

*The Arizona Comeback:
Leading with Values & Responsibility*
The Honorable Janice K. Brewer



Janice K. Brewer - Employment- Governor, State of Arizona; former Secretary of State, State of Arizona; former chairman, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, the state's fourth most populous county with more than three million residents; former senator, majority whip leader, Arizona State Senate; former state representative, Arizona House of Representatives. **Special Mention-** Member, Advisory Board, Hope and a Future; honorary board member, Arizonans for Children; former chairman of the board, RIAZ, Inc. (Recovery Innovations of Arizona); former co-chairman, Continuum of Care, an organization dealing with homeless issues; charter member, Luke Fighter Country Partnership, an organization dedicated to preserving the missions of Luke Air Force Base; former board member, Child Help USA; member, Arrowhead Republican Women's Club, Arizona Rifle and Pistol Association, Japanese-American Citizens League, and Life in Christ Lutheran Church. **Personal-** Mother of three, one of whom passed away in 2007; married to John; they live in Arizona.

Let me begin if I can by welcoming all of you to Arizona and to thank you for selecting our great state for your first meeting of the year. It is a privilege for me to spend time with such respected and thoughtful conservatives, Individuals who never quit believing in the same principles that made America the great nation that it is. I'm really proud that my home state is Arizona and has been a fighter fighting for those same issues that you all fight for and that includes everything from limiting the size of the scope of government, to holding Washington's feet to the fire when it comes to border security, to cutting red tape and getting bureaucrats out of the way so free markets can operate and business owners can do what they do best, create jobs.

I've been in public office for a long time, long enough to have learned that doing the right thing almost always means doing the hard thing. This is something that I learned at a very early age. You might know especially if you have had the chance opportunity to read my book *Scorpion for Breakfast*, that the most important mentor in my life was my mother Edna Drinkwine. She never worked outside the home but after my father died when I was eleven my mother knew she had no other choice but to support her family including my brother and me. And with her very meager savings she bought a small dress store and I worked side by side with her until the time she sold it when I was twenty years old. And that dress shop was truly a classroom for me, where I learned the importance of hard work, responsibility, honesty, and integrity and yes courage from my mother's daily example. I'm sure all of you have had mentors and teachers who instilled the principles that guide you and the values that inspire you. I needed my mother's example as I faced challenges on my own when I became Governor of Arizona four years ago. And I say challenges because as the former democratic governor, you may remember her, left Arizona for the Obama Administration leaving her successor that would be me, with the worst state budget deficit in the nation. That was some good bye gift wasn't it? We always say it was like arriving at the party when it is over and the waiter hands you the bill. No one could have known the mountain of challenges we faced in rebuilding Arizona but I never doubted our resolve to get the job done. We had to take responsibility and we had to do the right thing. there was absolutely no time to lose. Government red tape was my first target. So the first official act as Governor the day I was sworn in was to issue a moratorium against all new state regulations. Then we attacked wasteful and unsustainable state spending head on. And we trimmed payroll and personnel costs to the point that Arizona, per capita, now has the second fewest state employees of all states. Once the budget came back into balance we took steps to secure Arizona's long term economic future. That meant lowering taxes to make Arizona the best place in the country to do

business. Together with the Arizona legislature we lowered corporate taxes, lowered capital gains taxes, lowered corporate property taxes and lowered business personal property taxes. How is that for dealing with the fiscal cliff? You see in Arizona we understand that the best way to generate tax revenue is by putting more money in the pockets of the consumers and the business owners. We even rewrote the state's economic development model by establishing the Arizona Commerce Authority and armed it with a board of directors comprised of Arizona's best minds in business and industry. And guess what? Our plan worked. Over four years Arizona has gone from a three billion dollar deficit to a nearly one billion dollar surplus. Thank you. Including four hundred and fifty million dollars in the rainy day fund and for the first time and the next time or if we ever need it next time if a crisis strikes. We are very very proud of that. Of course we all know that low taxes, lean regulation and a stable government alone are not enough to produce a growing economy. We must have a quality workforce and that means strong schools and universities. I am proud that we are transforming education here in Arizona. We are asking more of our students and our teachers because our standards must be at least as high as the rest of the world if we intend to keep pace in a global economy. We are also grading our schools on scale. Every student understands A through F. if our schools aren't doing the job, we will know about it and so will the Arizona parents. And that is just a start because I believe it is critical. We start funding the student achievement we want rather than simply continuing to fund the system we have. So, I proposed the nation's first comprehensive performance funding plan for our district and charter schools. The idea is to reward schools based upon their performance and their improvement rather than just the usual per student formula. We will reward outcomes, a novel idea for government wouldn't you agree? That is all part of what I like to call the Arizona comeback. It is a model of recovery very different from the way the Obama Administration views spreading the wealth around. That is a little bit about our little conversation that we had on the tarmac, you might remember. I took that opportunity that afternoon to go to the airport and meet him on the tarmac. And I wrote a letter, a handwritten letter that I thought that I might share with him and I explained to him when I arrived there I said, "Mr. President, welcome to Arizona." "I even kept the sun up for you." And we exchanged a few words. I went with a happy heart that morning and that afternoon and I thought well this will be interesting but I wrote this letter. Hand wrote this letter telling him what we had been able to do in the state of Arizona to get it turned around. And I thought I would share it with him and so that maybe he might be able to implement a little bit of it on the federal level. So I'm talking to him and I'm telling him all of this and I said, "I have a letter here that I wrote." I didn't want to give it to him. I didn't want an embarrassing thing happening on the tarmac right? So I told him what was in it and he said, "Okay." and I said, "okay Mr. President I'm going to give it to you." So I handed it to him and he took it and I said, "Mr. President, I would like, if it is possible, the opportunity to sit down and talk to you about it." And he said something similar to this, really, he said, the last time you sat down with me you talked about it in your book and he said it wasn't very flattering. And I said, "Well Mr. President, I said, my book is a truth telling book." That is how I felt. He said something that I feel is very sarcastic and he walked away from me as you have all seen in those lines. I'm sure many of you have been in those receiving lines and he walked away and I turned to my right and I said, "Mr. President, I said, did you read my book?" I thought he was a little thin skinned worried about little Jan Brewers little book about how I talked about him in the book. And then I wanted to put that little dig in because I don't think he ever read senate bill 170. So that was the tip on the tarmac. Anyway let me tell you where they spent in Arizona we saved. Where they handcuffed private industry, we unleashed the free market. Arizona didn't have a secret formula for economic success no we followed the tried and true free market principle of competition, choice and limited government. You know those sorts of things that my hero Ronald Reagan was advocating more than three decades ago. I'm a California girl and he is my hero. And President Reagan was a strong proponent of federalism. He knew the importance of limiting the federal governments reach and keeping it out of the affairs of the states but making sure that the feds lived up to their responsibilities. and that is truly something so important to all of us. You know that he knew that that included border security and on that count the Obama Administration has failed the American people. The President has failed to protect our citizens, failed to preserve the rule of law, and failed in his basic mission to secure the border. Meanwhile Arizona is bearing the brunt of those

failures. Two years ago Robert Krentz, a rancher, and a loved member of his community, was shot to death on the same Cochise County ranch his family had called home for more than one hundred years and it happened just one county east of here where we are sitting this night. Also in 2010 Arizona southern border was the sight of another tragedy, the murder of a brave and noble border patrol agent Brian Terry. You might remember that he was gunned down by a border gang armed in part by our own federal government. An administration that allowed guns to be shipped into Mexico as part of the scandalous operation, fast and furious. You know, sometimes I wonder whether the struggle with the federal government will make us grow stronger especially because now we fully understand what is at stake during the next four years. We all fully understand what is right and we understand what is wrong. Wrong is failing to secure our border. Wrong is the White House releasing thousands of criminal aliens from our jails and turning them loose in the American communities like this one. Wrong is President Obama's accumulation of more debt than any administration in history. And then dumping on the backs of our children and our grandchildren, it's amazing. Wrong is millions of Americans unemployed and millions more who cannot find enough work. So what is right? Right is calling a terrorist, well, a terrorist. Right is calling a Christmas tree a Christmas tree and a menorah a menorah. Right is not being ashamed to salute the flag, wear a flag pin and say the pledge of allegiance or sing the national anthem with a tear in our eye. Right is working with all fair minded people to fix our nation's immigration system but never selling out our values nor allowing the legislative branch to be circumvented via executive fiat. That my friends, is like a king not the elected President. You know what should bother us the most? Is that we have a President who suggests that America is not an exceptional nation. What other country has sent our finest young women and men to fight on distant battlefields for justice and peace. What other nation has ever rose to such strength yet rose not to conquer but to protect. What other nation has acted not to dominate but to liberate. We are an exceptional nation alright. That is just a fact written in blood and sacrifice of American patriots and their families. Not long ago I had the rare honor of visiting our troops in Kuwait and in Afghanistan and I met with our wounded warriors at Walter Reed. It was an incredible opportunity to be with our young men and women in uniform and to thank them for their service and their sacrifice, seeing first hand their extraordinary courage and patriotism. Their love for this country and their commitment to freedom is something that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Just four weeks ago, during a trip to Santa Barbara to speak to the Western Women's Summit I had the great privilege of visiting the Reagan ranch. It is a captivating place so filled with Ronald Reagan's presence that you expect to see him walking hand in hand with Nancy from the ranch house to greet you. But President Reagan's words are still with us. In his final radio address to the nation in 1989 he said and I quote, "Whether we seek it or not. Whether we like it or not we Americans are keepers of the miracles. We are asked to be guardians of a place to come, a place to start again, a place to live in the dignity that God meant for his children may it ever be so." From the shadow of our disappointment as we face another four years of Barack Obama, I believe there is reason to lift our hearts. Just look around this room. It is filled with dedicated, enthusiastic, smart and principled conservatives who are committed to leading this country back to the principles of our founding fathers. I am honored to be able to stand with you this evening and I say to each of you we will never rest until we have taken back our country. Until we have restored it once again to that shining city on the hill.

Thank you. May God bless you and my God always bless and protect the United States of America.