity and harmony.

To be clear, the Texas Conservative Grassroots Coalition strongly supports the declared mission of the Texas House Freedom Caucus, “The Texas Freedom Caucus was founded by members of the Texas House of Representatives [who are] committed to amplifying the voice of liberty-minded, grassroots Texans
who want bold action to protect life, strengthen families, defend the U.S. and Texas Bills of Rights, restrain government, and revitalize personal and economic freedoms in the State of Texas."

That plain language was necessary back in 2017, and it remains so today. In fact, the Freedom Caucus is needed now more than ever as a clear voice for the conservative grassroots and for the Republican Party Platform – in case things don’t go as promised with the new Speaker.

While it is wisdom to give the new Speaker a chance to make good on his promises as you await the appointment of committee chairs and committee assignments, this Coalition strongly opposes neutering or dissolving the Freedom Caucus. Why? Because some of us have been around long enough to know that the Big Government Swamp always finds a way to protect itself. There will always be Big Government Republicans somewhere in power. That is the nature of unprincipled men and women.

The Freedom Caucus will be successful if its members refocus on the mission statement, remembering the “forgotten citizens” that are not represented by special interests. You will succeed if you work with your House colleagues on those issues you can agree upon, sharpen your organizational, strategic, and persuasion skills, and strive to ensure the grassroots are informed as the legislative session unfolds. Do not allow the enemy to undermine you with bitterness and infighting. If you wrong a colleague, apologize. If your colleague wrongs you, forgive. God is not obligated to hear our prayers if we ignore His methods of settling differences among members of the household of faith.

We are aware that there are many voices urging you to be pragmatic – based on the November General Election outcome. They say you must be careful because you face political headwinds if you are too “far right,” and that you must take great care not to appear to be in opposition to the Republican Caucus. (The wizards of smart said the same thing about the US House Freedom Caucus.) Opposition to the Republican Caucus will be unnecessary if it pursues a principled, conservative path. Perhaps they will, but perhaps – as history demonstrates – they will readily exchange their stated principles and values for pragmatism and political expediency. Should their principles fall by the wayside and truth be redefined as “that which easily works,” Texas will depend on you to speak with a clear, unwavering voice.

Texans want, need, and deserve leaders who are more concerned for the welfare of this great state and nation than for their own political war chest and the next election. Without principle, liberty decays.

The Texas Conservative Grassroots Coalition stands ready to support the Freedom Caucus as long as YOU are willing to stand for and fight for that which is right. We need to hear your agenda, your goals for the session, and how you intend to advance the conservative cause while you wait to see how the new Speaker and leadership team conduct the People’s business in the House.

We close this heartfelt letter with two very appropriate quotes that are as true today as when they were first uttered:

“If ever a time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in Government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent its ruin.” Samuel Adams

“Peace if possible. Truth at all costs.” Martin Luther

For Texas – for Liberty,

[Coalition Partner names/title/organization/other identifier listed here]