

Alex Long

Long is a real estate agent at Weichert Realtors in Fredericksburg. He specializes in deals involving farms, land and commercial/industrial properties.

Pursuit of a Master of Business Administration occupied the past three years for me. It has been a blessing not so much for what is learned, but learning the discipline of thinking and to constantly question. From that perspective, these are my thoughts as to the great recession and its impacts upon the Fredericksburg region.

The present great recession is beyond what America has dealt with in the past. The National Bureau of Economic Research defines a recession as a decline in GDP for two consecutive quarters; the recession supposedly ran its course December 2007 thru June 2009. Our present economic quagmire is a “jobless” recovery floating upon a sea of red ink from a federal government nearing bankruptcy. Classical fiscal and/or monetary stimulus exert little to no positive impact.

My learning experience from watching America pulled from pillar to post by competing ideologies/political parties is one of complete disgust. Exceeding that disgust is the fact both many Republicans and Democrats do find agreement in “free trade” concepts that rip the industrial heart from this nation. The outsourcing of industrial and job base is a huge contributor to our economic problems and those of the world. Proof is easily at hand in terms of electronics, your cell phone at hand, or the clothes on your back – America makes very little and consumes much on credit. Jobs are lost and credit squandered.

Military, general government and medical spending all have the commonality of federal funds and acting to sustain the Fredericksburg region. We are a company town and the company is nearing bankruptcy. Our region requires a diversified economy if we are to prosper.

A review of industrial property in this region finds little to no new manufacturing companies. Industrial lands sit idle. Unfortunately, the deck is stacked against us by ideologues who would rather their ideas of free trade prevail over the economic health of our nation. Tariffs will put cash into the U.S. Treasury. Tariffs will level the playing field with communist countries pursuing predatory trade policies. Tariffs should be high enough to ensure fairness but low enough to keep benefits of competition and true comparative advantage.

Our economic, political and social future firmly rests in a newfound Common Sense, as Thomas Paine wrote during the first American Revolution. Alexander Hamilton brought forth his report on Industries, which championed some protection for America’s fledging industries. Our future, your future is an active pursuit of common sense. You can make a difference and demand politicians act now. If they

do not, then do not support them. Seek out third-party candidates who will fight for America and bring back jobs and true economic prosperity. The future, the year 2012 begins with you and your selfless actions to preserve your self-interests. We must go back to the future and visit Thomas Paine to gain Common Sense and Alexander Hamilton to find the basis of a strong and diversified economy.