

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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LP starts campaign to fight the "racist" Regulation B from the Federal Reserve

The Libertarian Party has joined a campaign to stop Regulation B — a new proposal by the Federal Reserve Board that may force banks to collect information about the race, gender, and ethnic background of loan applicants.

Since launching the anti-Regulation B campaign on November 17, party spokespeople have appeared on more than 200 radio stations to warn Americans about the proposal, and the party has put information on its website to help activists lobby against Regulation B.

Back down

"We learned from the success of the Know Your Customer campaign that if you pick the proper issue, you *can* force the feds to back down," said LP Press Secretary George Getz, who is coordinating the effort. "We hope to stop Regulation B, too, since it is another example of the government using race to pit one group against another."

Lobbying information can be found via a link on the LP website: www.LP.org. The link includes more information about the proposal, a fax number for the Federal Reserve, and phone numbers for people to call their Congressional

representatives.

The public comment period for Regulation B ended in mid-November, said Getz, but sources say the Federal Reserve is still "unofficially" taking comments.

On the fence

"Apparently, the Federal Reserve is still on the fence about Regulation B," he said. "If we put pressure on them *now*, we may be able to turn the tide against this racist proposal."

Other organizations active in the anti-Regulation B campaign include the Free Congress Foundation, the Eagle Forum, the Inde-

pendent Community Bankers of America, and other banking organizations.

No decision is expected until Spring 2000.

Regulation B would amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to "encourage" banks to collect data on the race, religion, gender, and national origin of anyone applying for an auto loan, credit card, or personal loan.

The collection of such data has been illegal since 1976, but the Federal Reserve wants to reverse that policy and make it "voluntary" — which is probably, critics note, the first step towards making it mandatory.

A record-setting campaign kick-off

In one of the largest campaign kick-off events in Libertarian Party history, Carla Howell launched her U.S. Senate race against Ted Kennedy with an event in Waltham, Massachusetts that attracted more than 200 people and raised \$23,000.

The November 5 event was described as "swank," "professional," and "exciting" by attendees.

"I have attended major Republican campaign kick-off events, and the Carla Howell U.S. Senate campaign kick-off is the best I've ever seen," said Bob O'Keefe, a former Republican activist turned Libertarian.

Howell will run against fading liberal legend Ted Kennedy (D-MA) in 2000.

At the kick-off event in the Westin Hotel, Howell announced the theme of her campaign: "Small government is beautiful." Her campaign will stress "a prosperous and generous and tolerant America — and a small and simple and thrifty federal government," she said.

Peter McWilliams takes plea bargain

Bestselling author and LP member Peter McWilliams has accepted a plea bargain in his medical marijuana case, and now faces five years in prison.

On November 19, McWilliams pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to manufacture and distribute marijuana, after a judge ruled earlier in the month that he couldn't use "medical necessity" as a defense.

"We had no place else to go," said McWilliams. "We couldn't present our medical marijuana defense, so we would be found guilty, taken into custody on the spot, and begin serving a mandatory 10-year sentence."

McWilliams and Todd McCormick were arrested in July on federal marijuana charges, even though California's Proposition 215 allows marijuana to be used for medical reasons.

McWilliams, who has AIDS, and McCormick, who has bone cancer, had planned to use a Proposition 215 defense.

But U.S. District Judge George King ruled they could not refer to their medical conditions, or mention any medical uses of marijuana.

N.H. Libertarians pick candidates

By JILLIAN SAFER
Telegraph Staff

NASHUA — In 1996, Libertarian Party of New Hampshire candidates didn't capture enough votes statewide to have the party's candidates automatically listed on the election ballot in 2000.

The 1996 Libertarian presidential candidate, Harry Browne, only captured a half percent of the vote nationwide.

While these types of results are naturally frustrating, party officials and supporters gathered at Saturday's statewide convention voted to thrust forward 22 candidates for statewide offices. Browne, too, is vying for the party's presidential nomination again.

Miriam Luce, a former gubernatorial candidate for the party, said that getting candidates out there year after year may not have resulted in many victories, but it has helped disseminate and familiarize people with many of the party's ideas.

Luce noted that many of the basic Libertarian stances that once sent people into shock are now a part of regular public discussion, such as privatizing social security, legalizing drugs and abolishing the IRS.

"These are all Libertarian issues and have been for 20 years," she said. "The public is getting used to these ideas and that sort of consensus has to build before change can happen."

Of course, she said, moving the ideas from the discussion table into law is the next step, and the best way to do that is with successful



Photo by Damon Klesow

Edmund Contoski of Minnesota delivers the keynote address, "Best kept Environmental Secrets — What You Haven't Been Told and Why," during the Libertarian Party of New Hampshire's convention Saturday at the Holiday Inn in Nashua.

candidates.

George Phillies of Worcester, Mass., an active supporter of the national Libertarian party, came to the party's convention to talk strategy with fellow members and encourage aspiring politicians to use small races as stepping stones for larger races, building a reputation and a core group of supporters as they go.

"People vote for people they know; people vote for people that they trust and people vote for people who have delivered," he said.

Trying to make a rather large political jump is the party's gubernatorial candidate, John Babiarz of Grafton, who said that the growing number of governmental restraints and regulations on his freedoms pushed him to join the race.

Currently a board member of the Mascoma Regional School District and the Grafton cemetery trustee, he jokes, "I'm starting from 6-foot under and going straight to the top."

The Libertarian Party of New Hampshire candidates also include: Executive Council — Rosalie Babiarz, Grafton; U.S. Representative District 1 — Dan Belforti; State Senate — Aaron Eymann of Nashua, James Vogt of Concord, Ken Blevens of Bow, Brian Christeson of Alexandria; State House of Representatives — Howard Wilson of Andover, William Discipio of Hampstead, Danielle Donovan of Goffstown, Jeannine Bernier of Goffstown, Tony Lekas of Hudson, Jim Wallack of Londonderry, Rhonda Keiper of Amherst, Andrew Silva of Hampstead, Len Epstein of Derry, Barry Brawer of Nashua, Brad Dorsey of Hopkinton, Joseph Rosenquist of Hampton, Robert Kelley of Concord, Cameron S. Hildebran of Milford and Ken Preve of Epsom.

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SPREADING THE MESSAGE: Ward Connerly, who engineered the passage of Proposition 209 in California, speaks to delegates at the Florida Libertarian Party Convention. Staff photo/Eric J. Larson

Party stands against racial preferences

Florida Libertarians take vote

By STELLA M. CHAVEZ
STAFF WRITER

WEST PALM BEACH — On a mission to eliminate race-based policies in Florida, Ward Connerly received a standing ovation as he spread his anti-affirmative action message Sunday to a group of local Libertarians.

Connerly's speech wrapped up the 25th Anniversary Libertarian Party of Florida Convention this weekend at the Sheraton Hotel. During the convention, party delegates voted to endorse Connerly's Civil Rights Initiative, which would end governmental affirmative action policies. The initiative is modeled after California's successful Proposition 209, which Californians approved by a 55 percent majority in 1996.

Connerly endorsed equality for everyone, but told delegates that his goal is to eliminate the "silly little boxes" that people must check off to signify their race.

"Race has no place. It doesn't matter what our skin color is," Connerly said. "We're so focused on race and skin color that we're not respecting people as individuals," Connerly said.

He chastised President Clinton for a speech Clinton made to a group of Hispanic leaders in which he blamed Congressional leaders for not supporting his nominations of Hispanics. Connerly also criticized candidates who make small attempts at speaking Spanish when they address Hispanics.

"I'm not trying to demean anyone who can speak Spanish," Connerly said. "But if that is the full content of your message, then that's the wrong message."

"He made a lot of really good points," said Steve Pitts, 32. "Until people stop focusing on race, we're going to be a race-conscious society. That shouldn't be important."

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WARD CONNERLY

ANTI-AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROponent

Herb Harmon, senior adviser of the Florida Civil Rights Initiative campaign, said the group is confident it will receive enough signatures to place the initiative on the November 2000 ballot. So far, about 55,000 signatures have been collected in more than 35 counties.

Harmon's group must collect at least 435,000 signatures, or 8 percent of the votes in the last presidential election, in order for the initiative to be placed on the ballot. At least 10 percent of that, or 43,500 signatures, must be verified so that the Florida Supreme Court can review the language of the initiative. As of last Thursday, the Department of the Secretary of State had verified 42,000 signatures, Harmon said.

Neither Connerly nor Harmon, a former chair of the Republican Party of Florida, say they're dismayed by recent news that some Republican leaders, including Gov. Jeb Bush, oppose Connerly's efforts. Bush has said he opposes quotas and set-asides for minority contractors but thinks the Civil Rights Initiative is divisive.

While that may be the sentiment of some, Connerly said "The rank and file members (of the Republican party) in the state overwhelmingly support this. It's only the state party leaders who don't."

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▲ *The Nashua Telegraph*,
Nashua, New Hampshire, October 24, 1999

► *The Sun-Sentinel*,
Fort Lauderdale, Florida, October 11, 1999

▼ *USA Today*,
Arlington, Virginia, October 12, 1999

Florida: West Palm Beach — The Florida Libertarian Party has endorsed plans for a November 2000 ballot initiative that would ban racial preferences in the state. Ward Connerly, who led successful ballot initiatives to ban racial preferences in California and Washington, convinced party delegates that America isn't racist anymore and preferential treatment only perpetuates discrimination.

Libertarian Party chairman still courting Johnson

ANDREW POERTNER
RECORD STAFF WRITER

Despite public rejections, the chairman of the Libertarian Party of New Mexico remains hopeful. Gov. Gary Johnson will accept the party's nomination as its presidential candidate.

Party chairman Joseph Knight was in Roswell Friday registering voters at the Eastern New Mexico State Fair. Knight said Johnson is an ideal candidate for his party since he displays so many of the ideals it advocates and is hopeful the Republican governor will step away from his established party affiliation.

"We're still twisting his arm," Knight said. "He's a closet Libertarian and he needs to come out of the closet. He's a very honest and out-

standing man and a sitting governor and the perfect messenger for us."

Although Johnson has recently come into national view for advocating the legalization of drugs, Knight said he's had his eye on the governor for several months. Facing criticism within his own party, Knight said Johnson would find a better audience among Libertarians.

"The Republicans aren't being very nice to him right now," Knight said. "And while the Republicans are embarrassed by him, we're proud of him."

"The drug thing is just the icing on the cake," Knight added. "He'd pretty well established his Libertari-



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Joseph Knight
Libertarian Party chairman

an credentials before that deal came along."

Knight said Johnson has routinely shown himself as a governor who wants less government intrusion into the private sector on many issues, a central theme of the Liber-

arian Party.

"Our stance is essentially the same on each issue: The less government is involved, the more we like it," Knight said.

As for drug legalization, Knight said his party's beliefs coincide with the governor's. He said the penalties for drug use are far too strong and outlawing drug use only enlarges the problem.

"First, it's wrong. You can't tell people what they can and cannot put in their body," he said. "Second, it doesn't work."

Knight said if Johnson accepted the Libertarian Party's nomination, he'd also receive a chance to further explain his views to the nation.

"What's in it for him is traveling this great land of ours talking about the issues he wants to talk about," Knight said. "And we'll be backing him up."

For now, Knight said his party is working toward registering for the presidential election. He said Friday the Libertarian Party is within 1,000 signatures of being able to appear on the ballot as a major party. If Johnson accepts the party's nomination, Knight said it will probably receive more support than any of the previous elections since the party was established in 1972.

"What we need to tell people is that if they've ever thought about joining the party, now's the time," Knight said. "Even if they don't agree with us they can help and put another choice on the ballot."

NRA endorses Kahn

By Rhonda Bodfield Sander
The Arizona Daily Star

Miffed at Republican candidate Bob Walkup, the National Rifle Association has now formally endorsed Libertarian Ed Kahn in Tucson's mayoral race.

Kahn was thrilled. "If the Jews in the ghettos had sidearms (during the Holocaust), there would have been a lot of dead Gestapo agents instead of Jews," Kahn responded.

But why would the national gun-rights group care about one city's mayoral race in 1999?

Walkup - trying to win middle-ground votes in a liberal stronghold - recently canceled an NRA membership in his name, after finding out someone took it out without his OK.

Now a statement from Walkup's campaign manager, Andrew Greenhill, said, "We're disappointed because we'd like everyone's support. But we'd like people to realize that a vote for Kahn is a vote for (Democrat Molly) McKasson because Ed doesn't have a chance to win and it would just be a protest vote."

- ▲ [TOP] *The Roswell Daily Record*, Roswell, New Mexico, October 10, 1999
- ▲ [CENTER] *The Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson, Arizona, October 17, 1999
- ▼ *The Delaware Capitol Review*, Dover, Delaware, October 3, 1999

Why criminals will love Clinton's gun buyback program

By Jim Conk

Jim Conk is chair of the Libertarian Party for Kent County. Mr. Conk resides in Smyrna.

A plan by President Clinton to spend \$15 million to launch a nationwide gun "buyback" program is not only a waste of money - it's a cheap public relations stunt that will have zero impact on gun crime.

The only people who will benefit from this buyback program are politicians and criminals. Criminals like it because it will take only a minuscule percentage of guns out of circulation - almost all of them from law-abiding people who will become disarmed. And politicians like it because they get to spend our money while pretending to solve a problem.

Last week, President Clinton proposed to hand out \$15 million in federal grants to police departments to buy guns from public housing residents as part of "the largest gun

"Expecting a criminal to turn in a gun is like expecting a carpenter to turn in his favorite hammer - or expecting a politician to surrender his power to write more gun laws. They're simply tools of the trade. Even dumb criminals are too smart to give up their guns."

- Jim Conk

buyback project in American history."

But before that \$15 million is squandered, politicians should study the evidence against government buyback programs. The fact is:

- The people LEAST likely to turn in guns are criminals. Expecting a criminal to turn in a gun is like expecting a carpenter to turn in his favorite hammer - or expecting a politician to surrender his power to

write more gun laws. They're simply tools of the trade. Even dumb criminals are too smart to give up their guns.

- The people MOST likely to turn in guns are law-abiding citizens. In recent local gun buybacks, a majority of sellers were women and senior citizens who explained that they're afraid of guns and wanted to get them out of the house. In other words, these are the people least

likely to use them for criminal purposes.

- Buybacks disarm future crime victims. Americans who turn in their guns can no longer use them to defend themselves against murderers, rapists, and thieves. It may be a voluntary disarmament program, but it's a disarmament program nonetheless that leaves people defenseless against criminals.

- Buybacks encourage criminals to steal guns. No-questions-asked buyback programs actually give street thugs an incentive to steal firearms and sell them to police departments. So, this buyback program will help criminals profit, while turning local police departments into fencing operations.

Besides the Libertarians, does anyone else question the usefulness of gun buyback programs? Yes: The federal government. Out of the \$15 million earmarked for this project,

\$1 million will go to study the effectiveness of gun buyback programs.

It's typical of the politicians: They decide to spend \$14 million on a program, and then spend \$1 million to see if they wasted that \$14 million. If it was their own money, it would be funny. Since it's the taxpayers' money, it's an outrage.

The government could save that \$1 million by simply reviewing the research done by Florida State University criminologist Gary Kleck, who found that buyback programs "have no demonstrable impact on crime" - but do yield "real political benefits." And then the government could save the \$14 million by simply canceling the buyback program.

This program won't reduce crime, and it's foolish to pretend otherwise. It's time to tell politicians that Americans aren't buying the gun buyback program.

Libertarians turn to justices on ballot ban

By AARON CHAMBERS
Law Bulletin staff writer

SPRINGFIELD — Libertarian candidate James L. Tobin wants the Illinois Supreme Court to decide whether his party was improperly knocked out of the fall 1998 election.

Tobin's attorney, Steve R. Merican of Woodridge, said Wednesday that he mailed a petition for leave to appeal to the high court, claiming the state Board of Elections violated the Election Code and misinterpreted case law to dismiss the Libertarians' nominating petitions from the November 1998 general election.

Tobin and other candidates for various state offices had wanted their names on the ballot under the Libertarian Party of Illinois name. But after objections were made, the board reduced the number of valid signatures to below the minimum required by law — striking not only those signatures that a hearing officer had recommended be stricken, but additional signatures as well, and rendered the petitions legally insufficient.

The candidates asked the Cook County Circuit Court to review the board's decision, but Judge Francis Barth ruled that the trial court lacked jurisdiction. Barth's reasons were that the candidates failed to name a necessary party, the LPI, in their petition for review and because the candidates didn't serve the objectors or the LPI with a copy of the petition within 10 days of the board's decision being issued.

The candidates appealed to the 1st District Appellate Court, but the 1st District affirmed Barth's dismissal for lack of jurisdiction. *James L. Tobin, et al. v. Anthony P. Libri Jr.*, No. 1-98-4392.

Tobin's petition complains that both lower courts failed to address "substantive" issues of law as to whether the board properly knocked the Libertarians from the ballot.

It claims the board violated the Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/10-10 (A6), which requires the board to state its findings and the objections it sustained in writing.

"If the Board is allowed to throw candidates off the ballot without identifying in writing its findings and which objections it sustained, then candidates and voters can never know that any number of petition signatures will suffice," the petition states.

Tobin's petition claims the board misinterpreted *Fortas v. Dixon*, 122 Ill.App.3d 697 (1984), in which the appellate court allowed the board to strike whole petition sheets in the absence of evidence that specific signatures were fraudulent. It asserts that the board

extended the punitive aspects of *Fortas* without authority from either the General Assembly or case law.

Tobin's petition claims the board improperly rejected some petition sheets on the ground that the circulators had not handed each individual signer the petition, saying the signing circulator was present when the petition was signed. "That fact apparently did not satisfy the board," it stated.

The petition also states that the Election Code does not require that a petition for judicial review be served within 10 days from the board's decision, and that

◀ *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin*, Chicago, Illinois, October 27, 1999

▶ *The Daily Review Atlas*, Monmouth, Illinois, October 15, 1999

Libertarian next U.S. president?

Browne wins mock poll

BY ROBERT BLACKFORD

Managing Editor

Promoting himself as the candidate of "sex, drugs and rock and roll," Monmouth College economics professor Richard Johnston, representing Libertarian Party candidate Harry Browne, won the Monmouth College Straw Poll held Thursday evening, answering for those present the question, "Who will be the next president of the United States?"

The poll was conducted by a group of students from political science professor Ira Smolensky's "Issues Seminars" class.

Johnston started his statement with a quote from Thomas Paine and went on to insist people take responsibility for their own actions. He attacked the nation's war on drugs and its war on poverty as failures. He

lumped the two primary political parties together, stating they were really only one party. Johnston decried, "Social Security is a pyramid scheme collapsing."

Johnston drew 12 votes and was the clear-cut winner. Finishing second in the voting was John McCain, (portrayed by Kim Williams). McCain drew nine votes.

The remainder of the voting went as follows: Al Gore (Bill Wanderer) and Bill Bradley (Christina Hauri), 8; Steve Forbes (Roshani Pandey) and Alan Keyes (Gordon Zaric), 5; George W. Bush (Tim Creedon), 4; Pat Buchanan (Paul Talley) and Elizabeth Dole (Keri Braun), 2.

Though no one was present to portray Jesse Ventura, he still garnered three votes. Gary Bauer, Larry Hines and Bob Smith, who were also unrepresented, each received one vote.

Barth was "without power to invent a requirement."

Chicago attorney Andrew M. Raucci, who defended objectors Anthony P. Libri Jr. and Drinda O'Connor before the 1st District, could not be reached for comment.

The attorney general's office, which is defending the state Board of Elections, had no comment, said spokesman Daniel M. Anders.

The case is *James L. Tobin, et al. v. Anthony P. Libri Jr., et al.* The petition had not been filed Wednesday and no docket number had been assigned.