

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

Libertarian National Committee, Inc. • 1444 Duke St. • Alexandria, VA 22314 • Phone: (202) 333-0008 • Fax: (202) 333-0072
www.LP.org January 2016

Bell announces Libertarian run for governor

Excerpted from *Daily News*
Published on Jan. 8, 2016

HAGERSTOWN — Hagerstown businessman Rex Bell has announced his intention to seek the Libertarian Party of Indiana’s (LPIN) nomination for the office of Governor of Indiana. The LPIN will hold its convention in April, when delegates from individual counties will select candidates for state offices.

“There is a growing disappointment among voters with both of the old parties,” said Bell. “The Libertarian Party offers a viable option for those voters, allowing them to cast a vote for limited government that is both fiscally conservative and socially tolerant. The party has had several areas around the state where vote totals for candidates have been very respectable, and even some

wins in some lower offices. We think 2016 gives us a chance to capitalize on the dissatisfaction of those voters from

both of the old parties who simply can’t support their candidates, and also attract voters who have lost interest in the whole process, hopefully connecting those areas into even greater vote totals.”

Bell says [that] at the present time, he knows of one other person who is seeking the LPIN nomination. “Contested nominations always make for a lively convention, and I’m looking forward to a lively campaign leading up

to the convention, and if things go my way, a lively campaign leading up to the November election.

Bell has owned and operated Bell Contracting in Hagerstown since 1974. He and his wife, Susan, have been married for 40 years, and are the parents of three children, and the grandparents of seven grandchildren. Bell has [run] for various local and state offices in the past. In 2010, he received 21 percent of the vote in a three-way race for state representative. It was the largest percentage by a third-party candidate in a three-way race in Indiana in 85 years.

Bell added, “We don’t know when exactly a critical mass of voters will say ‘enough is enough’ to government over-spending and over-meddling, but we plan on having candidates in place that will allow them to say it when the time comes.”•



Rex Bell

Libertarian takes on entrenched incumbent for U.S. House

Excerpted from
Wisconsin Daily Independent
Published on Dec. 18, 2015

In Milwaukee’s deep-blue 4th congressional district, five-term incumbent Democrat Gwen Moore regularly defeats Republican opponents by nearly 50-point margins.

In 2016, however, things are shaping up for a different race. The only declared challenger so far is not a Republican at all, but Libertarian



Andy Craig

Party candidate Andy Craig.

“I think a third-party campaign has the potential to build a winning coalition in Milwaukee. It’s happened before,” says Craig. “It’s easy for Moore to run against a Republican candidate. On social issues, on foreign policy, on civil liberties, the GOP is hopelessly out of step with the 4th district. That has left us with a ‘safe seat’ incumbent, who doesn’t have to care about representing the needs and views of the voters, who won’t even bother to debate her opponents.”

Craig’s campaign points to some heartening poll numbers: six in ten Americans agree that “both major parties do such a poor job” that “a third major party is needed.” Fifty-nine percent of

voters identify as “fiscally conservative and socially liberal,” a figure that only drops to 44 percent when the qualifier “...also known as ‘libertarian’” is added.

“On social issues, on foreign policy, on civil liberties, the GOP is hopelessly out of step with the 4th District.

—Andy Craig

“I think that’s where most Americans are at. Neither major party has an approval rating over 39%, yet the House has 246 Republicans, 188 Dem-

continued on page 2

Gallup: Democratic, Republican identification near historical lows

By Jeffrey M. Jones
Excerpted from *Gallup*

Published on Jan. 11, 2016

PRINCETON, N.J. — In 2015, for the fifth consecutive year, at least four in 10 U.S. adults identified as political independents. The 42% identifying as independents in 2015 was down slightly from the record 43% in 2014. This elevated percentage of political independents leaves Democratic (29%) and Republican (26%) identification at or near recent low points, with the modest Democratic advantage roughly where it has been over the past five years.

Since 1988, there have been many years in which more Americans have identified as independents than as Republicans or independents. But the percentage of independents did not reach 40% until 2011, and it has stayed at or above that level for the past five years.

For the fifth consecutive year, at least 4 in 10 U.S. adults identified as political independents.

As a consequence, the percentage of U.S. adults identifying as Democrats is now at the lowest point in the past 27 years, down from the prior low of 30% in 2014. Gallup data from 1951–1987 collected in person never found a yearly average Democratic identification less than 37%, making it safe to conclude that the current 29% is also the low point in Gallup polling history.

The percentage of Republicans is now just one point above its recent low of 25% in 2013. Before 1988, there were several years when the average percentage of Republican identifiers in Gallup polls was lower than 25%.

In the past several years, dissatisfaction with the government has ranked among the leading issues when U.S. adults are asked to name the

continued on page 3

Libertarian Craig challenges entrenched incumbent

continued from page 1

ocrats...and nobody else. We're the only major, developed country that has just two parties represented in the national legislature. It's time to change that, and start to break down the failed two-party-only system."

Craig says he's running a fiscally conservative campaign, in favor of [dramatically] cutting taxes and spending, but that he also wants to raise the topics of government abuse, civil liberties, overseas wars, and repealing victimless crimes.

"Gwen Moore 'declined to take a position' on ending the war on marijuana. She has rallied votes for big-business subsidies, voted against ending police militarization, and wants to expand and enlarge scandal-plagued agencies like the DEA and ATF," says Craig, "We need a representative for the rest of us, a sensible third way that isn't being offered by either Democrats or Republicans. That's the kind of candidacy I hope to offer."•

New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

Victor Aagaard	John Kitzmiller
Herman Alley	Terynes Kleffman
Luke Anderson	Daniel Krawiec
Christopher Ashcraft	John Kuhn
Frank Atwood	Russell Lay
Dustin Baellow	James Ledbetter
James Bedford	Vaughan Lund
James Berns	Olivia Mata
Charles Bickenheuser	Travis Maynard
Michael Blankenship	Richard McClain
Nicholas Bonacci	Brad McDonald
Warren Bowman	Ray Minter
Char-Lez Braden	Anna Mnyukh
Aaron Brundridge	Julian Moser
Michael Carr	Noelle Nelson
Matthew Cholko	Michael Pakko
Steven Damerell	Daniel Parrella
Jay Dewhurst	Michael Penrow
Patrick Dixon	Michael Phillips
Lori Duncan	John Poitras
Glenn Eddy	David Raine
Jack Elder	Sven Ratsep
Emerson Ellett	Michael Sandridge
William Ely	Keith Sauter
P. Jacob Erbes	Douglas Schell
Richard Evans	Brian Schmidt
Marc Feldman	David Schrader
Jacob Frasier	John Skehan
Russell Freeman	William Sloane
John Friedel	David Spain
Scott Gesty	Carl Swinney
Brandon Goldman	Dianne Szabla
Robert Gordon	Curry Taylor
Jackson Harvey	James Thompson
Brent Heist	Cynthia Verschuur
Brad Henry	Janet Walker
Jason Hitt	Wade Wallinger
Jay Holloway	Leon Ward
Barbara Howe	Joshua Weets
Tom Howe	Irving Welchons
Paul Jabber	Stephen Winston
Mark Jewell	Beth Woodell
Matt Johnston	Stephen Worden
Brian Kamerath	John Zaloudek

Dem, Repub identification

continued from page 2

most important problem facing the U.S., and was the most frequently mentioned problem in 2014 and 2015. Also, Americans' favorable ratings of each party are on the lower end of what [we have] measured over the past few decades.

Democrats maintain edge when independents' leanings are factored in

Although political independents lack a strong enough attachment to either party to say they identify as a Republican or a Democrat, most are inclined to favor one party over the other and generally vote that way.

Last year, in addition to the 29% of Americans who identified as Democrats, another 16% said they were independents but leaned toward the Democratic Party, for a combined total of 45% Democrats and Democratic leaners among the U.S. population. Likewise, 26% of Americans identified as Republicans and an additional 16% identified as independents but leaned toward the Republican Party, for a combined total of 42% Republicans and Republican leaners.

The high point in Democratic strength was in 2008, a time when President George W. Bush was highly

unpopular in the midst of the prolonged Iraq war and the emerging economic recession. That year, Democrats had a 12-point advantage in party identification and leaning.

Dissatisfaction with the government...was the most frequently mentioned problem in 2014 and 2015.

Democrats have had at least a slight advantage nearly every year since [at least] 1991. That year—when President George H.W. Bush led the successful Persian Gulf War effort—is the only time Republicans held an advantage in party affiliation.

Implications

Americans' attachment to the major political parties is arguably the weakest Gallup has recorded since the advent of its polls. The percentage of U.S. adults identifying as political independents has recently reached levels never seen before. As a result, a new low of 29% of Americans identify as Democrats, and the percentage of Republican identifiers is on the low end of what Gallup has measured historically.

Given that the percentage of independents usually declines in [presidential election years], both parties have an opportunity to win back some of their lost support. But doing so partly depends on how appealing the parties' and their presidential candidates' messages prove to be.

Even if the parties win back some support, they still will probably be competing among an electorate that has a historically high percentage of voters who do not identify with either major party. And the lack of strong attachment to the parties could make candidate-specific factors, as opposed to party loyalty, a greater consideration for voters in choosing a president than they have been in past elections.

Historical data are available in Gallup Analytics, here: www.Gallup.com/products/170987/gallup-analytics.aspx

Survey methods

Results for this Gallup poll are based on combined data from telephone interviews conducted throughout 2015, with a random sample of 12,137 adults, aged 18 and older, living [throughout the U.S.].•

See more details on the survey methods, here: www.Gallup.com/poll/188096/democratic-republican-identification-near-historical-lows.aspx

I would like to make a one-time donation to the LP:

- \$5,000 \$100
- \$1,000 \$50
- \$500 \$25
- \$250 _____ Other

I would like to increase my monthly pledge to this level:

- \$2,500** **\$100**
- \$1,000** **\$50**
- \$500** **\$30**
- \$250** _____ **Other**
(minimum \$10)

(Please make checks payable to **Libertarian Party.**)

Please bill my Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card number: _____ Exp: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Occupation*: _____

Employer*: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

* Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year. Political contributions are not tax deductible.

Gallup: Big Govt. Still Named as Biggest Threat to U.S.

By Rebecca Riffkin
Excerpted from *Gallup*
Published on Dec. 22, 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C. — When asked to choose among big government, big labor, and big business, Americans overwhelmingly name big government as the biggest threat to the country in the future. The 69% choosing big government is down slightly from a high of 72% in 2013, the last time Gallup asked the question, but is still one of the highest percentages choosing big government in Gallup's 50-year trend.

While Americans have always seen big government as a bigger threat than [they see] big business or big labor, the percentage naming it was significantly lower prior to 1990, when a much larger segment of Americans saw big labor as the greatest threat. By 2000, the percentage naming big government rose to 65%, as mentions of big labor fell into the single digits. A brief uptick in concerns about big business in 2002, probably prompted by several high-profile business scandals such as Enron, offset some concerns about big government. More recently, concerns about business and labor have drifted down, while concerns about big government have climbed back up to nearly 70%.

The large increase in the percentage naming big government as the biggest threat in 2013 may have resulted from the rollout of the Affordable Care Act and Edward Snowden's revelations about government monitoring of communications.

Concerns about business and labor have drifted down, while concerns about big government have climbed back up to nearly 70%.

Republicans remain most likely to say government poses the biggest threat

Almost nine in 10 Republicans, 88%, say big government is the biggest threat to the future of the country, far exceeding the 67% of independents and 53% of Democrats who say the same. Since 1985, Republicans have been more likely than Democrats and independents to name big government as the biggest threat. One notable exception occurred in 2005, when mentions of big government were tied across the three groups. This may have been due to U.S. involvement in a prolonged war in Iraq, as well as the Bush administration's struggle to respond adequately to Hurricane Katrina.

While a majority of Democrats say that big government poses the biggest threat, many more Democrats (41%) than

independents (25%) or Republicans (7%) say big business is the biggest threat.

Bottom line

While down slightly from 2013, 69% of Americans say big government is the biggest threat to the country in the future. This comes at a time when Americans name the government as one of the three most important problems facing the country and when 75% of Americans perceive widespread corruption in the government.

Only 8% of Americans in June said they have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in Congress.

Further, only 8% of Americans in June said they have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in Congress, far below the 24% who said they have that much confidence in organized labor and 21% in big business. But slightly more Americans said they have confidence in the presidency and the Supreme Court than said they have confidence in organized labor or big business.

Half of Americans say the federal government poses an immediate threat to rights and freedoms.

Half of Americans say the federal government poses an immediate threat to rights and freedoms, and Congress's job approval continues to languish—perhaps explaining why so many see big government as the biggest threat to the country.

Historical data are available in *Gallup Analytics*, here: www.Gallup.com/products/170987/gallup-analytics.aspx

Survey methods

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted Dec. 2–6, 2015, on the Gallup U.S. Daily survey, with a random sample of 824 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting. •

See more details on the survey methods, here: www.Gallup.com/poll/187919/big-government-named-biggest-threat.aspx