

WILSON ANNOUNCES ANEW, SAYS CLINTON 'FEARS' HIM / HE APPEARED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION. HIS TASK IS TO CARVE OUT A SPOT AMONG THE GOP HOPEFULS.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

JUNE 23, 1995 Friday FINAL EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: **NATIONAL**; Pg. A03

Length: 375 words

Byline: Rita Beamish, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

California Gov. Pete **Wilson** last night accused the **Clinton** administration of playing politics with an immigration investigation of his former maid and portrayed himself as the **GOP** presidential contender that President **Clinton** "**fears** most."

Wilson, announcing his candidacy on CNN's Larry King Live, sought to separate himself from other **GOP** candidates and **said Clinton** was "very skillful as a campaigner."

"But he's not good . . . rotten at government," added **Wilson**.

Underscoring his pro-abortion stand, **Wilson said** it was "a mistake" to block a Senate vote yesterday on **Clinton's** surgeon general nominee, Henry W. Foster Jr. because of his pro-abortion views.

A rival **GOP** presidential contender, Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, led the Senate opposition to Foster.

Responding to an announcement yesterday by the Immigration and Naturalization Service that it would investigate whether his former maid is in the country illegally, **Wilson** maintained the **Clinton** administration timed that disclosure to detract from his **national** TV appearance.

"It is of more than passing curiosity that this announcement comes . . . today, when there has been publicity about this show," **Wilson said**.

The reason, he contended, is that "**Clinton fears** me the most."

Wilson, his voice uneven as he recovers from throat surgery, turned to King's show as he struggled to establish himself **among** the nine candidates seeking the **GOP** presidential nomination.

But as he prepared for the show and a weekend campaign trip to Texas, Colorado and New Hampshire, word came of the INS probe, requested by California Democrats. The agency **said Wilson** was not a focus of the investigation.

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It was disclosed last month that the maid may have been in the country illegally when Wilson and his then-wife hired her, and failed to pay Social Security taxes for her. Wilson has made opposition to illegal immigration a central campaign theme.

On abortion, Wilson said, "government has no business making so personal and intrusive a decision" for women.

This weekend, Wilson is making his first formal campaign trip to New Hampshire. He was appear this morning in Houston at a conference of radio talk-show hosts, then fly to Denver to speak at a Lincoln Day dinner.

Graphic

PHOTO;

PHOTO (1)

1. Gov. Pete Wilson declared his candidacy for the GOP presidential nomination anew yesterday in an appearance on television. (A01)

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: US REPUBLICAN PARTY (92%); HEADS OF GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS (91%); POLITICAL CANDIDATES (91%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (90%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2008 (90%); IMMIGRATION (89%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (89%); US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (89%); US DEMOCRATIC PARTY (79%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); POLITICAL PARTIES (78%); POLITICS (78%); INVESTIGATIONS (78%); INTERVIEWS (77%); ABORTION (75%); SOCIAL SECURITY (70%); PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS (70%); CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS (50%); Us Campaign 1996

Organization: SURGEON GENERAL (57%); SURGEON GENERAL (57%)

Industry: PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS (70%)

Person: BILL CLINTON (79%); PHIL GRAMM (57%)

Geographic: HOUSTON, TX, USA (56%); DENVER, CO, USA (54%); TEXAS, USA (92%); CALIFORNIA, USA (91%); COLORADO, USA (79%)

Load-Date: October 28, 2002