

2010 Libertarian Party National Platform Planks

DRAFT Version from Committee Las Vegas Meeting

1.0. Personal Liberty

~~Individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. No individual, group, or government may initiate force against any other individual, group, or government.~~ Libertarians recognize individual self-ownership and the right to make personal choices. Our support of an individual's right to make choices ~~in life~~ does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices. With rights come responsibilities, and individuals must accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. Unlike adults, children realize certain rights as they mature and develop the ability to understand and accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Government exists to protect the rights of every individual.

1.1. Expression and Communication

We support full freedom of expression and assembly, and to petition for redress of grievances. We oppose government censorship, regulation or control of communications media and technology. We favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others. We oppose government actions ~~which either aid or attack~~ supporting, subsidizing or impeding any religion.

1.2. Personal Privacy

~~We~~ Libertarians support the protections provided rights recognized by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. Protection from unreasonable search and seizure should include records held by third parties, such as email, medical, and library records. Only actions that infringe on the rights of others can properly be termed crimes. We favor the repeal of all laws creating "crimes" without victims, ~~such as the use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes.~~

Note: PlatCom is recommending that the 1.2 drug language be moved to 1.5.

1.3. Personal Relationships

Sexual orientation, preference, gender, or gender identity should have no discriminatory impact on the government's treatment rights of individuals ~~by government~~, such as in current marriage, child custody, adoption, immigration, or military service laws. ~~Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships.~~ Government does not have legitimate authority to define, license or restrict personal relationships. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships.

1.4. Abortion

Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.

CONSIDERATION.

1.5. Crime and Justice

Government exists to protect the rights of every individual including life, liberty and property. Criminal laws should be limited to violation of the rights of others through force or fraud, or deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm. Individuals retain the right to voluntarily assume risk of harm to themselves, [such as the use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes](#). We support restitution of the victim to the fullest degree possible at the expense of the criminal or the negligent wrongdoer. We oppose reduction of constitutional safeguards of the rights of the criminally accused. The rights of due process, a speedy trial, legal counsel, trial by jury, and the legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty, must not be denied. We assert the common-law right of juries to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law.

1.6. Self-Defense

The only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights — life, liberty, and justly acquired property — against aggression. This right inheres in the individual, who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group. [We Libertarians](#) affirm the [individual right recognized by the Second Amendment](#) to keep and bear arms, and oppose the prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights of self-defense. We oppose all laws at any level of government requiring registration of, or restricting, the ownership, manufacture, or transfer or sale of firearms or ammunition. [Private property owners should be free to establish their own conditions regarding the possession or use of personal defense weapons on their own property.](#)

2.0. Economic Liberty

[Libertarians want all members of society to have abundant opportunities to achieve economic success.](#) A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected. All efforts by government to redistribute wealth, or to control or manage trade, are improper in a free society.

2.1. Property and Contract

Property rights are entitled to the same protection as all other human rights. The owners of property have the full right to control, use, dispose of, or in any manner enjoy, their property without interference, until and unless the exercise of their control infringes the valid rights of others. We oppose all controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates. We advocate the repeal of all laws banning or restricting the advertising of prices, products, or services. We oppose all violations of the right to private property, liberty of contract, and freedom of trade. The right to trade includes the right not to trade — for any reasons whatsoever. Where property, including land, has been taken from its rightful owners by the government or private action in violation of individual rights, we favor restitution to the rightful owners.

2.2. Environment

~~We support a clean and healthy environment and sensible use of our natural resources. Private landowners and conservation groups have a vested interest in maintaining natural resources. Pollution and misuse of resources~~

~~cause damage to our ecosystem. Governments, unlike private businesses, are unaccountable for such damage done to our environment and have a terrible track record when it comes to environmental protection.~~

Protecting the environment requires a clear definition and enforcement of individual rights in resources like land, water, air, and wildlife. Free markets and property rights stimulate the technological innovations and behavioral changes required to protect our environment and ecosystems. We realize that our planet's climate is constantly changing, but environmental [advocacy advocates](#) and social pressure are the most effective means of changing public behavior.

2.3. Energy and Resources

~~While energy is needed to fuel a modern society, government should not be subsidizing any particular form of energy. We oppose all government control of energy pricing, allocation, and production. Energy is needed to fuel a modern capitalistic society. Government should not be subsidizing any form of energy. Energy sources need to compete in an open and free market, which rewards new technological advances. Our current dependence on carbon-based fuel has led to our involvement in wars throughout the globe, threatened our national security, increased pollution, and diverted money that could be spent on finding new clean alternative energy options.~~

2.4. Government Finance and Spending

All persons are entitled to keep the fruits of their labor. We call for the repeal of the income tax, the abolishment of the Internal Revenue Service and all federal programs and services not required under the U.S. Constitution. We oppose any legal requirements forcing employers to serve as tax collectors. Government should not incur debt, which burdens future generations without their consent. We support the passage of a "Balanced Budget Amendment" to the U.S. Constitution, provided that the budget is balanced exclusively by cutting expenditures, and not by raising taxes.

2.5. Money and Financial Markets

We favor free-market banking, with unrestricted competition among banks and depository institutions of all types. Individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use as money any mutually agreeable commodity or item. We support a halt to inflationary monetary policies, ~~the repeal of legal tender laws and compulsory governmental units of account~~ and [unconstitutional legal tender laws](#).

2.6. Monopolies and Corporations

We defend the right of individuals to form corporations, cooperatives and other types of companies based on voluntary association. We seek to divest government of all functions that can be provided by non-governmental organizations or private individuals. We oppose government subsidies to business, labor, or any other special interest. Industries should be governed by free markets.

2.7. Labor Markets

We support repeal of all laws which impede the ability of any person to find employment. We oppose government-fostered forced retirement. We support the right of free persons to associate or not associate in

labor unions, and an employer should have the right to recognize or refuse to recognize a union. We oppose government interference in bargaining, such as compulsory arbitration or imposing an obligation to bargain.

2.8. Education

Education, ~~like any other service~~, is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality and efficiency with more diversity of choice. Schools should be managed locally to achieve greater accountability and parental involvement. ~~Recognizing that the education of children is inextricably linked to moral values,~~ ~~therefore~~ we would return authority to parents to determine the education of their children, ~~w.~~ Without interference from government. ~~In particular~~, parents should have control of and responsibility for all funds expended for their children's education.

2.9. Health Care

We favor restoring and reviving a free market health care system. We recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health insurance they want, the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they will use and all other aspects of their medical care, including end-of-life decisions. Individuals should not be penalized by health insurance related tax code inequities. People should be free to purchase health insurance across state lines.

2.10. Retirement and Income Security

Retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. ~~We Libertarians favor replacing~~ ~~would phase out~~ the current government-sponsored Social Security system, ~~and transition to~~ ~~with~~ a private voluntary system. The proper ~~and most effective~~ source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals. We believe members of society will become more charitable and civil society will be strengthened as government reduces its activity in this realm.

3.0. Securing Liberty

The protection of individual rights is the only proper purpose of government. Government is constitutionally limited so as to prevent the infringement of individual rights by the government itself. The principle of non-initiation of force should guide the relationships between governments.

3.1. National Defense

We support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression. The United States should both avoid entangling alliances and abandon its attempts to act as policeman for the world ~~and~~ ~~avoid entangling alliances~~. We oppose any form of compulsory national service.

3.2. Internal Security and Individual Rights

The defense of the country requires that we have adequate intelligence to detect and to counter threats to domestic security. This requirement must not take priority over maintaining the civil liberties of our citizens. The Constitution and Bill of Rights shall not be suspended even during ~~provides no exceptions for a~~ time of war. Intelligence agencies that legitimately seek to preserve the security of the nation must be subject to

oversight and transparency. We oppose the government's use of secret classifications to keep from the public information that it should have, especially that which shows that the government has violated the law.

3.3. International Affairs

American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world and its defense against attack from abroad. We would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid. We recognize the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights. We condemn the use of force, and especially the use of terrorism, against the innocent, regardless of whether such acts are committed by governments or by political or revolutionary groups.

3.4. Free Trade and Migration

We support the removal of governmental impediments to free trade. ~~Political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries.~~ Economic freedom demands ~~the unrestricted~~ movement of ~~human as well as financial~~ goods and capital across national borders. ~~However, w~~We support ~~control over the~~ prohibiting entry into our country of ~~those~~ foreign nationals ~~who pose~~ posing a credible threat to security, health or property. ~~We invite those not requiring public assistance to come to our country to embrace the American dream.~~

3.5. Rights and Discrimination

~~We condemn bigotry as irrational and repugnant. Libertarians embrace the concept that humans are born with inherent rights. We reject the idea that a natural right can ever impose an obligation upon others to fulfill that "right."~~ Government should ~~neither not~~ deny or abridge any individual's rights, ~~nor create or enhance~~ individual privileges, based upon sex, wealth, race, ~~color~~, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference or sexual orientation. ~~Parents, or other guardians, have the right to raise their children according to their own standards and beliefs.~~

3.6. Representative Government

We support electoral systems that are more representative of the electorate at the federal, state and local levels. As private voluntary groups, political parties should be allowed to establish their own rules for nomination procedures, primaries and conventions. We call for an end to any tax-financed subsidies to candidates or parties and the repeal of all laws which restrict voluntary financing of election campaigns. We oppose laws that effectively exclude alternative candidates and parties, deny ballot access, gerrymander districts, or deny the voters their right to consider all legitimate alternatives.

3.7. Self-Determination

Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of individual liberty, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to agree to such new governance as to them shall seem most likely to protect their liberty.

4.0. Omissions

Our silence about any other particular government law, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, or machination should not be construed to imply approval.