

Libertarian Party of Texas



2006 Platform

Adopted in Convention
Houston, Texas
June 11, 2006

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF TEXAS

STATE PLATFORM

ADOPTED IN CONVENTION

HOUSTON

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**LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF TEXAS
PLATFORM**

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PREAMBLE

As Libertarians, we seek a world of liberty; a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their lives, and no individuals are forced to sacrifice their values for the benefit of others.

We believe that respect for individual rights is the essential precondition for a free and prosperous world, that force and fraud must be eliminated from human relationships, and that only through freedom can peace and prosperity be realized. Consequently, we defend each person's right to engage in any activity that is peaceful and honest.

The following pages set forth our basic principles and some of the policies derived from them. Our goal, however, is nothing more nor less than a world set free in our lifetime, and it is to this end that we take these stands.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, seek the maximum protection for the rights of all people against any violation, be it by other people, other nations, or our own government.

Every human being is born master of himself or herself, sole owner of his or her body and mind, free to live and act as he or she sees fit. It is our

principle that, so long as a person does not violate the rights of others, he or she should be left free and unrestrained. Government tends to operate on the opposite principle, that the State is master and the individual the servant, to act only as directed by those in power.

We deny the right of any government to coerce peaceful citizens. Governments exist for the sole purpose of defending the freedoms of their citizens. These freedoms include the right to life; the right to liberty of thought, speech and action; and the right to property. When government violates these freedoms- by initiating force against them, by prohibiting the act and means of self-defense, by censoring thought, word and deed, or by taking property without the consent of the owner- the government must be brought to heel.

Government is, essentially, raw concentrated force, and thus prone to abuse. It is established and tolerated only as the agent and servant of the people- not their master. The force of government must be used only in response to an attack, fraud, or other initiation of force against an individual, group or government by another individual, group or government.

Governments have no business interfering in

voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. Only to prevent or to rectify acts of fraud should government step in – never for purposes of redistributing wealth or providing special privilege to a few. Under no circumstances should government be allowed to prefer one set of people or handicap another, for whatever reason. All people should be equal under the law, free to deal with one another in a free market, the only system compatible with the principle of individual rights.

The power of government must be kept to the minimum necessary to protect the rights of its citizens, and no more. Granting more power than that minimum allows the corrupt, the ambitious, and the tyrannical to run roughshod over the rights of the citizen. It is our mission to contest this trend, to stop its expansion and to reverse it, working towards the ideal society envisioned by the Founders and enshrined in the Constitution of the United States.

1. EMINENT DOMAIN

Libertarians would close the exceptions and loopholes in the state prohibition against the use of eminent domain for private economic

development. Under no circumstances should government have the power to force the transfer of land from private entity to another against the will of the owner. Additionally, we believe that property owners displaced through eminent domain should be compensated 125% of the fair value of their property to compensate for their moving expenses and inconvenience.

2. GUN OWNERSHIP

Libertarians advocate the legalization of “open carry” firearms, including handguns, without a license. This includes recognition of the right of gun owners to bear arms while driving.

3. TOLL ROADS

Libertarians oppose the Trans Texas Corridor Act, a costly boondoggle intended to benefit land developers through the abuse of eminent domain and the power of highway monopoly. Further, we support legislation that would forbid tolls on any highway right of way which was obtained with tax dollars or through the use of eminent domain or

condemnation.

Libertarians uphold the right of private enterprise to construct and operate private toll roads, provided that those private toll roads were not established by coercive government power.

4. GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Libertarians support balancing the budgets at all levels of government within the state without increasing net taxation. We support a moratorium on bond issues and all other forms of borrowing money, giving top priority to the repayment of government debts. Once government debt and wasteful spending are eliminated, the savings must be returned to the people of Texas in lower taxes.

5. EDUCATION

Libertarians seek to abolish the Federal Department of Education and repeal all unconstitutional federal mandates on state-run public education.

Libertarians seek to challenge in the courts the

federal government's authority to regulate in any way the operation of state-run public schools.

Libertarians would establish a true competitive market in education by repealing all restrictions on transfer from one public school to another or between public and private schools. Further, we would repeal all laws which interfere with the right of parents to home school their children. To achieve this, we would repeal all compulsory attendance laws. The public school system, originally established as the school of last resort, should not enjoy a monopoly on the education of Texas children.

6. GAMBLING

Libertarians would legalize casino and other types of gambling. Libertarians recognize that fraud in gambling is just the same as any other form of fraud. Libertarians therefore seek to ensure that those who operate crooked games, including public officials, are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

7. JUDICIAL REFORM (Informed Jury)

Libertarians support judicial reform allowing juries not only to judge the case, but the validity of the law itself. All juries should likewise be informed of their rights to interpret the law and vote their conscience before deliberations in criminal and civil cases.

8. POLICE POWERS

Libertarians support legislation or judicial rules that forbid the execution of “no-knock” warrants unless there is probable cause that they are necessary to avoid death or serious injury to an innocent person. We require that all warrants be presented to the subject for examination, with an original signature and a copy of the affidavit attached, and that the subject have an opportunity to contact the court that issued the warrant to verify its validity.

9. IMMIGRATION AND BORDERS

Immigration is among the most contentious issues facing America today, and the specters of terrorism and war have only added fuel to

an already fiery debate.

By any reasonable measure, properly-regulated immigration is not just beneficial to the American economy but indispensable to the goal of a nation of freedom and opportunity. This nation was built on immigration. Allowing peaceful people to enter our country appropriately is not just an option. It’s a benchmark by which we measure whether or not we’re living up to the American ideal. Coupled with a benign foreign policy, it is what makes America the beacon of Liberty in what was once and would be again an otherwise dark world for most people.

Peaceful immigrants should be allowed to enter the US at conveniently located Customs and Immigration stations, subject only to brief vetting to ensure that they are not terrorists or criminals, and reasonable consideration of the nation’s ability to assimilate them.

Coupled with reasonable immigration for the peaceful, we must maintain a vigorous

national defense against our enemies.

Terrorists and criminals who attempt to enter the US via a Customs and Immigration station should be denied entry and, where applicable, arrested and detained or extradited.

Terrorists and criminals who attempt to enter the US via other points along its 95,000 miles of border and coastline should be treated as what they are: invaders against whom we must respond. As long as our defense forces restrain themselves to reasonable rules of engagement, doing this will much better guarantee our security with little risk of dire consequences to occasional innocent refugees.

The privilege of entering the United States is not the right to invade the United States in contest with its legitimate interest in securing itself against those who would do it harm. It doesn't matter whether the invasion is in the form of an organized military unit or a privately-executed mass movement assisted by a foreign government.

We should not have to worry about foreign nationals moving in just so they can eat out our substance on the dole. Still, the possibility of "safety net" abuse is not a good excuse for excluding immigrants. The so-called safety net is not a solution for the plight of poor immigrants. It is, for immigrants as much as for native-born citizens, an insidious enticement to laziness. Real immigrants don't want welfare, and private charities could handle their occasional start-up needs.