

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## NEWSLETTER

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www.LP.org December 2015

## National debt greatest threat to American liberty

**By Ross Leone III, Texas State University student and Chair, Guadalupe County, Texas LP**  
**Excerpted from *Seguin Gazette***  
**Published on Nov. 27, 2015**

Amid a morass of problems faced by our country, any conscientious citizen may wonder what issue is the most important and crucial in solving right away. Expectedly, many might misguidedly respond that it is ISIS, immigration, climate change, or funniest of all, making college free. I could review each of these issues in detail but not one of them matters, nor is any easier to solve, until the ultimate crisis at hand is rectified.

Most people are aware that we as a nation are over \$18 trillion in debt. Most, however, cannot comprehend such a colossal number, and dismiss it as if unreal and without consequence. Furthermore, this figure does not include all of the government's future obligations, such as Social Security and Medicare, which when taken into account, according to the former U.S.

Comptroller General David Walker who resigned from his position to fight this debt, is around \$65 trillion, although other sources, such as Boston University economics professor Laurence Kotlikoff, estimate as high as \$210 trillion, with differing expectations on economic growth, tax, and interest rates, entitlements, and so forth. If we ignore this problem, when we have a deficit of a half trillion dollars already, with a growing populace that has an entitlement mentality and is constantly demanding more welfare, and

**We still have time to turn this disaster around . . . if we work to erase this debt.**

a nation that maintains war like an empire, we will one day wake up to find we've dug our own grave, too deep to climb out of.

But we still have time to turn this disaster around, if we act quickly and put an end to overspending and work to progressively erase this debt.

The Libertarian [Party] Platform out-

lines a brilliant beginning to accomplish this task, in Section 2.4: "All persons are entitled to keep the fruits of their labor. We call for the repeal of the income tax, the abolishment of the Internal Revenue Service and all federal programs and services not required under the U.S. Constitution. We oppose any legal requirements forcing employers to serve as tax collectors. Government should not incur debt, which burdens future generations without their consent. We support the passage of a 'Balanced Budget Amendment' to the U.S. Constitution, provided that the budget is balanced exclusively by cutting expenditures, and not by raising taxes."

By following these guidelines alone, we decisively eliminate numerous unnecessary, expensive government programs, saving hundreds of billions of dollars. We save the people money by eliminating the income tax. We also save businesses money by no longer making their employees' taxes their business. We declare with a new constitutional amendment that we will not

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## Iraq War veteran returns home, launches constitutional challenge

**Reported by Matthew Nordin**  
**WSIL-TV News 3 (ABC)**  
**Interview aired Nov. 27, 2015**

WSIL — Scott Schluter endured temperatures up to 140 degrees "in the desert," as he and other veterans call it, serving in Iraq and Qatar for the Air Force. He's back in Marion [Illinois]. And as he sees it, he's launching a fight for democracy right here on the homefront.

"No group should be held above or have their rights denied because the powers that be don't like what they're doing," said Schluter.

Those he believes are being discriminated against are medical marijuana businesses. Illinois law forbids them from donating to political candidates and PACs. So he and

[fellow] Libertarian Claire Ball are taking Illinois officials to court.

In the suit, obtained by News 3, their attorneys argue that Illinois's law violates the "First Amendment rights of free speech and association" as well as the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United case that, they contend, found "government is never justified in imposing 'restrictions on certain disfavored speakers.'"

But the case is also about money.

Libertarians believe medical marijuana business owners are their natural constituency, since Libertarians "favor the repeal of all laws creating 'crimes' without victims," as the lawsuit quotes the party's platform. Those businesses could be a source of up to \$10,800 each in campaign contributions. However, since the Illinois law forbids



**LP Candidate Scott Schluter on WSIL-TV; Nov. 27**

those businesses from giving, the business owners have to make donations as an individual. And in Illinois, an individual is only allowed to contribute half of what a business is allowed, [or] \$5,400.

"If we can get the desired results in this lawsuit, I'm sure I will seek them out," said Schluter, who plans to run against incum-

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# Ohioans Reject Monopoly, Not Marijuana Reform, Say Libertarians

**Libertarian Party of Ohio press release**  
**Picked up by The WorldNews Network**  
**Published on Nov. 6, 2015**

COLUMBUS — Ohio voters rejected Issue 3 because they didn't want a small cartel of already-rich, well-connected operators to make millions by controlling Ohioans' personal freedom and urgent medical needs, said the chairman of the [Ohio] Libertarian Party.

"Some of the media have this story a little bit wrong," said LPO Executive Committee Chairman Bob Bridges. "A lot of headlines are focusing on the pot, when for most Ohioans, the real issue was the pot of gold the investors would reap. Issue 3 was much more about who could sell cannabis than about who could buy it, or who could use it to treat medical problems for themselves and their children.

"The Issue 3 cartel badly misjudged the voters. They thought we would overlook the cronyism to get the cannabis. They were wrong."

Ohio voters rejected Issue 3 [on Nov. 3] by a margin of 65 percent to 35 percent, mainly because they opposed the proposed legal drug cartel — created and backed by the State of Ohio — not because of opposition to ending marijuana prohibition or to allowing Ohio citizens the right to choose medical cannabis for themselves and their children, said Bridges.

**"A lot of headlines are focusing on the pot . . . when the real issue was the pot of gold the investors would reap." —Bob Bridges, Chair of LP Ohio**

Bridges added that polling shows strong support for legal cannabis among Ohio voters, noting a Quinnipiac poll just weeks before the election that showed that Ohioans favor by a margin of 9 to 1, the right to choose medical cannabis, and that almost half of Ohio voters support re-legalizing cannabis for recreational use.

"Cannabis prohibition is less popular in Ohio every day, and the Libertarian Party is going to continue to help lead the fight for an end to cannabis prohibition, as we always have," said Bridges.

Bridges [said] he was very encouraged by the grass-roots activism in support of Issue 3, and commended the efforts of the hundreds of activists who were sincerely working in the best interests of all Ohioans.

"A lot of great people — many of whom are themselves Libertarian — were confused, or even upset, about our official opposition to Issue 3, and we worked hard to explain [it]," Bridges said. "We understand why many people decided that a significant rollback of marijuana prohibition was more important [than] stopping crony capitalism, and we're working on bringing together everyone who is fighting marijuana prohibition to find a better way to accomplish it as soon as possible."

Bridges, also a registered lobbyist who is well regarded by both Republicans and Democrats in the Statehouse, is spearheading an effort to get a medical cannabis bill before the legislature immediately. "Compassionate use is now low-hanging fruit, if we all tell our representatives what we want," Bridges said. "This is something Issue 3 supporters and many Issue 3 opponents can agree on and work together to achieve."

The Libertarian Party of Ohio has supported the re-legalization of marijuana since its founding in 1972. The LPO Executive Committee unanimously voted to oppose Issue 3 in March 2015. •

## New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Judith B. Abel        | Richard Marrell      |
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| Marcus Coleman        | Thomas Plock         |
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| Raymond D. Craig      | Toby Rider           |
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| Steven Lundvall       | Gary Zander          |
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| Robert Margetin       | Debra M. Zweber      |

## National debt greatest threat

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allow ourselves to fall further into debt, by balancing the budget and following the example of 45 states, including Texas, that have constitutional citations concerning a balanced budget.

All of this is of course radical change and a lot to implement quickly, and still just the most fundamental reforms, so it is reasonable to propose a more gradual transition to reach these ultimate goals.

I implore all patriotic Americans to do their research on how to eliminate the debt. I truly believe that you will find that the surest method to do so while not only retaining but regaining the maximum amount of Liberty requires the downsizing of government altogether. •

# LPVA commemorates anniversary of repeal of Prohibition

**Libertarian Party of Virginia**  
**Press release issued Dec. 5, 2015**

RICHMOND, VA — On Dec. 5, 2015, the Libertarian Party of Virginia (LPVA) celebrated the 82nd anniversary of the ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment to the United States Constitution, which repealed the Eighteenth Amendment of 1920 mandating a nationwide prohibition on alcohol. The LPVA marks the anniversary by reiterating its opposition to government criminalization of victimless activity.

Prohibition was a nationwide constitutional ban on the sale, production, importation, and transportation of alcoholic beverages that remained in place from Jan. 17, 1920 until it was repealed on Dec. 5, 1933. What began as concern about behaviors seen as unsavory that often accompanied local drinking establishments, became a largely unsuccessful nationwide effort by Prohibition leaders to stem the perceived demise of American society by forcing sobriety through prohibitive legislation, strict law enforcement, and religious education.

LPVA Chairman William (“Bill”) Redpath, shares the Libertarian view against legislation that restricts individual freedoms based on behaviors other people may deem offensive. “The core idea of liberty is the concept of self-ownership. People own their own lives and should be able to live as they choose, as long as they do not tangibly harm other people or their property.”

A clear trend linking prohibition and increased criminal activity has emerged over time. A 2011 study by Megan Sasinowski at Carnegie Mellon University showed a clear spike and subsequent drop in homicide rates during alcohol prohibition. In their 1974 book, *Victimless Crimes: Two Sides of a Controversy*, Edwin Schur and Hugo Bedau stated that “some of these laws produce secondary crime, and all create new ‘criminals’, many of whom are otherwise law-abiding citizens and people in authority.” Since the War on Drugs campaign, which began in the early 1980s, crime rates have grown exponentially, and continue to.

Government expenditure for prohibition enforcement has exceeded \$33 billion annually, with law enforcement authorities making more than 1.5 million arrests per year on drug-related charges. In his 2004 book, *Drug Crimes: The Consequences of Prohibition*, Jeffrey Miron provides insight into the costs, benefits, and consequences of drug prohibition. Among other findings, Miron reported: increased homicide rates linked to drug prohibition; U.S. incarceration numbers over 300,000 for drug violations, exceeding those for several European countries for all crimes combined; a decline in the price of illegal drugs, corresponding to increased availability; and failure of the legal system to reduce drug consumption.

“What U.S. politics needs more than anything is to recognize that government action involves the use of force or the

threat of it,” urges Redpath. “Both liberals and conservatives want to accomplish certain things, but give little thought to the coercion they employ to achieve it.”

The LPVA recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse can have serious consequences for individuals and their loved ones, and endeavors toward a Commonwealth and America that see these greatly reduced, in a manner that guarantees people the freedom to make choices for themselves.

The Twenty-first Amendment is unique among the 27 amendments of the U.S. Constitution for being the only one to repeal a prior amendment and to have been ratified by state ratifying conventions. •

## Veteran defends Constitution

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bent Rep. John Bradley (D-Marion). “But that’s not the reason for doing this. I’m here to protect rights, [and] to fight for the people instead of the interests of government.”

It’s not clear what position Attorney General Madigan will take. Her spokeswoman says she has until Dec. 10 to file a response. Schluter sees that as a good sign for his side. “With the reaction, or lack of reaction we’ve been getting from the AG’s office, I think they realized this probably shouldn’t have been in the law to begin with.” He said his attorneys believe “it’s a slam-dunk case.”

Both sides are due in federal court in Chicago for an initial hearing on Jan. 12. •

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

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- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$25
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

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

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- \$500**
- \$250**
- \$100**
- \$50**
- \$30**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Other**  
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\* 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.



# North Dakota Libertarian Party sees momentum in 2016

By Nick Smith

Excerpted from *The Bismarck Tribune*

Published on Nov. 5, 2015

Heading today into a joint North Dakota and South Dakota Libertarian Party (LP) convention, state party leaders say their momentum is taking them into uncharted territory as national frustration mounts with the two major political parties.

In the Nov. 2014 election, the ND LP for the first time secured enough votes to gain party recognition on the June primary ballot.

"I'm very optimistic. I think we'll probably do better than we ever have in the history of North Dakota," said Roland Riemers, chairman of the ND LP, adding that the party has been working 15 to 20 years to gain ballot status.

"It's a slow process. You've got to be in it for the long haul. Rome wasn't built in a day," Riemers said.

A political party must get at least 5 percent of the total votes cast for certain races, depending on the election cycle, to gain recognized party status on the next election's ballot, according to the North Dakota Century Code.

**"You've got to be in it for the long haul. Rome wasn't built in a day," said Riemers.**

In the Nov. 2014 election, Tax Commissioner candidate Anthony Mangnall received 6.4 percent of the vote; U.S. House candidate Jack Seaman garnered 5.8 percent; and Riemers' secretary of state bid earned him 5.3 percent.

In nonpresidential elections, parties must attain at least 5 percent for a party's candidate for attorney general or secretary of state to be recognized as a party. In presidential elections, parties must attain at least 5 percent for a party's candidate for president and vice president or governor to be recognized as a party.

In the past, the Libertarian Party has had to get candidates on the ballot by circulating petitions.

The convention, held at the Baymont Inn and Suites in Mandan from 1 to 5 P.M. and expected to draw about 150 people, is to be highlighted by nominations for statewide offices and possibly some legislative candidates.

## A proactive stance

The party is being more proactive in preparing candidates and planning campaign strategies in advance, according to Riemers.

"We'd kind of gotten behind the 8-ball," Riemers said of past elections. "We're trying to use that time (now) to our advantage."

To encourage state legislative candidates, party leadership is offering \$1,000 campaign donations to the top five Libertarian legislative candidates who can get at least one percent of the vote in their district and make it past the June primary.

"We're just trying to increase our percentages as much as possible," Riemers said. "There are people in the state, especially in the western part of the state, that are willing to vote Libertarian."

While Riemers said he's unsure if he'll run in 2016, Seaman said he's undecided on which statewide office he'll run for.

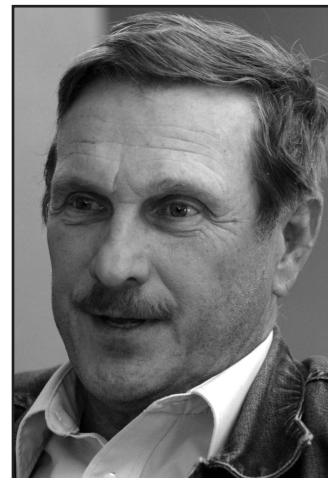
"I'm pretty sure we're going to have a full slate of statewide candidates," Seaman said. "We're following the national trend. It's the fastest growing third party in America."

It is critical to ensure their ballot status isn't a one-and-done deal, according to Seaman.

"It'd be a huge black eye for the party," Seaman said.

The party could attain further momentum if the Democratic-NPL Party comes up short in candidate recruiting, Seaman said. In a September radio interview, Sen. George B. Sinner, D-Fargo, said there was a possibility the party might not nominate candidates for governor or U.S. Senate.

"It just makes our party so much stronger," Seaman said. "People are fed up with career politicians. You get disillusioned with the two-party duopoly. The message of the Libertarian Party is resonating with people."



**Roland Riemers**  
Chairman, North Dakota LP

## Lack of influence

While the party faithful are optimistic, others say they still have a long road ahead of them.

Mark Jendrysik, a political science professor at the University of North Dakota, said the party typically siphons off some Republican votes but they really don't have anyone with the name recognition to be a major force.

"You could see them influencing a close vote like the 2012 U.S. Senate race," Jendrysik said.

The libertarians are in need of a bench and standard-bearer, according to Jendrysik.

"They're always more on a shoestring (budget). They need some charismatic person with resources," Jendrysik said.

Republican and Democratic-NPL Party leadership says, despite its small numbers, they do keep an eye on the Libertarian Party.

"We look at them the same way as we treat anyone else," said North Dakota Republican Party Chairman Kelly Armstrong, adding that having more choices on the ballot is "good for people" and keeps leaders from all parties on their toes.

**"A third-party candidate can always have an impact on an election...."**  
—ND Democratic Party Chair

"We just have to work hard to get our message out there. If we work hard, I'm pretty confident in the results," Armstrong said.

ND Dem-NPL Party Chair Oversen said by email they watch the party, acknowledging they could impact the occasional race.

"A third-party candidate can always have an impact on an election, particularly on a close one. The candidate may not change the outcome, regarding votes, but can certainly change the conversation and bring different voters to the polls," Oversen said. •