

Report of the
2010 Libertarian Party Platform Committee



Recommendations adopted December 12-13, 2009

2010 Platform Committee Members

LNC Appointees:

Chris Barber
Joe Hauptmann
Susan Hogarth
Brian Holtz - Vice-Chair
Alicia Mattson - Chair
Adam Mayer
Rob Power
Richard Randall
Jon Roland
Rebecca Sink-Burris

Top-Ten State Appointees:

Bruce Dovner (CA)
Guy McLendon (TX)
Geoff Scott (FL)
Paul Campbell (OH)
M Carling (NY) - Secretary
Jim Lark (VA)
Damon Dillon (IL)
Berlie Etzel (PA)
Debbie Schum (CO)
vacant (GA)

Alternates

LNC Appointees:

Aaron Starr

Top-Ten State Appointees:

John Shuey (TX)
Greg Lennon (FL)
Crystal Jurczynski (IL)
Clint Jones (CO)

NOTES:

This report is subject to amendment at the committee's next meeting on May 28th in St. Louis, prior to the national convention.

The committee has not yet determined in which order these proposals will be presented to the convention delegates. That decision will be made in our May 28th meeting.

The entire current platform can be found at: www.lp.org/platform. This report merely shows the portions for which the committee is recommending changes.

LEGEND:

Unchanged text from current platform

~~Text proposed to delete~~

[Text proposed to add](#)

1.0 Personal Liberty

*committee adopted by vote of 13-2
survey support 83.8%*

~~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. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.~~

Libertarians recognize individual self-ownership and the right to make personal choices. Our support of an individual's right to make choices 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

*first of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 9-1
survey support 89.1%*

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 any religion.

*second of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 9-4
survey support 87.8%*

We support full freedom of expression and 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~~ [supporting, subsidizing, or attack](#) [impeding](#) any religion [and favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others.](#)

1.2 Personal Privacy

*first of three recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 11-4
survey support 84.6%*

We support the ~~protections provided~~ [rights recognized](#) by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. 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.

*second of three recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 10-5
survey support 89.1%*

NOTE: A later proposal adds this exact phrase to the 1.5 Crime and Justice plank

We support the protections provided by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. 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.~~

*third of three recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 14-2
survey support 80.9%*

~~We~~ [Libertarians](#) support the protections provided 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.

1.3 Personal Relationships

*committee adopted by vote of 13-1
survey support 86.8%*

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

1.5 Crime and Justice

*committee adopted by vote of 10-4
survey support 83.6%*

NOTE: This proposal completes the move of this language from the 1.2 Personal Privacy plank to the 1.5 Crime and Justice Plank.

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

*first of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 14-1
survey support 89.1%*

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 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.

*second of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 7-6
survey support 82.9%*

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 right 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

*committee adopted by vote of 12-0
survey support 92.2%*

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.

2.2 Environment

*committee adopted by vote of 8-6
survey support 81.0%*

~~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 ~~advocates~~ [advocacy](#) and social pressure are the most effective means of changing public behavior.

2.3 Energy and Resources

*committee adopted by vote of 8-5
survey support 77.4%*

~~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.

2.5 Money and Financial Markets

*committee adopted by vote of 12-0
survey support 90.5%*

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.

2.8 Education

*committee adopted by vote of 14-1
survey support 90.1%*

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

*first of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 7-5
survey support 86.5%*

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.](#)

*second of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 10-2
survey support 90.7%*

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.
[People should be free to purchase health insurance across state lines.](#)

2.10 Retirement and Income Security

*first of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 16-1
survey support 84%*

Retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. We ~~favor replacing~~ would phase out the current government-sponsored Social Security system and transition to ~~with~~ a private voluntary system. The proper source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals.

*second of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 16-0
survey support 76.6%*

Retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. ~~We~~ Libertarians favor replacing the current government-sponsored Social Security system 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.

3.1 National Defense

*committee adopted by vote of 11-0
survey support 89.4%*

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

*committee adopted by vote of 15-0
survey support 92.6%*

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.

3.4 Free Trade and Migration

*first of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 17-0
survey support 72.8%*

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 capital across national borders. However, we support control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a [credible](#) threat to security, health or property.

*second of two recommendations for this plank
committee adopted by vote of 14-1
survey support 79.5%*

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

*committee adopted by vote of 7-4
survey support 93.4%*

~~We condemn bigotry as irrational and repugnant. Government should not deny or abridge any individual's rights based on 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.~~

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 deny or abridge any individual's right, nor create or enhance individual privileges, based upon sex, wealth, race, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference or sexual orientation.