It's Time for the Platform Token System to Go

A Proposal to Remove the Platform Token System
from the Libertarian Party in its Entirety

This proposal aims to:

- Delete the entirety of Rule 5, Section 1 from the LP Convention Special Rules of Order of the Libertarian Party
- Rename the subsequent sections of Rule 5 accordingly to adjust for the deletion

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Delegates and Other Interested Parties:

The token system has proven an ineffective tool towards the goal of retaining liberty inside the Libertarian Party. Too often it has been used as a vehicle for divisiveness, and it has arbitrarily amplified controversy among our own ranks at almost every national convention in memory. Regardless of what the original intent of the token system (created in 2006) was supposed to be, today it stands as a symbol of party infighting and serves as a means by which a very small, but motivated, minority of less-than-Libertarian factionalists can, with the snap of a finger, dismantle years of the efforts of multiple Platform Committees and delegates to the national convention.

For the uninitiated, the token system works as follows. Each delegate, upon check-in, receives 5 paper tokens. At the delegate's wish, they may cast each of their tokens for a particular platform plank. If the total number of tokens returned for a particular plank is equal to or greater than 20% of the number of credentialed delegates, then that platform plank is immediately put to a vote _on immediate deletion_ by the entire 100% of the convention delegation. No debate or amendment is allowed before a vote takes place. What's more, this token deletion vote requires only a simple majority to pass, unlike the usual 2/3rds required for

normal platform edits. Given the very low requirements the token system allows to attack platform planks, the opportunity for subterfuge is obvious.

To make matters worse, any delegate can multiply the power of his token vote **_by 5_** for any one particular plank. This is because of the particularly egregious Rule 5, Section 1, Part d., which allows multi-casting for the deletion of a particular platform plank up to 5 times. For example, if a delegate hates Platform Plank ABC, then they are allowed to cast all 5 of their tokens in support of deleting Plank ABC. Since only a small 20% of the counted delegation is required for Plank ABC to be considered (again, without debate) for deletion, then mathematically speaking, it requires only a dedicated 4% of the entire delegation to cast each (all 5) of their tokens for Plank ABC in order to ensure that the entire (100%) of the delegation must vote on immediate deletion. This is, by any stretch of the imagination, is clearly absurd.

Consider for a moment what chaos might occur to the Libertarian Party Platform if, equivalently, a super-minority of just 4% of the national convention delegation had the power to force the entire delegation to **_add_** a plank to the Platform by simple majority vote.

> **_Clearly, the token system strongly favors political <u>silence</u> rather than political <u>boldness</u>._**

It is certainly true that, in any assembly, particularly that of a convention, the minority in any subject matter should be protected. That is, the minority should not be shut out, and should be heard. Robert's Rules of Order exists in no small part in order to establish a set of rules so as to protect the minority's right to be _heard_ – and **_heard_** is the key word of importance here. Robert's Rules does not serve to empower the minority beyond what is reasonable to serve the purpose of giving the minority a pedestal upon which to speak. What the token system does goes far beyond establishing such a pedestal. It allows the minority to usurp control of the entire convention by jumping ahead of the Platform Committee's own report, the Chair, and the unspoken desires of the remaining portions of the delegation body. It gives the minority far too much power – and disproportionately high amounts of power are something which Libertarians should logically disdain.

Please consider _speaking out_ against the platform token system and supporting an initiative to remove it.