Constitution of the Libertarian Party of Washington State –

As Adopted by Convention July 8th 2017

Statement of Principles

We, the members of the Libertarian Party of Washington State, hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. Accordingly, all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

We further hold that where government exists, it must not violate the right of any individual: namely (1) the right to life – accordingly, we support prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action – accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and the press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property – accordingly, we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives or property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

Toward these ends, the following articles comprise our Constitution:

Article I: Name

The name of this organization will be the Libertarian Party of Washington State Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as “the Party.”

Article II: Purpose and Duration

The duration of this Party will be perpetual. The purpose of the Party is to proclaim and implement its Statement of Principles by:

1. Nominating and running candidates for office in the State of Washington;
2. Entering into political information and educational activities;
3. Promoting, chartering, and coordinating regional organizations throughout the State of Washington;

4. Calling conventions of Libertarian Party Members within the State of Washington;

5. Providing delegates for national Libertarian Party conventions;

6. And filling vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket.

Article III: Controlling Documents

1. The controlling documents of the Party are this Constitution and the Party Bylaws. Authority for procedures not otherwise addressed in the Controlling Documents is Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

Article IV: Membership

1. Any person residing within the State of Washington, and who endorses in writing the following statement: "I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals," and who meets the criteria established by the controlling documents is a member of the Party.

2. The requirement and standards for membership will be set forth in the Party Bylaws.

Article V: BCRA Compliance

1. The Party shall not make any purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit, or gift of money or anything of value for the purpose of influencing any election for federal office.

2. Nothing in these documents is meant to directly influence federal election activity.

Article VI: Officers

1. The Party shall have four (4) Party Officers, as follows: State Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

2. Party Officers will be elected individually, on separate ballots, in the order set forth above, at the annual Party Convention. No offices shall be combined. When three (3) or more candidates run for an office, the election shall be conducted using an instant runoff vote.

3. Terms of office for Party Officers will commence after adjournment of the annual convention in odd numbered years, and terminate after adjournment of the annual convention in the succeeding odd numbered year.

4. Only Party members eligible to vote at the annual Party convention may serve as Party Officers.

5. Party Officers have the executive powers and duties of the Party. Additional powers and duties of the Party Officers are set forth herein and in the Bylaws.

6. Party Officers may delegate their powers and/or duties to other Party members upon the advice and three-fifths (3/5) consent of the State Executive Committee. Removal of such delegation requires a simple majority of the State Executive Committee.

7. In the event that the office of State Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair shall become the State Chair for the remainder of the term.

8. The State Executive Committee may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the current members, appoint or reinstate Party Officers other than the State Chair if vacancies or suspensions occur, such officers to serve the remainder of the vacated term.

9. Any Party Officer may be suspended for cause by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the State Executive Committee. The Vice-Chair is recused from voting to suspend the State Chair.

10. A Party Officer may challenge his/her suspension by written appeal to the Judicial Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of notice of such suspension. Failure to appeal within thirty (30) days shall confirm the suspension and bar any later challenge or appeal.

11. Members of the State Executive Committee shall not be members of any party in the State of Washington other than the LPWA or its affiliates

Article VII: State Executive Committee

A. Membership:

1. There shall be eight (8) regional representatives allocated to the State Executive Committee, elected from the Party membership at the annual State Convention in the manner determined in the Party Bylaws, each representing a unique political or geographical region.

2. The Party Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary are members of the State Executive Committee.

3. The State Chair shall preside at State Executive Committee meetings, and may vote only if the Chair's vote would change the outcome.

B. Powers:

1. The State Executive Committee will have all policy making, investigatory, and review authority over all the affairs, properties, and funds of the Party not prohibited by the Controlling Documents of the Party.

2. The State Executive Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules, as provided in the Party Bylaws.

3. The State Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint committees as provided in the Party Bylaws.

4. The State Executive Committee may never expel a member from the Party, but may petition the Judicial Committee to expel a member of the Party upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Article VIII: Statutory State Committee

A. Applicability:

Article VIII applies during only such times as when the Party has major party status per state statute.

B. Membership:

The Statutory State Committee shall be composed of Party members who have been selected by Statutory County Committees to serve on the Statutory State Committee.

C. Powers:

The Statutory State Committee has the following powers:

1. To call conventions of Libertarian Party members within the State of Washington;
2. To provide delegates for National Libertarian Party conventions;
3. To nominate Presidential electors; and
4. To fill vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket.
5. The Statutory State Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules, as provided in the Party Bylaws.
6. The Statutory State Committee may delegate its powers to the State Executive Committee, or to an appropriate standing committee created by the controlling documents, or to the Party Convention.

Article IX: Judicial Committee

A. Membership:

1. The Judicial Committee will consist of not more than nine (9) Party members.
2. A candidate for election to the Judicial Committee must be a Party member for at least three (3) years.
3. Party Officers and members of the State Executive Committee and the Statutory State Committee are not eligible to serve on the Judicial Committee.
4. Members of the Judicial Committee shall be elected at each annual convention and serve for a period specified in the Bylaws, unless they are recalled by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a Party convention.
5. Within sixty (60) days of each annual convention the Judicial Committee shall elect from its members a Chief Justice.
6. Vacancies on the Judicial Committee will be filled at the next annual Party convention.

B. Powers:

1. The Judicial Committee shall hear appeals or petitions from Party members concerning:
2. Interpretation of the controlling documents;
3. Disputes involving access to Party records;
4. Suspension of Party Officers; and
5. Disputes involving representation on the State Executive Committee, or the Statutory State Committee or its committees
6. The Judicial Committee shall review any petition by the State Executive Committee to expel a member from the Party. The Judicial Committee must either dismiss such petition or refer such petition to the Convention, or to any properly called Special Convention, for a final determination.
7. Decisions of the Judicial Committee shall be limited to summary affirmation or reversal of any official act of a Party Officer, or the State Executive Committee or the Statutory State Committee. The State Executive Committee, or the Statutory State Committee or the appellant/petitioner may request a written opinion from the Judicial Committee.
8. Judicial Committee decisions are subject to repeal by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates at the next Party convention.
9. The Judicial Committee will meet in the manner and conduct themselves according to the Party Bylaws.

Article X: Regional Organizations

1. The State Executive Committee may charter as regional organizations those organizations requesting such status, to represent counties or other political or geographical entities, if requested by affected members and approved by the State Executive Committee. Regional Organizations may be, in the sole and exclusive discretion of the State Executive Committee, Statutory County Committees. Regional organizations will be chartered for the following purposes:

    a. Nominating candidates for public office.
    b. Working to elect Libertarian candidates.
    c. Promoting Libertarian principles through political information and educational activities.
    d. Selecting representatives to appropriate Party activities.

2. Every organization so chartered will ratify the Statement of Principles of the LPWA and provide the names and titles of its regional officers to the State Executive Committee annually.

Article XI: Statutory County Committees

A. Applicability:

Article XI applies during only such times as when the Party has major party status per state statute.

B. Membership:

Statutory County Committees are composed of current Party members in the County who are appointed by the committee chair and confirmed by the County Executive Committee. The committee chair shall be elected by ballot at a convention of Party members residing in the County. Persons elected as Libertarian Precinct Committee Officers in the county shall have the right to address each meeting of the Statutory County Committee for up to one minute, but shall not have any voting rights.

C. Powers:

1. Statutory County Committees shall select from their numbers up to two (2) representatives to the Statutory State Committee. Any representative to the Statutory State Committee must have been a member of the Party for at least one (1) year.

2. Statutory County Committees shall have such other powers as may be delegated by these controlling documents or by the State Executive Committee.

3. The Statutory County Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules as provided in the Party Bylaws.

Article XII: Annual Party Conventions

1. The Party will meet in convention as provided in the convention rules and the Party Bylaws.

2. Any Party member is eligible to be a Delegate and when in attendance may vote at convention; provided that he or she has~~:~~

    a. Paid current dues at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to that convention as determined by the State Executive Committee or Credentials Chair and been a member of either the Party or the national Libertarian Party on or before the date thirty (30) days before the convention; or

    b. Been selected as a Delegate by a regional organization recognized under Article X of this Constitution at least thirty (30) days prior to the convention; or

    c. Upon application for appointment, been appointed as a Delegate by the State Executive Committee or a designated subcommittee thereof; Provided further, that the eligible Delegates under this section who are at any particular convention may, upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote, waive the requirements of subsections a., b., and c. for other Party members who are present but not otherwise eligible to vote at that convention.

3. A quorum shall consist of no less than ten percent of the total current Party membership qualified to be voting convention delegates, and shall be reported by a Teller Committee Chair prior to commencement of any voting segment of the annual convention.
4. The rules for each convention will be adopted by the convention as its first order of business. A simple majority of those delegates present and voting will be sufficient for adoption.
5. At annual conventions Party Officers, State Executive Committee members, and Judicial Committee members shall be elected as provided in the Bylaws, a Party Platform may be adopted or revised, the Constitution and Bylaws may be Amended, resolutions may be adopted, and candidates for public office may be endorsed.
6. The convention date(s) and location city shall be announced on the homepage of the Party's website and other official publication methods designated by the State Executive Committee at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the annual convention.
7. In years when a National Libertarian Party Convention is to be held, the annual convention will elect delegates and alternates to the national convention in accordance with procedures set forth in the Party Bylaws. In the event of conflict, selections made by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.
8. In years when a United States Presidential Election is to be held, the annual convention will elect representatives to the United States Electoral College. In the event of conflict, the selections made by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.

A. Special Conventions

1. The State Executive Committee may call a special convention by a four-fifths (4/5) majority vote of those present at a regular State Executive Committee meeting. In the event of conflict, the convention date selected by the State Executive Committee shall have priority.

2. Members of the Party may call a special convention by submitting a petition to the State Chair, signed by at least twenty-five (25) percent of the Party members eligible to be voting delegates at convention. Those petitioning will bear all costs including required notification.

Article XIII: Platform

1. The Party may adopt a Platform or plank at the annual Party convention by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates in attendance.

2. Any Platform plank, or the entire Platform, may be repealed by a simple majority vote of delegates at the convention.

3. All platform planks shall be consistent with the Statement of Principles of the Party.

Article XIV: Nomination of Candidates

1. All Libertarian candidates for partisan office shall be members of the Party, and shall be nominated by members of the Party.

2. In the event of conflict, the person(s) selected to fill vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket by the Campaigns Committee or other committee delegated with such power by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.

3. Nomination of candidates for public office will be according to this Constitution and the Party Bylaws.

Article XV: President and Vice President

The officers of the Party shall notify the Secretary of State of Washington that the candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States selected by the national Libertarian Party are the nominees of the Party.

Article XVI: Election Code Superseded

In accordance with the rights of political parties recognized by the Supreme Court of the United States in Eu v. San Francisco County Democratic Central Comm., 489 U.S. 214 (1989), any provision of the Washington State Election Code regarding internal party governance that conflicts with the provisions of this Constitution or with the Bylaws of the Party is hereby superseded.

Article XVII: Amendments

1. The Statement of Principles, preamble to this Constitution, affirms the philosophy upon which the Libertarian Party is founded, upon which it shall be sustained, and through which liberty shall prevail. The enduring importance of the Statement of Principles requires that it may be amended only by a seven-eighths (7/8) majority vote of all delegates at an annual convention.

2. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates in attendance at any party convention.

3. The Party Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of delegates in attendance at any Party convention.