

Rockefeller thinks resurgence of Republican Party in Arkansas bodes well for the state

By Jeff Smithpeters
Sifings Herald

Republican candidate for lieutenant governor Winthrop Rockefeller said in an interview Tuesday afternoon that the resurgence of the Republican party in Arkansas can only bode well for the state.

"I think what is the strength of the party is that we have such a good crop at all sorts of different levels, from the county courthouse, right through to the statehouse and the state Capitol. Attractive, fresh, new candidates that people are prepared to hear, a message of optimism, a message of commitment to public service rather than to politics," he said.

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* has reported that Rockefeller is spending seven times what Charlie Cole Chaffin, the Democratic candidate for the office, is spending on her campaign. Asked about this controversy Rockefeller said, "I think that's just a campaign type of issue that is not something I think the voters are concerned about. But it makes good copy."

Rockefeller said he looks forward to working with Mike Huckabee, with whom he met before deciding to run for office. "I wanted to let him know I was considering and see if he was comfortable with having



Win Rockefeller

me as his lieutenant governor. Since then, he's been more than enthusiastic about it. He's told a number of groups that not only did he want me, that he needed me," Rockefeller said.

For Rockefeller, the important issues in Arkansas are primarily economic. "A serious problem facing our state is the fact that we are exporting so many of our youth to other states. Consequently, we have to try to import others to fill those jobs. We have to do a better job of marketing to our college graduates about the opportunities that exist here," he said.

"We need to stimulate the existing businesses that we have. Seventy percent of the job growth that has taken place in Arkansas. It costs more to attract new industry than it does to stimulate an existing one."

Like Huckabee, Rockefeller has been a critic of Arkansas's tax structure. He compared it to a car built with incompatible parts, which don't fit and work against each other. "I think our tax system does need a review," he said.

Rockefeller, the son of Winthrop Rockefeller who was governor of Arkansas from 1967-1970, made a stop in Arkadelphia Tuesday. This week his campaign schedule includes stops in at least 15 cities, including Gurdon, where he will be in the Forest Festival Parade on Saturday.

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According to a poll by Opinion Research Associates Inc. released last week, Rockefeller leads his Democratic opponent Charlie Cole Chaffin, receiving a 42 percent approval rating to Chaffin's 35 percent.

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