

Will Secession Find Success?

Erin Maylett

“Petitions to Secede Are Filed for 23 States Since Election” (Richardson), “Illinois Residents Join Secession Petition Trend” (CBS), “Secession Petitions Now Filed for All 50 States” (Stableford): with headlines like these starting a week after a heated presidential election, it’s no wonder that young people are asking, “What is going on, Is that even possible?” Of all the young adults (ages 18-29) that voted in the key battleground states (the states that could turn the tide of the election), 60% voted for Barack Obama (“2012 Voter Support”). It is understood that as Americans we have a voice. We get to participate in elections, such as the presidential election, to make that voice heard. However, the great thing about democracy is you don’t have to wait for one specific day to make that voice heard. What happens in Washington, D.C. affects us all year round. Yes, we elect the officials, and they are there to represent us—to help us be heard—all year round. The petitioning process is just one more way to get it done.



The first amendment of the U.S. Constitution grants us the freedom of religion, speech, press, peaceable assembly, and petitioning the government a redress

of grievances (to read more visit http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html). That means that since 1791, Americans have had the power to petition their government to effect change. With the technological advancements, it is even easier to do now than it was to do back then. Petitions can be created on the White House website

(<https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/homepage>).

Because there are millions of Americans, significant changes, such as secession from the Union, will not be made on a whim. In order to receive a response from the White House, petitions must accrue 25,000 signatures within 30 days of creation. In most cases, that is a sufficient amount of time to separate serious complaints from the rest. In the recent cases of secession, there has been a lot of response among the people. Less than a week after Obama was declared

victor in the election campaign, Texas had already exceeded the required number of signatures to garner a White House response (Richardson).

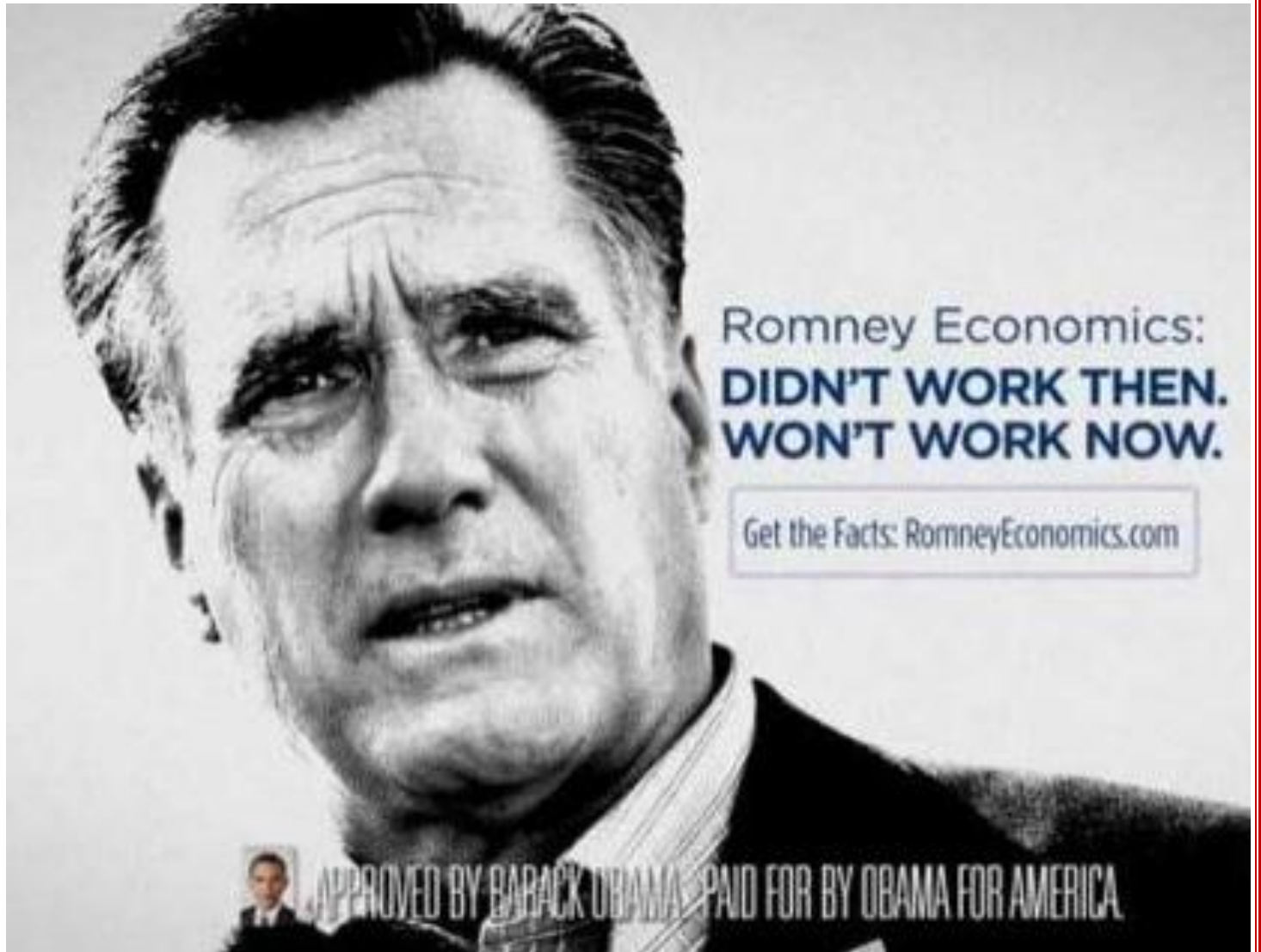
What exactly would the White House be responding to? It’s easy to hitch a ride on the bandwagon and sign just because everyone else is doing it, but a petition needs a foundation. It needs something to back its ideals. At the top of every petition page there

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is a brief stated argument as to why the petition was created. In the case of Texas seceding, it cites the injustice felt in regards to some government agencies and the poor economic situation of the country. Texas believes, because it ranks 15th in the world economies, it would be better suited to take care of its people (H).

The questions now stands, will they have success in secession. The answer: no. A Supreme Court case in 1869, after the last significant attempt at secession—the Civil War—“decreed by law what the Union’s Civil War victory had effected by force...that no state may secede from the Union” (“Texas v White”). In other words, short of another Civil War, they will not have success in secession. However, that does not mean that the petitions are in vain. The impact citizens have by creating and signing the petition is so much more than whether or not they succeed in leaving the union. They have shown support around common concerns that the White House will be able to address and work together to rectify.

In politics, it’s not always black and white. It’s a compromise to satisfy the needs of millions of others. With one man as president, it is impossible that he should know the specific expectations and needs of each individual. Through petitioning, we are able to bring those needs to the attention of those we have selected to act on our behalf. When you have a concern that you think others may feel as well, let your voice be heard. Be the change you want to see in the world. Contact your government leaders and make a difference. It’s your right.



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