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## Issues

The Libertarian Party takes a “**live and let live**” approach to your life and public policy. We believe that, at most, governments should exist only to defend and protect the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Libertarianism can also be described as a “best of both worlds” approach, combining fiscal responsibility with social acceptance; we should not spend more than we take in and Government has no place in your bedroom or what you do with your body. We’ll actual do what both parties say they are good at, instead of offering empty rhetoric to get elected. Our solutions are guided on:

- A **free-market economy** and the abundance and prosperity it brings
- A dedication to **personal freedom** and **civil liberties**
- A foreign policy of **free trade, non-intervention, and peace**

Most people agree with our positions but are not familiar with the Libertarian Party, or have been misinformed about what Libertarians really believe. The fact is many people are Libertarian, but they just don’t know it yet. Some people might not agree with all Libertarian positions on all issues and that is perfectly okay!

**CHALLENGE:** Please review our positions on each issue. After you review our positions on major issues please ask yourself the following:

- Is this how the mainstream media, the Democrats and the Republicans portray us?
- Do our positions make more sense?
- Are you a Libertarian?



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## Jobs and Unemployment



### **Libertarians supports capitalism and free market solutions to job creation**

Maine needs a plan to encourage new businesses to move here. We can achieve this with less bureaucracy and intervention from city, county, state and the federal governments.

Libertarians believe that reducing the size and scope of government is the best way to improve the job market. Government cannot allocate resources as effectively as market forces, so even programs explicitly designed to reduce unemployment are likely to be counter-productive. Each high paying government job exists at the expense of every private sector job. The result is less private sector investment, smaller margins, and a poor environment for business. The best way to improve the labor market is by reducing the barriers erected by government. This includes lowering taxes, reducing or eliminating business license requirements, provide easier



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## Taxes



### Respecting the fruits of your labor Just Defend Our Rights

Libertarians believe that if government's role were limited to protecting our lives, rights and property, then America would prosper and thrive as never before. Then the federal government could concentrate on protecting our Constitutional rights and defending us from foreign attack. **A federal government that did *only* those two things, could do them *better* and at a small fraction of the cost.**

### How Can We Cut Taxes?

Instead of tending to the basics, government has grown into a bloated conglomerate of political services that gets larger every year — with no end in sight.

For example, politicians spend millions of dollars to urge people not to smoke — while spending more millions to subsidize tobacco farmers. They send billions overseas for foreign aid — while the federal deficit swells. They spend millions to subsidize public art — while working families struggle to pay their taxes.

Politicians also run trains, bail out savings and loans, construct houses, sell insurance, print books, and build basketball courts — you name it! **But the fact is, every service supplied by the government can be provided better and cheaper by private business.**

## Privatize And Cut Taxes

All over the world, governments are busy selling airlines, power plants, housing, and factories to private owners. Where inefficient government bureaucrats lost money and squandered tax dollars, hard-working private owners now make profits and create new jobs. **Why can't we do the same thing in America?**

## Defend America: Cut Taxes

Military expenses are over \$250 billion a year! A large percentage of this is spent overseas to defend wealthy countries like Germany and Japan — who then wallop us in international trade. Let's take them off military welfare. **We can defend America better and save at least \$100 billion a year in taxes.**

## Stop Bailing Out Industry

No one has the right to cover his losses at taxpayer expense — and yet wealthy corporations demand exactly that. The federal government has bailed out railroads, banks, and other corporations with your tax dollars. **This must stop!**

## Replace Welfare: Cut Taxes

The bulk of your welfare tax dollars goes to pay the handsome salaries of well-educated welfare workers. The poor get little from government welfare except meager handouts and a cycle of despair. Let's get government out of the charity business. **Private charities and groups do a better and more efficient job of helping the truly needy get back on their feet.**

## Why An Income Tax?

Before 1913, federal income taxes were rare and short-lived. America became the most prosperous nation on earth. The U.S. Government did not try to police the world or play “nanny” to everyone from cradle to grave. People took responsibility for themselves, their families, and their communities. That is how the founders of America thought it should be. **And it worked. It can again!**



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## Government Spending



### Libertarians want to end wasteful and inefficient government spending

Libertarians think most government spending is very foolish and wasteful. In the federal government politicians spend millions of dollars to urge people not to smoke, while spending millions more to subsidize tobacco farmers. They send billions overseas for foreign aid while the federal deficit swells. They spend millions to subsidize public art while working families struggle to pay their taxes. Politicians also run trains, bail out banks, construct houses and buildings, sell insurance, print books, and build basketball courts, the government tries to do everything! But the fact is, every service supplied by the government can be provided better and cheaper by private business in a competitive marketplace. The bulk of your welfare tax dollars goes to pay the handsome salaries of well-educated welfare workers. The poor get little from government welfare except meager handouts and a cycle of despair.

Libertarians want to stop the wasteful spending of taxpayers and get government out of “non-essential” expenses.

## **Does Government Have a Revenue or Spending Problem?**

## **Why Politicians Don't Cut Spending**





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## Minimum Wage



**Libertarians advocate a world not of mandates, force, and decrees, but of voluntary agreements, opportunity, and freewill**

On the surface, raising the minimum wage seems like an easy way to boost the fortunes of the poor and working class. Legislators simply decree that wages must be higher, and low-income workers would instantly be better off. Or would they?

To begin, it's important to note that working people *do* have justifiable reason to be unhappy. Not long ago, the minimum of \$6.15/hour was seen as sufficient. But not anymore. What happened?

The answer is that the dollar has been eroding in value. Since just the year 2000, the dollar has

lost 25% of its purchasing power. It has lost an incredible 96% of its value over the past 100 years. It's no wonder that many feel squeezed. This unstable valuation has put America's financial system on a foundation of quicksand and jeopardized the living standard of every person, as employees find out that their earnings don't buy as much as they once did, and as savers and seniors discover that their rainy-day funds and retirement accounts aren't worth nearly as much as when they had worked to earn that money.

## Does the Minimum Wage Hurt Workers?

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## Social Security



### Securing Your Retirement

Politicians in Washington are stealing your future.

Every year, they take 12.4% of your income to prop up their failed Social Security system – a system that is heading toward bankruptcy.

If you are an American earning the median income of \$31,695 per year, and were given the option of investing that same amount of money in a stock mutual fund, you would retire a millionaire – without winning the lottery or a TV game show. That million dollars would provide you with a retirement income of over \$100,000 per year – about five times what you could expect from Social Security. Even a very conservative investment strategy would yield three times the benefits promised by Social Security.

## **Libertarians Want You to Control Your Own Money & Future!**

Libertarians believe you should be able to opt out of Social Security and invest your money in your own personal retirement account. An account that you own and control – one that politicians can't get their hands on.

Republicans and Democrats say it can't be done – that your Social Security taxes are needed to pay benefits to today's retirees. Instead of letting you invest in your own future, they want you to have faith that someone else will pay your benefits when it comes time for you to retire. Although most won't admit it publicly, their "solutions" to the Social Security crises all come down to some combination of tax increases and benefit cuts.

Libertarians know that there's a better way.

Countries like Chile, Mexico, Britain, and Australia have successfully made the transition from their failed Social Security systems to healthy systems based on individual retirement accounts. In Chile, over 90% of workers have opted out of the government-run system. It's time America did as well.

The federal government owns assets worth trillions of dollars – assets that it simply doesn't need to perform its Constitutional functions. By selling those assets over time, we can keep the promises that were made to today's retirees, and to those nearing retirement, while freeing the rest of America from a failed Social Security system.

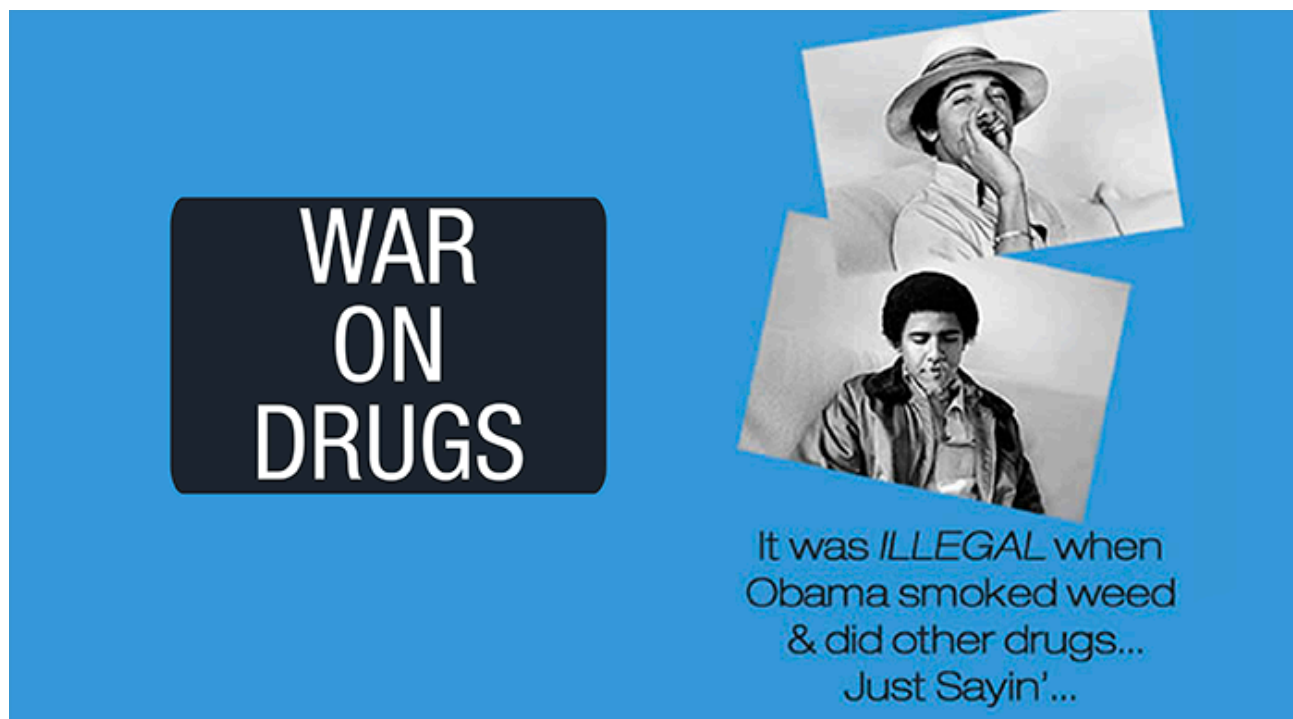
Libertarians will introduce and support legislation to give you that choice, and put you in control of your own retirement future.

## **Social Security vs. Private Retirement**



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## War on Drugs



### Libertarians want to end the failed “War on Drugs” and legalize marijuana

What right could be more basic, more inherent in human nature, than the right to choose what substances to put in one’s own body? Whether we’re talking about alcohol, tobacco, herbal cures, saturated fat, or marijuana, this is a decision that should be made by the individual, not the government.

Drug-related crime (which is over 85% of all crime) is caused not by drugs but by drug laws that make it expensive and a monopoly of criminals. This stance isn’t “approving” of drugs; it’s just realism, prohibition doesn’t work. In addition to the significant financial strain, the worst hazard of the drug war may be the expansion of police powers through asset forfeiture laws, “no-knock” warrants and other “anti-drug” measures. These tactics can’t stop the drug trade,

but they are making a mockery of our supposed Constitutional freedoms.

Libertarians would leave in place laws against actions which directly endanger the physical safety of others, like driving under the influence of drugs, or carrying a firearm under the influence.

## Make Marijuana Legal

Over a million and a half Americans were arrested last year on drug charges, and nearly 40% of those arrests were for marijuana possession alone. Does this make sense?

A recent Gallup poll reports that 58% of Americans now agree that marijuana should be legalized, a dramatic increase in support that reflects Americans' increased knowledge and understanding of the issue. Proposals to regulate marijuana similarly to alcohol have been considered in several states, and the Libertarian Party has supported those efforts; Libertarians believes the federal government should end its prohibition mandate and allow each state to pursue its own desired policy.

Before we can get serious about reducing the harms associated with drugs, we have to accept that there will never be a drug-free society. The 2012 Libertarian Presidential Candidate, Governor Gary Johnson said "it will never be legal for a person to smoke marijuana, become impaired, and get behind the wheel of a car or otherwise do harm to others, and it will never be legal for kids to smoke marijuana. But we have to understand that marijuana is our nation's #1 cash crop despite the prohibition; it will always be available to those who really wish to use it."

When polled, high school kids say marijuana is easier to get than alcohol. Is this perhaps because they buy from black market dealers who do not ask for ID? Legalization of marijuana would instantly and dramatically improve conditions on our southern border. Marijuana is Mexico's #1 illegal export; legalizing it would result in dramatically reducing the power and wealth of the drug lords, and instantly helping to restore stability in a nation whose stability and sustainability is truly vital to our economic and national security interests. If we truly wish to reduce border violence, take the profit out of it.

To create a drug-free society, we'd have to build a police apparatus so intrusive that all Americans would have to be under surveillance 24 hours a day... presumably for their own good. Should citizens of the "land of the free" ever stand for that? Abuse of hard drugs is a health problem that should be dealt with by health experts, not a problem that should be clogging up our courts, jails, and prisons with addicts. Instead of continuing to arrest and incarcerate drug users, we should seriously consider the examples of countries such as Portugal, the Netherlands, and Uganda, and we should ultimately choose to adopt policies which aim to reduce death, disease, violence, and crime associated with dangerous drugs. Honest, effective education will be key to succeeding with this transition. America has cut teen

cigarette use in half, not by criminalizing possession and use, but through a combination of honest education and sensible regulation. We can never totally eliminate drug addiction and drug abuse. We can, however, minimize these harms and reduce the negative effects they have on society by making sure drug abusers are able to access effective treatment options (jail is not an effective treatment option).

Lastly, Libertarians believe the government should not be able to tell us what we can and cannot put into our body.

## **What You Should Know About Drug Prohibition**

## **Why Are So Many Violent Criminals Walking Free?**



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# Marriage Equality



## Libertarians support marriage equality

Gay couples deserve the same property rights as straight couples. People, regardless of their sexual identity, should have the same access to due process when applying for any type of state license. Relationships of love should not be determined by the state, nor should any state certified marriage be given more legal protection than another.

Libertarians do not believe it is the government's job to define marriage, however, as long the government is in the marriage business the law should not favor one group over another. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices, personal relationships and marry whomever they want regardless of sexual identity, preference, gender.





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# Immigration



## Immigration Law Should Reflect Our Dynamic Labor Market

By [Daniel T. Griswold](#)

Among its many virtues, America is a nation where laws are generally reasonable, respected and impartially enforced. A glaring exception is immigration.

Today an estimated 12 million people live in the U.S. without authorization, 1.6 million in Texas alone, and that number grows every year. Many Americans understandably want the rule of law restored to a system where law-breaking has become the norm.

The fundamental choice before us is whether we redouble our efforts to enforce existing immigration law, whatever the cost, or whether we change the law to match the reality of a

dynamic society and labor market.

Low-skilled immigrants cross the Mexican border illegally or overstay their visas for a simple reason: There are jobs waiting here for them to fill, especially in Texas and other, faster growing states. Each year our economy creates hundreds of thousands of net new jobs — in such sectors as retail, cleaning, food preparation, construction and tourism — that require only short-term, on-the-job training.

At the same time, the supply of Americans who have traditionally filled many of those jobs — those without a high school diploma — continues to shrink. Their numbers have declined by 4.6 million in the past decade, as the typical American worker becomes older and better educated.

Yet our system offers no legal channel for anywhere near a sufficient number of peaceful, hardworking immigrants to legally enter the United States even temporarily to fill this growing gap. The predictable result is illegal immigration.

In response, we can spend billions more to beef up border patrols. We can erect hundreds of miles of ugly fence slicing through private property along the Rio Grande. We can raid more discount stores and chicken-processing plants from coast to coast. We can require all Americans to carry a national ID card and seek approval from a government computer before starting a new job.

Or we can change our immigration law to more closely conform to how millions of normal people actually live.

Crossing an international border to support your family and pursue dreams of a better life is not an inherently criminal act like rape or robbery. If it were, then most of us descend from criminals. As the people of Texas know well, the large majority of illegal immigrants are not bad people. They are people who value family, faith and hard work trying to live within a bad system.

When large numbers of otherwise decent people routinely violate a law, the law itself is probably the problem. To argue that illegal immigration is bad merely because it is illegal avoids the threshold question of whether we should prohibit this kind of immigration in the first place.

We've faced this choice on immigration before. In the early 1950s, federal agents were making a million arrests a year along the Mexican border. In response, Congress ramped up enforcement, but it also dramatically increased the number of visas available through the Bracero guest worker program. As a result, apprehensions at the border dropped 95 percent. By changing the law, we transformed an illegal inflow of workers into a legal flow.

For those workers already in the United States illegally, we can avoid “amnesty” and still offer a pathway out of the underground economy. Newly legalized workers can be assessed fines and back taxes and serve probation befitting the misdemeanor they’ve committed. They can be required to take their place at the back of the line should they eventually apply for permanent residency.

The fatal flaw of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act was not that it offered legal status to workers already here but that it made no provision for future workers to enter legally.

In the 19th century, America’s frontier was settled largely by illegal squatters. In his influential book on property rights, *The Mystery of Capital*, economist Hernando de Soto describes how these so-called extralegals began to farm, mine and otherwise improve land to which they did not have strict legal title. After failed attempts by the authorities to destroy their cabins and evict them, federal and state officials finally recognized reality, changed the laws, declared amnesty and issued legal documents conferring title to the land the settlers had improved.

As Mr. de Soto wisely concluded: “The law must be compatible with how people actually arrange their lives.” That must be a guiding principle when Congress returns to the important task of fixing our immigration laws.

*Daniel Griswold is the director of the Cato Institute’s Center for Trade Policy Studies.*

## **Immigration Myths Debunked**



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## **Immigration Myths Debunked**





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## Lowering the Drinking Age



### **Libertarians support lowering the age to consume alcohol to adults 18 years or older**

Adults are considered to be 18 years of age. Turning 18 provides a person the rights and responsibilities of adulthood to vote, get married, enter into contracts, serve on juries, join the military and fight in wars-which includes taking on the responsibilities of life and death-and be prosecuted as adults. To adults between the ages of 18 and 20, those who in the eyes of the law are, in every other respect legal adults, it is Prohibition.

Under the federal constitution, determining the legal drinking age is a state matter and Congress has no authority. On July 17, 1984 the National Minimum Drinking Act of 1984 was passed by Congress. This law required all states to legislate and enforce the age of 21 as the minimum age to purchase and publicly possess alcoholic beverages. Any state that was found

not enforcing this law would be subjected to a 10% decrease in the annual federal highway apportionment for that state. Libertarians feel the new revenues would far outweigh the decrease in annual funding from the federal government.

Many productive, civilized countries manage with a lower drinking age: no minimum in China or Portugal, 14 in Switzerland, 16 in most of Europe.

By lowering the drinking age to 18, people could learn about alcohol long before they turned 16 and get their driver's license. We should prepare young adults to make responsible decisions about alcohol in the same way we prepare them to operate a motor vehicle; to exercise the full privileges of adulthood so long as they demonstrate their ability to observe the law. Alcohol is a reality in the lives of young adults. We can either try to change the reality – which has been our principal focus since 1984, by imposing Prohibition on young adults 18 to 20 – or we can create the safest possible environment for that reality.

## 21: Is It Time to Lower the Drinking Age?

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## Civil Liberties



### **Champions of civil liberties and staunch protectors of your privacy**

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.

Police are no longer protecting rights of civilians; they are protecting people from making any decision in their life not deemed "safe" or "prudent" by the government. This explains why the government enforcement arm is getting more militarized, more aggressive and involved in issues not limited to protecting the rights of the individual.

Libertarians are committed to restoring and protecting civil liberties. We will:

- Protect freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly.
- Reverse the militarization of law-enforcement agencies.
- Reform asset-forfeiture laws.
- Restore Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches and seizures.
- Restore voting and gun rights for those convicted of non-violent drug offenses.
- Fight against federal overreach and government spying programs.
- Restrict law-enforcement use of general surveillance technologies.
- Protect internet freedom & privacy.

We believe an important part of restoring civil liberties is ending the drug war. Voluntary treatment vs. mandatory incarceration is a winning strategy.

### **What Would it Take for You to Fight For Your Liberty?**

### **Self-Ownership and the Right to Say No**



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## Healthcare



### **Making Healthcare Safe and Affordable**

As recently as the 1960s, low-cost health insurance was available to virtually everyone in America –including people with existing medical problems. Doctors made house calls. A hospital stay cost only a few days' pay. Charity hospitals were available to take care of families who could not afford to pay for healthcare.

Since then the federal government has increasingly intervened through Medicare, Medicaid, the HMO Act and tens of thousands of regulations on doctors, hospitals and health-insurance companies.

**Today, more than 50 percent of all healthcare dollars are spent by the government.**

Health insurance costs are skyrocketing. Government health programs are heading for bankruptcy. Politicians continue to pile on the regulations. The Libertarian Party knows the only healthcare reforms that will make a *real* difference are those that draw on the strength of the free market.

The Libertarian Party will work towards the following:

## **1. Establish Medical Saving Accounts**

Under this program, you could deposit tax-free money into a Medical Savings Account (MSA). Whenever you need the money to pay medical bills, you will be able to withdraw it. For individuals without an MSA, the Libertarian Party will work to make all healthcare expenditures 100 percent tax deductible.

## **2. Deregulate the healthcare industry**

We should repeal all government policies that increase health costs and decrease the availability of medical services. For example, every state has laws that mandate coverage of specific disabilities and diseases. These laws reduce consumer choice and increase the cost of health insurance. By making insurance more expensive, mandated benefits increase the number of uninsured American workers.

## **3. Remove barriers to safe, affordable medicines**

We should replace harmful government agencies like the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) with more agile, free-market alternatives. The mission of the FDA is to protect us from unsafe medicines. In fact, the FDA has driven up healthcare costs and deprived millions of Americans of much-needed treatments. For example, during a 10-year delay in approving Propranolol (a heart medication for treating angina and hypertension), approximately 100,000 people died who could have been treated with this lifesaving drug. Bureaucratic roadblocks kill sick Americans.

## **How Medicaid and Obamacare Hurt the Poor – And How to Fix Them**





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## Gun Rights



### **Libertarians support the 2nd amendment**

Libertarians, like other Americans, want to be able to walk city streets safely and be secure in their homes. We also want our Constitutional rights protected, to guard against the erosion of our civil liberties. In particular, Libertarians want to see all people treated equally under the law, as our Constitution requires. America's millions of gun owners are people too.

Law-abiding, responsible citizens do not and should not need to ask anyone's permission or approval to engage in a peaceful activity. Gun ownership, by itself, harms no other person and cannot morally justify criminal penalties.

### **The Prohibition Lesson**

The primary victim of these misguided efforts is the honest citizen whose civil rights are

trampled as frustrated legislators and police tighten the screws.

Banning guns will make guns more expensive and give organized crime a great opportunity to make profits in a new black market for weapons. Street violence will increase in new turf wars. Criminals will not give up their guns. But, many law abiding citizens will, leaving them defenseless against armed bandits.

## The Right of Self Defense

Libertarians agree with the majority of Americans who believe they have the right to decide how best to protect themselves, their families and their property. Millions of Americans have guns in their homes and sleep more comfortably because of it. Studies show that where gun ownership is illegal, residential burglaries are higher. A man with a gun in his home is no threat to you if you aren't breaking into it.

The police do not provide security in your home, your business or the street. They show up after the crime to take reports and do detective work. The poorer the neighborhood, the riskier it is for peaceful residents.

Only an armed citizenry can be present in sufficient numbers to prevent or deter violent crime before it starts, or to reduce its spread. Interviews with convicted felons indicate that fear of the armed citizen significantly deters crime. A criminal is more likely to be driven off from a particular crime by an armed victim than to be convicted and imprisoned for it. Thus, widespread gun ownership will make neighborhoods safer.

Foolish politicians and police now seek to ban semi-automatic "assault rifles". They ignore the fact that only honest citizens will comply; criminals will still have them. Such a ban will only increase the criminals' ability to victimize the innocent.

## Personal Responsibility

**Let us put the responsibility where it belongs, on the owner and user of the gun.** If he or she acts responsibly, without attacking others or causing injury negligently, no crime or harm has been done. Leave them in peace. But, if a person commits a crime with a gun, then impose the *severest penalties* for the injuries done to the victim. Similarly, hold the negligent gun user fully liable for all harm his negligence does to others.

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## Education



**Libertarians believe competition in education between private and public organizations will lead to a better education system along with more parental influence in their children's education**

In order to achieve the best possible opportunity of education we advocate bringing the positive benefits of competition to the monopolistic government schools. Therefore we call for the privatization and deregulation of schools. Also we call for the repeal of compulsory education laws, truancy laws, school and teacher certification and licensing laws, and taxpayer financing of education. As an interim measure we advocate tax credits for any individual or business sponsoring a person's education, equal to the amount of that assistance. We also support open enrollment and the expansion of charter school program which allows parents, students and educators to independently set up semi-autonomous schools operating under

reduced public authority. On principle, Libertarians call for the eventual complete separation of government and education, and call for an immediate end to state mandated curricula, including but not limited to: the Profile of Learning, Goals 2000, and School to Work.

## **Education Is NOT The Same As Schooling**

## **Why Is Higher Education So Expensive?**



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## Poverty and Welfare



### **Libertarians support individual choice to provide private charity**

From across the political and ideological spectrum, there is now almost universal acknowledgement that the American social welfare system has been a failure.

Since the start of the “war on poverty” in 1965, the United States has spent more than \$5 trillion trying to ease the plight of the poor. What we have received for this massive investment is — primarily — more poverty.

Our welfare system is unfair to everyone: to taxpayers who must pick up the bill for failed programs; to society, whose mediating institutions of community, church and family are increasingly pushed aside; and most of all to the poor themselves, who are trapped in a system that destroys opportunity for themselves and hope for their children.



The Libertarian Party believes it is time for a new approach to fighting poverty. It is a program based on opportunity, work, and individual responsibility.

## **1. End Welfare**

None of the proposals currently being advanced by either conservatives or liberals is likely to fix the fundamental problems with our welfare system. Current proposals for welfare reform, including block grants, job training, and “workfare” represent mere tinkering with a failed system.

It is time to recognize that welfare cannot be reformed: it should be ended.

We should eliminate the entire social welfare system. This includes eliminating food stamps, subsidized housing, and all the rest. Individuals who are unable to fully support themselves and their families through the job market must, once again, learn to rely on supportive family, church, community, or private charity to bridge the gap.

## **2. Establish a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions to private charity**

If the federal government’s attempt at charity has been a dismal failure, private efforts have been much more successful. America is the most generous nation on earth. We already contribute more than \$125 billion annually to charity. However, as we phase out inefficient government welfare, private charities must be able to step up and fill the void.

To help facilitate this transfer of responsibility from government welfare to private charity, the federal government should offer a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions to private charities that provide social-welfare services. That is to say, if an individual gives a dollar to charity, he should be able to reduce his tax liability by a dollar.

## **3. Tear down barriers to entrepreneurship and economic growth**

Almost everyone agrees that a job is better than any welfare program. Yet for years this country has pursued tax and regulatory policies that seem perversely designed to discourage economic growth and reduce entrepreneurial opportunities. Someone starting a business today needs a battery of lawyers just to comply with the myriad of government regulations from a virtual alphabet soup of government agencies: OSHA, EPA, FTC, CPSC, etc. Zoning and occupational licensing laws are particularly damaging to the type of small businesses that may help people work their way out of poverty.

In addition, government regulations such as minimum wage laws and mandated benefits drive



up the cost of employing additional workers. We call for the repeal of government regulations and taxes that are steadily cutting the bottom rungs off the economic ladder.

## **4. Reform education**

There can be no serious attempt to solve the problem of poverty in America without addressing our failed government-run school system. Nearly forty years after *Brown vs. Board of Education*, America's schools are becoming increasingly segregated, not on the basis of race, but on income. Wealthy and middle class parents are able to send their children to private schools, or at least move to a district with better public schools. Poor families are trapped — forced to send their children to a public school system that fails to educate.

It is time to break up the public education monopoly and give all parents the right to decide what school their children will attend. It is essential to restore choice and the discipline of the marketplace to education. Only a free market in education will provide the improvement in education necessary to enable millions of Americans to escape poverty.

## **Summary**

We should not pretend that reforming our welfare system will be easy or painless. In particular it will be difficult for those people who currently use welfare the way it was intended — as a temporary support mechanism during hard times. However, these people remain on welfare for short periods of time. A compassionate society will find other ways to help people who need temporary assistance. But our current government-run welfare system is costly to taxpayers and cruel to the children born into a cycle of welfare dependency and hopelessness.

## **Working More to Earn Less | Why the Poor Stay Poor**



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## Crime and Violence



**An approach to criminal justice and crime control that is smart, compassionate and tough. An approach that will make our streets safe again.**

The Libertarian Party is the only party that addresses the issue of Crime at the basic fundamental level. The first step to fighting crime is to identify what a “crime” is. A “crime” is defined as the use of force, including fraud, against another individual or group. Without the description of “crime”, what you have are violations of someone’s idea of what you should be doing. The Libertarian Party is committed to reducing the “crime” rate by addressing only those acts that have a victim. In short if there is NO VICTIM, there is NO CRIME.

The Libertarian Party’s anti-crime plan would:

- Respect the victim's rights and make criminals pay full restitution.
- Hold all criminals responsible for their actions.
- Double the police resources available for crime prevention without any additional government spending.
- Reduce the number of criminals at large on our streets.
- Defend the most effective crime deterrent available, the private ownership of guns.
- Create jobs, end welfare dependence, and improve education.

## Step 1. Protect Victims' Rights

Protecting the rights and interests of victims should be the basis of our criminal justice system. Victims should have the right to be present, consulted and heard throughout the prosecution of their case.

In addition, Libertarians would do more than just punish criminals. We would also make them pay restitution to their victims for the damage they've caused, including property loss, medical costs, pain, and suffering. If you are the victim of a crime, the criminal should fully compensate you for your loss.

## Step 2. End Prohibition

Drug prohibition does more to make Americans unsafe than any other factor. Just as alcohol prohibition gave us Al Capone and the mafia, drug prohibition has given us the Crips, the Bloods and drive-by shootings. Consider the historical evidence: America's murder rate rose nearly 70% during alcohol prohibition, but returned to its previous levels after prohibition ended. Now, since the War on Drugs began, America's murder rates have doubled. The cause/effect relationship is clear. Prohibition is putting innocent lives at risk.

What's more, drug prohibition also inflates the cost of drugs, leading users to steal to support their high priced habits. It is estimated that drug addicts commit 25% of all auto thefts, 40% of robberies and assaults, and 50% of burglaries and larcenies. Prohibition puts your property at risk. Finally, nearly one half of all police resources are devoted to stopping drug trafficking, instead of preventing violent crime. The bottom line? By ending drug prohibition Libertarians would double the resources available for crime prevention, and significantly reduce the number of violent criminals at work in your neighborhood.

## Step 3. Get Tough on Real Crime

The Libertarian Party is the party of personal responsibility. We believe that anyone who harms another person should be held responsible for that action. By contrast, the Democrats and Republicans have created a system where criminals can get away with almost anything.

For instance: sentences seldom mean what they say. Fewer than one out of every four violent felons serves more than four years. Libertarians would dramatically reduce the number of these early releases by eliminating their root cause – prison over-crowding.

Since nearly six out of every ten federal prison inmates are there for non-violent drug-related offenses, it's clear that drug prohibition is the primary source of this over-crowding. It has been estimated that every drug offender imprisoned results in the release of one violent criminal, who then commits an average of 40 robberies, 7 assaults, 110 burglaries and 25 auto thefts. Early release of violent criminals puts you and your family at risk. It must stop.

## **Step 4. Protect the Right to Self-Defense**

We believe that the private ownership of firearms is part of the solution to America's crime epidemic, not part of the problem. Evidence: law-abiding citizens in Florida have been able to carry concealed weapons since 1987. During that time, the murder rate in Florida has declined 21% while the national murder rate has increased 12%.

In addition, evidence shows that self-defense with guns is the safest response to violent crime. It results in fewer injuries to the defender (17.4% injury rate) than any other response, including not resisting at all (24.7% injury rate). Libertarians would repeal waiting periods, concealed carry laws, and other restrictions that make it difficult for victims to defend themselves, and end the prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights of self-defense.

## **Step 5. Address the Root Causes of Crime**

Any society that lets kids grow up dependent on government welfare, attending government schools that fail to teach, and entering an economy where government policy has crushed opportunity, will be a society that breeds criminals. No permanent solution to crime will be found until we address these root causes of crime.

The Libertarian Party would increase employment opportunities by slashing taxes and government red tape. We would also end the welfare system with its culture of dependence and hopelessness. Most important of all, we would promote low-cost private alternatives to the failed government school system.

## **Why are so Many Violent Criminals Walking Free?**



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## Environment



### **Ensure full liability for individuals and corporations; private property rights as a protector of the environment**

Pollution of other people's property is wrong. Strict liability, not government agencies and arbitrary standards, should regulate pollution. We advocate repeal of the laws that prevent full ownership of the air and water above and below land, thus denying individuals protection under the law against polluters. Private property rights must replace public property. We further advocate repeal of corporate limited liability laws protecting the individuals who own or manage corporations from the personal liability of pollution. We further advocate the repeal of sovereign immunity laws, which protect those in charge of government property, utilities and military installations from the personal liability of pollution.

One reason a person becomes a Libertarian is that they recognize how government has enabled

the destruction of the environment through cronyism. Governments are the biggest polluters of the environment worldwide. From war, their militaries and the creation of the corporation. The invention of the corporation was to politically protect individuals from legal action for their neglectful decisions towards the environment along with other issues. This creates a moral hazard when individuals are not held accountable but a mythical creature called the corporation. In the end, the fine is paid for by the employees through less or lowered compensation. The executives are not hurt and the corporation will do all it can not to pass these costs onto the customer. Projected fines and penalties associated with the pollution are actually apart of the cost analysis for many companies. Thus companies are not incentivized to be stewards of the environment but instead are able to stagnate as long as the profits are protected by limited liability laws.

### **Solutions to a clean environment:**

- Recognizing and respecting private property rights again.
- End corporate hood and the political protections it provides irresponsible people.
- Free the market. Example –End government protections such as caps on liability if a disaster happens. If an oil rig cannot get insured to drill then that activity does not happen. If a pipeline cannot be laid by the company negotiating with private property owners then it does not get laid. Governments using eminent domain for financial gains is a coercive behavior to enrich the politically favored groups at the expense of private property owners and potentially putting the environment at risk.
- Reform the patent system. The patent system has become a system of corporate protection against competition as patents are bought by the rich and locked away. As patents can be worded so vaguely that years of lawsuits and or threat of lawsuit from patent trolls stifles new businesses, new innovations and the economy.
- There will be times when externalities come into the equation and property rights alone cannot solve the issue. It is in these cases government intervention may be appropriate.

## **What are Libertarian Solutions to Environmental Problems?**





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## Foreign Policy



**Stop nation-building and being the “policeman of the world.” Peace through trade and diplomacy.**

In his first inaugural address, President Thomas Jefferson cited the essence of a libertarian foreign policy, “Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations – entangling alliances with none.” This echoed the advice of President George Washington that “the great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible.”

The twin pillars of a sane foreign policy are:

1. Building positive relationships, with an emphasis on free trade, and
2. Avoiding negative relationships, with an emphasis on military non-intervention.

The military budget of the United States, conservatively measured at around \$700 billion (but probably closer to \$1 trillion once all security measures and veteran benefits are considered), is approximately equal to all of the military budgets of all other countries combined. If the US military budget were cut in half, it would still be the largest in the world. Then, if it were cut in half again, it would STILL be the largest in the world. Then, if it were cut in half a third time, reduced to only one-eighth its current size, it would STILL be the largest in the world. And that's using the conservative measure.

Whatever motivates this enormous budget, it is certainly not for the defense of American soil. Indeed, when the Department of Homeland Security was created, this was a virtual admission that the Department of Defense had goals other than homeland security. No foreign army has the slightest capacity to invade the United States, and as North Korea has demonstrated, even the possession of a single nuclear weapon is enough to deter invasion.

The best form of anti-terrorism insurance is to remove all troops from the Middle East, stop attempts to either preserve or change their current governments, and end all government-to-government aid.

It is time for American troops to come home, not just from the Middle East but from Europe, the Pacific. At the same time, let's drop all barriers to trade and travel and turn enemies into friends. Polls have long indicated that the rest of the world likes Americans far more than they like the US Government and admires America's reputation as a land of opportunity and productivity. We have a great opportunity now to bring both peace and prosperity to our country and the world by restoring that reputation.

## **You Liked Ron Paul, Except on Foreign Policy**