PATH TO ... citizenship

BY MATTHEW L. HIRSCH

Since the election, renewed attention has been focused on the issue of immigration reform, and like boxers circling in the ring, opposing sides seem to be inching toward some kind of compromise.

The Republican leadership recognizes that shifting demographics helped President Obama win re-election, and it does not want to be the party of "No" on immigration.

Both parties also understand that Congress is seen by the public as a pit of partisan bickering, and they view immigration as an issue that has the potential for a bipartisan bill they can claim as their own.

These are good reasons for compromise on immigration, but there are at least five other good reasons for supporting immigration reform, which includes legalization of the undocumented.

• The current system contributes to illegal immigration. Most Americans don’t realize that it takes years for a person with a green card to bring their spouse to the U.S. As a result, some separated spouses desperate the law by entering the U.S. illegally or by overstaying. Similarly, it takes years for a U.S. employer sponsoring a foreign professional to bring "him in the right way." Instead, faced with the pressing demands of trimming fruit, unoccupied hotels or intract grass, employers hire the undocumented. Reform is needed to align supply with demand in the family- and employment-based categories.

• Legalizing the undocumented will help to reduce the deficit. Everyone complains that the undocumented don’t pay taxes. In fact, the U.S. Treasury loses $11 billion a year in uncollected taxes. We can’t afford to lose that money.

For GOP, election effort was too little, too late

If Republicans want to win the White House, they might have to work a little harder.

BY DOUGT H. WEDMAN

Republicans have a month now to deliberate on and negotiate with the electoral disaster that took place on Nov. 6.

Second-guessing and 20-20 hindsight have been the order of the day, and political experts to no lesser nature than Karl Rove, Michael Barone and Dick Morris have been left red-faced over their pre-election predictions. Attempts for the GOP to explain what happened to the GOP have been legion; we Republicans failed to connect with Hispanics or with women or with students or we weren’t aggressive enough on Beng- hazi or perhaps we weren’t specific enough on our plans for, well, name your issue.

There might be truth in all of the above, but none of these or any combination of these really explain what happened on Election Day.

We’ve all heard the old saw that for every difficult problem there is a solution that is simple and wrong, but in this case the simple answer to our problem is the correct one, and it is that Republicans were just plain outnumbered by Democrats.

Now, I know this goes against the party line; that we knocked on a gallon more doors and made a gallon more phone calls than we did in 2008, and this was supposed to give us victory. It didn’t.

If Obama’s margin of victory was a little less than it was in 2008, it was because of a bit less enthusiasm for a candidate that was no longer fresh and new, and it wasn’t because of any great wave of enthusiasm for the GOP.

Oh, yes, make no mistake, the GOP base was excited and wanted to expel Obama from the White House. But its enthusiasm was too little and
GDP

Even more dramatically, much, much too late.

The Republican Governor, Tim Pawlenty, was the leader in our state with the highest unemployment rate during the 2000s. He was one of the biggest proponents of tax cuts, believing that it would be a key way to get businesses to invest and create jobs. However, this approach didn’t work and we are still feeling the effects of it today.

By 2012, the unemployment rate was hovering around 9%, a far cry from the low single digits that we had seen before the recession. It was clear that the state needed to do more to support its citizens.

One of the key things that we focused on was education. We needed to make sure that our children were getting the best possible education so that they could be prepared for the workforce of the future. We also needed to make sure that our schools were well-funded and that our teachers were paid fairly.

Additionally, we worked to improve infrastructure in our state. We needed to make sure that our roads and bridges were well-maintained and that our public transportation system was effective.

Finally, we focused on making our state more competitive on a global scale. We needed to make sure that our businesses were able to compete with companies from around the world.

As a result of our efforts, our state saw significant improvements in its economy. The unemployment rate began to decrease, and businesses started to invest in our state. We were able to create jobs and improve the quality of life for our citizens.

Unfortunately, the recession that started in 2008 had a significant impact on our state’s economy. The unemployment rate spiked, and many businesses struggled. It was clear that we needed to do more to support our citizens during this difficult time.

Throughout the recession, we continued to focus on education, infrastructure, and competitiveness. We also worked to provide resources to those who were struggling during this time.

As a result of our efforts, our state was able to weather the recession and come out stronger. We are now seeing growth in our economy, and our citizens are benefiting from these improvements.

In conclusion, the economic recession that started in 2008 had a significant impact on our state’s economy. However, by focusing on education, infrastructure, and competitiveness, we were able to create jobs and improve the quality of life for our citizens. We will continue to work to ensure that our state remains competitive and that our citizens are able to thrive.

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ADDRESS: Letters to the Editor
The Patriot-News
33 W. Third St.
Harrisburg, PA 17105
FAX: 717-233-4356

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