

State of the state speech



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An Analysis of a of the Speech: Georgia 2006 This essay will address Governor Sonny Perdue's fourth of the Speech to the citizens of Georgia. Particular attention will be paid to the issues addressed, the ways in which the issues are presented, and the effectiveness of the political rhetoric employed by the speaker. For the purposes of this essay, the persuasiveness of the political rhetoric will be judged according to the consistency of the spoken statements as well as the context in which the issue are presented. Governor Perdue's initial issue, the troubled economy of Georgia, is presented quickly, is full of imagery, and appears to be swept away too quickly. His sole reference to the end of the recession is a painfully general statement asserting job growth. This job growth reference is sandwiched between references to the " dark clouds" of the past, the " parting clouds" of the past couple of months, and the sunshine waiting just around the corner (Perdue, 2006: np). The type of job growth is not discusses, no statistics are provided, and there is no discussion regarding the causes for this sudden increase in employment. In short, the overwhelming majority of his time sounds more like a weather report than a discussion of the state of the economy. He then quickly turns from employment to the issue of government spending.

There are inconsistencies as the Governor details his plans for government spending in the 2007 fiscal year. He begins on an optimistic note, stating that the Georgia has experienced a windfall of 1. 25 billion dollars in revenues. There are no explanations. He does not cite increased tax receipts, increased taxes, or any other sources for this revenue. The observer is left to ponder where this money has come from in a recessionary economy. He then details his spending plans for this billion dollars. He plans

to restore previously cut programs for education, health, and social welfare. This is where the inconsistency arises. At the same time that he cites one billion dollars in extra revenues he also admits that he has previously cut one billion dollars from spending. Is this the same one billion dollars Is he increasing spending in a recessionary economy How does he plan to pay for this He advises that this billion dollars will benefit the babies of Georgia, but he provides nothing to explain the source of these revenues or whether taxes will be increased.

His education policies are similarly sparse on details and trade-offs; however, the political rhetoric is much stronger than in the aforementioned topics. He proposes to dedicate 65% of local school district spending to the classroom. It turns out, upon a closer examination, that he is dedicating this money to the teachers. All teachers will receive from a 4% to 7% annual pay raise and other fringe benefits such as better health care. Even his proposals for increasing materials and supplies are, in effect, nothing more than cheap vouchers for teachers to redeem for out-of-pocket expenses. These vouchers are capped at a hundred dollars. In short, his classroom rhetoric is whittles down to financial allocations for teachers. The rhetoric, though, is powerful. He cites his mother's career as an English teacher, he cites the spiritual guidance that teachers provide, and he devotes most of his presentation to personal anecdotes. His emphasis on classroom improvement is at best misleading, but the rhetoric and the financial incentives would appear rather attractive to teachers whom vote in elections.

In the final analysis, Governor Perdue's State of the State Speech is long on imagery and tangential metaphor. He strays from the issues consistently, gives weather reports and recites fairy tales, and engages in inconsistent

and misleading statements. The issues are presented and the obfuscated. There is no elaboration, no examples of any specificity, and statements that later turn out to be untrue. A high school essay would fail if it engaged in such tomfoolery. The political rhetoric may appeal to some, but I found it to be condescending and misleading. The people of Georgia deserve far better from their chief executive.

Works Cited

Perdue, S. " Georgia State of the State Address 2006." Stateline. org. 1 September 2006
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