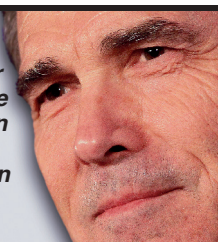


Rick Perry

Texas Governor likely to become a front-runner in the race for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination



■ **Born:** March 4, 1950, Paint Creek, Texas, to ranching family

■ **Education:** Degree in animal science from Texas A&M University in 1972. Serves in U.S. Air Force as C-130 transport pilot

■ **Political career:** Elected to Texas House of Representatives as Democrat in 1984. Joins Republican Party in 1989

■ **Anti-Washington:** Causes stir in 2009 when he suggests at anti-tax *Tea Party* rally that Texas could secede from Union

■ **Religion:** Especially popular with Christian religious conservatives – key base of Republican Party – after leading religious rally in August with prayer for American nation

■ **Family:** Marries Anita in 1982, they have two children