

Draft Platform Report from the LPPA Governance Committee

The Following Document is a draft platform report from the LPPA Governance Committee. The purpose of publishing our draft report is to solicit feedback from members prior to the deadline for member submitted amendments (January 1st) and the deadline for the committee report (February 1st). The Committee report consists of two amendments.

The first amendment is a minor language change to the statement of principles, meant to improve readability. This amendment requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote at the state convention.

The second amendment is a major reorganization of the platform, addition of planks, and rewording of some planks. The Platform was reorganized in order to create a better flow of ideas, starting from basic principles and building out. Throughout the reorganization there are also comments when plank pieces were split up and moved apart, so people can see where the parts of the previous platform were relocated in this amendment. A section titled 'Libertarian Principles' was added to outline first principles and serve as building blocks to reference for the rest of the platform. Another section was added to the end titled 'Pennsylvania Issues' in order to add planks specific to PA topics. This amendment requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote at the state convention.

The Following pages show a markup version of these amendments so members can follow what changes were made. In addition, at the end there is a draft of what the platform would look like if the committee report was adopted.

Thank you,
Governance Committee

Statement of Principles of The Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania

Simply stated, the libertarian philosophy is, “Live and let live.” Each individual must be free to do as she or he pleases as long as she or he does not infringe upon the **equal** rights of others **to do the same**. This is the central idea of our Declaration of Independence.

More specifically, “live and let live” means that force must not be used on an individual, unless that person has initiated the use of force or fraud. This is the simple but powerful principle from which Libertarian Party’s positions on all issues are logically and consistently derived.

All laws empower the government to use force on people. Some laws deter and punish those who would initiate force, as in murder, robbery or assault, for example. These laws are entirely consistent with the legitimate purpose of government, which is to protect and secure our rights. However, many other laws just restrict or even violate our rights, quite the opposite of protecting and securing them. Thus, our governments, as they grow ever larger, utilize oppressive force on peaceful people through their complex thicket of laws.

Libertarians advocate maximizing liberty by eliminating the use of force on honest, peaceful people.

Platform of the Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania

Libertarian Principles:

1.1 Self Ownership: Every person has exclusive control over their physical body; it is inalienable property which can only be rightfully owned by the person whose body it is. A person who does not own their body completely is the slave of another to some degree.

1.2 Property rights: Ownership of external, scarce resources is determined in accordance with the principles of homesteading, contractual title transfer, and restitution to compensate victims of property rights violations. Property owners have the right to have and use their property as long as they do not violate the rights of others.

1.3 Non Aggression Principle: Aggression is the initiation of force, or the threat thereof, against, or the unconsented-to use of another person’s property; including fraudulent takings of property. All acts of aggression are illegitimate and unjust, whether committed

by private actors or the state. Use of force is legitimate as defense against/retaliation for aggression.

1.4 Individualism: The individual person is the basis for all rights, agency, thought, and action.

1.5 Voluntary interaction: Humans are social creatures who identify with and organize themselves into groups. People interact with one another either voluntarily or forcefully. Forceful interaction is either aggression or in response to aggression. Voluntary interaction is a necessary foundation for a peaceful, civilized society.

1.6 The State: The State is an organization which attempts to forcefully maintain a monopoly on violence and decision making in society. The State is arguably the most dangerous aggressor in 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.~~

Application of Principles

Defense of Liberty:

2.14.2 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, ~~or~~ any other tools of defense.

2.24.7 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.~~

Freedom of Thought and Expression:

2.34.3 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~~ forms of expression that do not violate the rights of others. ~~We oppose government actions which either aid or attack any religion.~~ Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not

mean approval ~~that we necessarily approve or disapprove~~ of those choices.

2.4 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.

Freedom of Association

2.5 We support freedom of association as integral to individual rights. A free society demands all individuals be able to voluntarily associate with or dissociate from anyone for any reason. We oppose all forms of segregation and anti-discrimination laws.

2.61.5 Any ~~sexual~~ arrangement between consenting adults which does not involve force or fraud, 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.~~

2.7 Government has no power to define or "license" social institutions such as marriage, or to impose any restrictions thereon.

Voluntary Exchange

2.8 We support full separation of economy and State. Governments must not regulate, restrict, or prohibit voluntary exchange. We oppose all forms of economic lockdowns as egregious violations of individual rights and voluntary exchange.

2.93.7 No government should operate, subsidize, license, or collaborate with any business as this is "crony statism," or corporatism. The use of corporatist institutions to restrict the rights of individuals under the guise of "private companies can do what they want," is as much an act of aggression as overtly statist institutions doing the same.

2.10 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.~~

2.116 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 ~~or disqualification~~ for employment.

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

2.135 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~~.

Criminal Justice

2.143-5 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. 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~~ provide a mandatory instruction at every criminal trial to inform juries of their common-law right to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law, ~~and thus their ability to nullify the prosecution~~. It must not be illegal for anyone to so-inform jurors.

2.151-4 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.

2.162-2 ~~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.

Privacy

2.174-6 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~~ bank records.

Education

2.183 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~~ educate their children without government involvement or influence.

Healthcare

2.194 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~~ may 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.

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.

3.56 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.

Pennsylvania Issues

4.13-8 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.

4.2 Individuals have the inherent right to make decisions regarding the food they grow, purchase, sell, and consume. Small scale and local food producers play a vital role in providing diverse, high-quality food options to individuals. Government regulations on food production violate consumer choice, stifles innovation, and cartelizes food production. We support the deregulation of food markets, the lifting of anti-farming zoning restrictions, the repeal of ineffective and unnecessary food safety regulations, and the abolition of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

~~**4.3** 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.~~ We support the abolition of the Liquor Control Board and the deregulation of the importation, exportation, production, transportation, selling, and consumption of alcohol.

4.4 Plentiful, reliable, and cost effective energy is essential for human flourishing. We support the deregulation of energy markets, ending restrictions on energy production and export, ending energy subsidies, and the abolition of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

4.6 We support the abolishment of the Pennsylvania department of education and the repeal of state standardized tests and curriculum.

4.5 We support the abolition of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the privatization of all transportation goods and services.

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