

Ripon Profile

Name: Tim Pawlenty

Hometown: South Saint Paul, Minnesota

Occupation: Governor of Minnesota

Previous Jobs: Attorney; Majority Leader, Minnesota House of Representatives.

Individual(s) who inspired me as a child: My parents. My Mom was a strong believer in the value of education while my Dad taught us the importance of hard work.

Historical figure(s) I would most like to meet: Abraham Lincoln. He successfully led our country through an epic challenge with great courage, foresight and skill. His will, wisdom, communication skills, and trust in the goodness of people made him one of the most impactful leaders ever. His commitment to liberty, prosperity and equality was world changing and remains incredibly inspiring today.

Issue facing America that no one is talking about: Education. The improvement and reform of our system of education must be addressed with the sense of urgency and boldness that it deserves as a key factor to our nation's continued success. The current system is outdated and it does not produce the results needed for far too many of our children, particularly the disadvantaged. Changes to the system must include increased parental involvement and school choice, higher academic standards, greater decision making at the school and classroom level, performance pay for teachers and staff, greatly enhanced teacher training, better use of technology, high school redesign, better alignment between our K-12 and higher education systems, more rigorous and relevant class offerings and more. Successfully improving our system of education is strategically, economically, socially and morally critical to America's future success.

What the Republican Party must do to be successful in the elections this year: Republicans must present ideas and solutions that address the concerns of Americans in a positive, hopeful and pragmatic manner, while remaining faithful to our principles.

