



# Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania

Platform (revised March 2023)



## 1. Free and Open Society

**1.1** No individual, organization, business, or government may engage in fraud, initiate force, or make a credible threat of force against any other individual, organization, business, or government. Individuals must be free to make choices for themselves, but must accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.

**1.2** 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 to keep and bear arms without being questioned as recognized by Article I, Section 21, of the PA Constitution and also the Second Amendment of the US Constitution. We oppose all laws at any level of government requiring registration of, or restricting the ownership, manufacture, transfer or sale of firearms or ammunition.

**1.3** We support full freedom of expression and oppose all government censorship, regulation or control of communications media and technology. We support 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. Parents or legal guardians have the right to raise their children according to their own standards and beliefs, provided the children's rights are not violated.

**1.4** Only actions that infringe on the rights of others can properly be termed crimes. We call for the repeal of all laws creating “crimes” without victims. The so-called “war on drugs” has failed utterly and has actually made recovery from addiction more difficult. In addition to its huge cost, it has incarcerated millions for victimless “crimes” and easy availability of potentially harmful substances is still widespread. Human individuals have the absolute right to decide what substances they will use or consume. We call for ending the war on drugs, commuting the sentences of non-violent offenders and expunging their records.

**1.5** Any sexual arrangement between consenting adults must be free from government interference. Individuals have the right to do what they wish with their bodies as long as they are not coercing or harming others. Criminalizing voluntary non-violent behavior has unintended consequences, and often harms those it was intended to aid. Consenting sex workers are not victims of human trafficking.

**1.6** We support the right to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. Protection from unreasonable search and seizure or warrantless spying must include records held by third parties, such as email, medical, and library records.

**1.7** We uphold and defend the rights of every person, regardless of any aspect of their identity, including sex, wealth, race, color, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Government has no power to define or “license” social institutions such as marriage, or to impose any restrictions thereon.

## **2. Open and Free Market Economy**

**2.1** We want all members of society to have abundant opportunities to achieve economic success. A competitive free market economy allocates resources in the most efficient manner which produces the most wealth and best satisfies everyone’s wants. Any person or group has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. We oppose all mandates or controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates. Competing currencies must not be prohibited. There must be no government laws regarding prevailing wages or arbitrary and capricious alcoholic beverage controls. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework within which voluntary trade is protected.

**2.2** 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, unless and until the exercise of their control infringes the valid rights of others. The injustice of “civil asset forfeiture,” where property is confiscated without compensation and without due process, must be ended immediately.

**2.3** Education, like any other service, is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality and efficiency with more diversity of choice at lower cost. Schools should be managed locally to achieve greater accountability and parental involvement. We support the right of parents to home school their children.

**2.4** We call for restoring and reviving free market health care and health insurance markets, thus achieving higher quality and efficiency with more diversity and lower costs. We support 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. No government must have any power to issue mandates regarding medical care, including vaccine mandates. Communication between doctors and their patients must always be completely unrestricted and confidential.

**2.5** We call for the repeal of laws regulating the physical requirements of buildings and equipment, especially for medical facilities where smaller practices may be shut down for no medically necessary reason.

**2.6** Labor markets must also be open and free. Terms of employment must always be voluntarily negotiable between employees and employers, including wages, overtime, working conditions and all benefits. Employers must be free to decide whether or not union membership is a condition for employment.

**2.7** We oppose occupational licensing and advocate that professional communities be free to establish their own standards.

### **3. Transparent and Limited Government**

**3.1** The legislative process, and the administration of government, must be open and transparent. Accordingly, all proposed legislation must be available in its final form for public review and comment at least 5 days before being voted on by the legislature. Before voting for or against any bill, it is the duty of each legislator to have personally read and understood the bill in its entirety. All state government budgets and expenditures must be available for review by the citizens on the Internet.

**3.2** Article I, Section 5 of the Pennsylvania Constitution specifies that all elections shall be free and equal. Pennsylvania's restrictive ballot access laws clearly violate that requirement and some provisions have even been declared unconstitutional in federal court. They must be repealed immediately. Any political party that can demonstrate a modicum of public support must be qualified to nominate candidates to appear on general election ballots. No taxpayer dollars should ever be spent for the benefit of any private political organization (such as funding primary elections or subsidizing conventions). Parties may establish their own rules for nominating procedures, primaries and conventions, but must bear all costs of their operations.

**3.3** Continued use of Plurality voting is a pernicious problem hiding in plain sight. Plurality works extremely poorly and actually is a significant cause of increasing polarization which is reaching dangerous levels. All public elections must use a much better voting method that enables voters to indicate both which candidates they like and which candidates they do not like.

**3.4** The practice of gerrymandering must end. Those in power must not have the ability to draw electoral districts to suit their own purposes. Instead, a completely impartial geometric procedure should be used to draw districts.

**3.5** Criminal laws must be limited to dealing with violations of the rights of others through force or fraud, or deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm. We support restitution of the victim to the fullest degree possible at the expense of the criminal or the negligent wrongdoer. The rights of due process, habeas corpus, a speedy trial, legal counsel, trial by jury, and the legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty, must not be denied. Judges must always inform juries of their common-law right to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law. It must not be illegal for anyone to so-inform jurors.

**3.6** We oppose the practice of government borrowing which creates an obligation for future generations. It is the equivalent of taxation without representation. Balanced budgets must be required for all governments at all levels. Budgets must be balanced by greatly reducing spending, not by increasing taxes. Whatever taxes there are must be few in number, simple, broadly based, pay-as-you-go and must not require that citizens file tax returns.

**3.7** No government should operate, subsidize or collaborate with any business as this is "crony statism." We call for abolishment of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. We also call for the elimination of alcoholic beverage licensing which just restricts competition and creates opportunity for political corruption.

**3.8** The primary mission of the Pennsylvania National Guard is to aid Pennsylvanians in the most desperate times. National Guard members have been unavailable to fulfill that mission in recent decades because of unwarranted commitments to the Federal executive branch. Thus, we call on the Governor of Pennsylvania to withhold or withdraw approval of the transfer of the Pennsylvania National Guard to Federal control in the absence of:

**a)** A military invasion of the United States, or

**b)** An insurrection, or

**c)** A calling forth of the Guard by the federal government in a manner provided for by Congress to execute the Laws of the Union, provided that said Laws were made in pursuance of the delegated powers in the Constitution of the United States.