

History of the republican party in texas

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History of the Republican Party in Texas The Republican Party of Texas was found in the spring of 1867, as the people of Texas reacted to the Congressional Reconstruction Act, which was passed on March 7. This act required the previous Confederate states to form new governments, and extend the elective votes to all adult males regardless of their color, race, or previous condition of servitude (Newell et al. 102). This law made the struggle for political power to take a new dimension in Texas and the rest of the south, since the African Americans were integrated into the political process. Texan Republicans accepted Congressional provisions, and pursued to form a biracial party (Newell et al. 105). Republicans struggle led to formal organization of the party, and they held their first state convention on July 4 at Houston.

Republican leadership came from wartime Texas Unionists and antebellum, who were supporters of Sam Houston (scalawags), newly franchised blacks, and recent immigrants from the North (carpetbaggers) (Newell et al. 136). Texas Unionists controlled the party's proceedings. The party's first convention that was held in Houston was chaired by Elisha M. Pease, former governor, and Col. John L. Haynes, commander of the First Texas Cavalry, was the party's first executive-committee chairman (Newell et al. 141). Blacks are one of the groups that strongly supported the Republican Party in Texas in the early days. The GOP membership comprised of 90 percent African Americans, and about 44 African Americans served in the Texas legislature as Republicans (Newell et al. 147). Blacks strongly supported Republican Party because one of its main agendums was to abolish slavery.

The Republican club of Texas was founded in 1947 by Captain J. F. Lucey of Dallas (Newell et al. 204). Through this club, a drive was initiated to establish <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-republican-party-in-texas/>

a potent Republican Party in the Lone Star State (Newell et al. 204). The Republican Party of Texas entered transitional era between 1950 and 1978. During this period, this party increasingly gained strength and popularity. The number of Texans who identified themselves with the party at the state level increased significantly. Republican's presidential candidates secured more than 48 percent of votes during 1960s and 1970s, except in 1964 and 1968 (Newell et al. 217). 1961 marked the party's greatest achievement, when John G. Tower won the United States senate in a special election to replace Lyndon B. Johnson. This gave the party strong leadership, and its geographic and urban bases remained strong (Newell et al. 226). In 1966, Republican Party for the first time, elected two congressmen.

Texas elected William P. Clement Junior as the first Republican governor in 1978. Although Clement was defeated in 1982, successful campaign that was conducted by Phil Gramm, George H. W. Bush, and Ronald Regan in 1984, improved the party's popularity and strength significantly (Newell et al. 236). In 1984, Phil Gramm served as U. S. Senate on behalf of John Tower when he retired. Gramm joined Republican Party, and became the senator, after enjoying a strong support across Texas. During that time, Republican Party also achieved 15 seats in the State Legislature, 5 seats in Congress, and 107 local offices (Newell et al. 241). Kent Hance, a Republican, was appointed as Railroad Commissioner in 1987. Judge Thomas Phillips was also appointed Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme court. These were the first republicans to be appointed in these offices since Reconstruction.

1994 and 1998 marked Republican Party's era of breaking records. George W. Bush became the only second Republican Governor in 1994 after Reconstruction, after defeating Ann Richards in a general election (Newell et al. 241). <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-republican-party-in-texas/>

al. 366). Carole Keeton Strayhorn was elected as the first Austin's female mayor. In the same year, republican also gained 3-seat increase in the Texas House, and the other in the Texas Senate. In 1998, Republicans swept the statewide ballot, when they forged inroads into traditional Democratic constituencies (Newell et al. 371). George W. Bush also became the first republican to win governorship post back-to-back four-year term.

Tina Benkiser is the current chairman of the Republican Party of Texas. She has laid out clear goals that are determined at strengthening the Republican Party's infrastructure by recruiting quality candidates at the county level, and training grassroots leaders. In addition, she is also working to set up a Republican Party, which is diverse enough to reach out to traditional Democratic constituencies such as African Americans and Hispanics, who share most of the party's conservative beliefs (Newell et al. 398).

In the present, Republicans are serving in about 2, 000 elected offices across Texas, as compared to 1967 when there were only four Republicans serving in elected offices across the state (Newell et al. 480). Continued strength, and popularity of the party have marked the beginning of a new period of Texas politics. Republican Party is emerging as the most popular party in Texas at the dawn of a new millennium.

Works Cited

Newell C, Prindle D. F, Riddlesperger J. W. Texas Politics. New York: Cengage Learning, 2010. Print