

# NTCL 83rd Texas Legislature Newsletter



Connecting the Citizens of North Texas with their elected officials in Austin

May 13, 2013

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*The North Texas Citizens Lobby is made up of conservative citizens working together to lobby Texas State Senators, Representatives, and other elected officials to follow their oath of office and promote Constitutionally Limited Government, State and National Sovereignty, the Rule of Law, Fiscal Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility.*

## Future Leaders in Austin

By Mark Reid

Last week, six home school students joined the NTCL delegation in Austin. This was a unique and inspiring trip for the adults that accompanied these fine young men and women.

The day began as everyone assembled at 5:00 a.m. to carpool to Austin. In spite of the early hour, particularly for high school age kids, everyone was on time and ready for what ever the day in Austin might bring.

Dennis Scharp, Barbara Harless, Chuck Molyneaux, and Mark Reid were there representing the North Texas Citizens Lobby group. Levi Box, Eva Ruth Christophel, Johanna Christophel, Thatcher Townson, Duncan Voyles, Christian Yiu and their chaperon, Linda Townson represented their S.A.L.T. club.

S.A.L.T. stands for Students Active in the Leadership of Tomorrow. These young men and women represented their club with distinction and exemplified what one would expect to see in future leaders.

Once organized the group proceeded to Austin and their first meeting with **Representative Jeff Leach**. **Rep. Leach** welcomed each student individually and then took time



to discuss the issues advocated by the students.

The group then walked to the house chamber with **Rep. Leach** and his staff, meeting **Rep. Van Taylor** on his way to the house floor.

After observing the House conduct business they moved over to the Senate to observe proceedings before a break for lunch.

After lunch, the group visited the offices of other representatives briefly, then toured the Capital dome.

The last appointment of the day was then with **Senator Craig Estes**. Fortunately the senator was available and made time for a conversation with the students.

The students engaged the senator in a dialogue and debate about their position on two issues impacting

State sovereignty. **Sen. Estes** agreed with their position on one of the issues and disagreed on the other. The students then engaged in a spirited debate with **Sen. Estes**.

The story is best told by the students. Their account follows in ***Something Worth Fighting For by Duncan Voyles***. Suffice it to say that the these young men and women were able to sit in the office of a seasoned Texas Senator and handily debate the issues.

They clearly stated their positions, listened to the senator's positions, then identified the discrepancies and debated them with **Sen. Estes** who was clearly taken aback by their poise and well articulated arguments. Agree or disagree with these young men and women, one must admire the leadership they already exhibit!

# Something Worth Fighting For

By Duncan Voyles

This past Tuesday, I was joined by five of my fellow high school students from our local Generation Joshua club, S.A.L.T. (Students Active in Leadership of Tomorrow), as we made the trip down to Austin with the NTCL. There we had the opportunity to participate in such activities as lobbying our representatives, observing the House and Senate chambers, and going on a tour of the Capitol dome.

Each of these activities were unique in and of themselves and subsequently, we drew different things from them respectively. Nevertheless, it was unanimously agreed that lobbying was the highlight of the day. Specifically, it was our conversation with **Senator Craig Estes** that truly excited us.

My fellow students and I were advocating a variety of legislation. Foremost among them were **HJR 59** and **HB 3785** both of which deal with the nullification of Obamacare within the state of Texas. At the same time, we were also promoting **HB 80**, which would make searching without probable cause a criminal offense when performed by a public servant for the purpose of granting access to a public building or form of transportation.

Interestingly, **Sen. Estes** assured us of his wholehearted support for the legislation involving the negation of Obamacare and yet, upon questioning him regarding his support for **HB 80**, he said that, while he supported the legislation, it was useless to pursue as it contradicted federal law.

Upon making this statement, one of my fellow students pointed out that he was being hypocritical as he had just stated his support for the legislation involving the nullification of Obamacare, which is also federal law. In response, **Sen. Estes** replied that at times one has to stick to their principles while at others one must take the more pragmatic approach. Needless to say, a heated debate ensued.

By the time we departed **Sen. Estes'** office, I confess that my faith in him was somewhat diminished. It's one thing to know that there are elected officials who compromise on their principles and another entirely to converse with one face-to-face.

Nevertheless, despite these sobering events, I had to recognize that, on the whole, the experience was a good one. After all, it made me realize I can't but



be thankful that I even have the opportunity to speak to my elected officials. The fact that through them I have the chance to directly influence the course of my government and subsequently, my country is truly amazing to me. I pray it's a privilege that I never come to take for granted and that I will always be diligent in defending.

In the end, while **Sen. Estes** himself may have disappointed me in the short run, my encounter with him has inspired me in the long run. It's true, there is a lot of work to be done; but with that work there is so much potential for good! All I can say, is that it's **worth fighting for**.

# Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution

By Barbara Harless

An exceptionally intelligent and civic minded group of high school students traveled to the Capitol with the NTCL last week. Their visit to one of the 83<sup>rd</sup> legislators' office revealed some disappointment during civil discourse centered on the **supremacy clause** in the **U.S. Constitution** (Article VI).

**Article I** of the Constitution forms the basis for a limited government with limited powers stating: "All legislative powers herein granted..." The founders understood that government derives its powers from the people. Thus they set out to create a limited government with specific, enumerated, powers.

**Article VI**, that the students debated with the senator, states that the Constitution is the basis for all laws. The **2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph in Article VI** specifies that all laws shall be "made in pursuance" of the constitution which shall be "the **supreme law** of the land ... anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding." This is the "supremacy clause" and taken by itself would imply that the U.S. Constitution takes precedence, notwithstanding future laws enacted.

However, **Article V** of the Constitution describes how to amend the constitution and the **9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Amendments**

**specify that the powers not specifically granted to the federal government in the constitution, are retained by the People or the States.**

**The 9<sup>th</sup> Amendment** states: "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people."

**The 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment** states: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

# Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution

By Barbara Harless (continued)

Clearly, while the powers enumerated in the U.S. Constitution are the supreme law of the land, the States and the People retain the right to self governance in all other matters and when federal law over reaches its limits.

Therefore, this Texas citizen argues that health care and the right of self-defense (among numerous other “natural” rights) are individual rights and responsibilities that our Texas

legislators have a moral duty to protect and defend through the process of **nullification**. Jefferson and Madison taught us this lesson as stated in the Kentucky & Virginia Resolutions; “nullification...is the rightful remedy” and the states are “duty bound to resist” when the federal government violates its charter.

Currently, 167 bills have been passed by the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature. Most of these

bills place more restrictions on the activities of Texas taxpayers, yielding to un-lawful federal mandates. Texas has a moral right to resist and nullify these mandates.

Texans want to support our modern day heroes of liberty in Austin, but sadly, we have yet to elect a majority with the character to defend the sovereignty of Texas and Texans from the oppression of Washington D.C.



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