



**For Immediate Release**  
**August 16, 2010**

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**GOP LEGISLATIVE LEADERS UNVEIL 2010**  
**“REPUBLICAN HANDSHAKE WITH ALABAMA”**  
**PLATFORM DETAILS PRIORITIES UNDER REPUBLICAN LEGISLATURE**

**Montgomery** – ALGOP legislative leaders on Monday released details of the *2010 Republican Handshake with Alabama*, an agenda of specific, issue-oriented bills they will make a priority of passing if given a majority in one or both chambers of the Legislature.

“In Alabama, a handshake means something,” said State Republican Party Chairman and House Minority Leader Mike Hubbard (R – Auburn). “When you look someone in the eye, give them your word and shake their hand, you make a bond. This Handshake Agenda is our bond with the voters of Alabama, and if Republicans are successful in taking over the Legislature, these are the items we will immediately work to pass.”

State Senator Jabo Waggoner (R – Vestavia), who serves as Senate Minority Leader, noted that Alabama Democrats announced an agenda they termed the *Covenant for the Future* during the 2006 election cycle and pledged to pass each of its items within the first 10 days of the quadrennium. Four years later, despite controlling every House and Senate Committee, both agenda-setting Rules committees and a having a majority in both houses, only three of the 16 items in the agenda have become law. Many of its contents were also supported by Republicans, which suggests the Democrats made promises during the 2006 campaign they had no intention of keeping.

“We are asking the citizens of Alabama to judge us not only by what we say, but also by what we, as Republicans, do if given a majority,” Waggoner said. “Using that yardstick, Democrats should be tossed out of the Legislature for running collectively on an agenda four years ago and then making no serious efforts to actually pass it. They broke their ‘covenant’ and should be forced to pay the price.”

Among the goals and specific agenda items included in the *Republican Handshake* are:

**Creating Jobs and Economic Opportunities** – Alabama Republicans understand that creating jobs and putting our state on the right economic track is our top priority, and we are prepared to implement proven, conservative incentives and pro-business reforms to accomplish that goal.

We will work with the administration to build upon and expand the job-creation tax incentives that our gubernatorial nominee, Dr. Robert Bentley, successfully passed during the last legislative session. Those incentives will be targeted to both new and existing businesses alike.

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In order to provide more capital needed to add new jobs Republicans will also push to expand the small business health insurance tax credit from 150% to 200% of the amount that both employers and employees pay for coverage premiums.

Similarly, the Bentley plan to create a cabinet-level *Office of Small Business Creation and Development* has been embraced by Republican legislative candidates who will work to dedicate the resources needed for its success. The office will be tasked with reducing regulations and red tape, unifying small-business orientated state programs under one roof and advocating on behalf of both new and existing small businesses.

We will fight to ensure that Alabama remains a right-to-work state in order to keep employment costs low and demand legislation that protects the right to a secret ballot in union elections so that no worker may be harassed or intimidated for voting his or her heart and conscience.

A Republican Legislature will work to put roadblocks in the way of the job-killing “*Cap and Tax*” legislation being pushed by liberal Congressional Democrats. If passed, such legislation will cause energy costs in Alabama to skyrocket and crash our economy. Businesses from our largest industrial employers to our smallest mom-and-pop operations rely upon affordable energy costs to keep doors open and workers employed in Alabama.

**Controlling Wasteful Spending** – Many of our national economic problems have been caused by a Democrat Congress and liberal president who are spending like drunken sailors. Alabama Republicans want to prevent that from happening on the state level. Our Legislature has traditionally budgeted based on political convenience and unsustainable revenue estimates. When those estimates prove too conservative for the Democrats’ tastes, they simply increase them to accommodate additional spending. The result is devastating proration.

Alabama Republicans believe that the Legislature, like families and individuals across the state, should live within its means, and we propose passage of the Responsible Budgeting and Spending Act. Under this bill, state revenue estimates would be based upon a 15-year rolling average rather than unsupported projections, which will rein in spending and allow the budgets to more easily absorb changes in a cyclical economy.

**Ending Corruption in Montgomery** – Democrats have held the majority in Montgomery for 136 years, and during that time, they created an atmosphere that breeds corruption and encourages graft. The recent criminal convictions of numerous Democrat legislators and other Democrat officials provide ample evidence of that fact.

Republicans understand that we must limit the influence of special interests and other lobbyists who control much of what happens in Montgomery. Under existing law, lobbyists are allowed to spend up to \$250 a day on each public official without having to file an ethics report. A Republican majority will introduce legislation to require all spending by lobbyists is reported – even down to a cup of coffee.

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Alabama is one of only three states that do not provide subpoena power to its ethics watchdog agency, which makes it easy for public officials and others to hamstring investigations. Republicans not only support subpoena power for the Alabama Ethics Commission, they want to provide the agency with a statutorily defined level of appropriation that can be cut only by a two-thirds vote of both houses. That way, no legislator can retaliate against the agency and its work by cutting its annual budget.

Too many legislators and other public officials have been caught double-dipping or holding questionable contracts with government agencies and those wishing to do business with the state. Republicans will work to ban double-dipping and require public officials and their spouses to disclose any contracts they hold with government entities.

**Combating Illegal Immigration** – Because illegal immigration threatens our homeland security, reduces the quality of life for taxpaying citizens and places our schools, hospitals and other resources under tremendous burden, Alabama Republicans believe we must take immediate action. Politicians in Washington refuse to act, so we must bring the fight to the home front.

A Republican legislative majority will push an illegal immigration bill similar to the recently approved Arizona law. The Alabama bill will create a new state criminal trespass statute that allows local law enforcement to arrest illegal immigrants for simply setting foot in Alabama. Another provision will make it a crime to provide an illegal immigrant transportation anywhere in Alabama, whether it is a trip across the state or simply to the corner store.

Proof of citizenship or legal residency in order to access government services will also be required, and, because illegal immigrants and their allies are working to gather political power and influence, any illegal immigrant who registers to vote, or attempts to, or casts a ballot will be convicted of a Class C felony as will anyone aiding in those efforts.

**Blocking the Washington, D.C. Power Grab** – Many rights and freedoms previously reserved to the states and to individuals are under an unprecedented attack from D.C. liberals, and Alabama Republicans are prepared to take strong actions to repel their assault. It is important that the voices of the frustrated majority of Alabamians be heard, especially in the area of socialized health care programs recently implemented against our wishes by Obama and his allies.

An Alabama House and Senate controlled by Republicans will immediately introduce and work to pass a constitutional amendment that would “prohibit any person, employer or health care provider from being compelled to participate in any health care system.” This amendment would be similar to measures introduced or passed in at least 30 other state legislatures across the country, and it is believed that such state amendments will assist in court cases questioning federal authority to force citizens to purchase something they do not wish to purchase, a mandate never previously forced on the populace.

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