

Ripon

Profile

Name: Brian E. Sandoval

Occupation: Governor of the State of Nevada

Where and when was the first speech of your political career, and how many people were in the room? My first political speech happened around the time I ran for the state Assembly in 1994. I remember giving a speech to the GOP Central Committee in a theater at Wooster High School in Reno. There were probably about 50 to 100 people in attendance.

Thinking back on that speech, have the issues you talked about changed, or have the basic themes and priorities you first ran on essentially remained the same? The basic themes and priorities I first ran on have essentially remained the same – Nevadans, and I think all Americans, want economic opportunity, they want responsible government, and they want a better future for their children and grandchildren. I think then, as now, it's about the quality of life.

As you enter the third year of your first term in office as Nevada's Chief Executive, what has surprised you most about being Governor? I haven't been surprised so much as reminded of the resiliency of people and the love Nevadans have for their state. From my weekend travels to Elko and Ely in rural Nevada to reading to 1st graders at schools in Las Vegas and Reno, and the Nevadan who stops me in the grocery store to ask how they can support our troops, my fellow citizens share a deep and profound love for our state. From the thousands of miles we've put on the car to the hundreds of businesses I've visited, I've never once ceased to be amazed by how much we can – and do – accomplish together.

How has being a former state legislator and federal judge impacted and informed your approach to the job?

My experience has helped me exponentially. As a former state Assemblyman, I understand the Legislative process, I've sat on the committees, and I've moved bills through. As a former federal judge, I've evaluated all the facts. My training as a judge built on my experience in the Legislature – I've heard from lawyers and I hear from constituents and I listen to the facts. I want to make the best decision for the people of my state and my experience across all three branches of government helps me do that.

You are considered one of the rising stars of the Republican Party. What does the party need to do to expand their constituency and broaden their base? The gloomy predictions remind me of something President Lincoln said: "No matter how much cats fight, there always seems to be plenty of kittens." Some observers look at the catfights only and tend to miss the evidence of success and strength. We've got a Republican House of Representatives and 30 Republican Governors. And we debate. All across my state and our country, we debate. We do not believe in exactly the same things, or support the same solutions to problems large or small. But I believe that by reminding our friends, families, coworkers and neighbors of the values of the Republican Party, we will win. I see it in the waves of immigrants who have come to our country for more than 200 years. I see it in the stunning success of small business owners in my state. I see it in families, where parents strive to secure the future hopes of their children. And I find it when I remember that each one of us deserves the right to pursue our dreams. There is much to be built upon and I look forward to the days ahead.

