

It is hardly too strong to say that the Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters."  
 - Daniel Webster (1782-1852)



# The Birmingham Libertarian

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## Birmingham City Council Race Featured October 8th

We are inviting several city council race candidates to our forum on October 8th. The evening will be filled with questions for the candidates and the direction they want to take the city. Please come early, as seating is limited and we can not be certain of the turnout. If you are late you may not get a seat! Friendly discussions from 6:30pm and dinner at 7:00 o'clock.

Join us for an evening of fun filled discussion!

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The LPA HQ  
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 Sunday, September 30 7pm-9pm

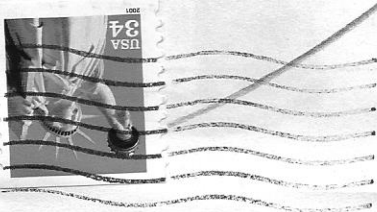
Another Kaffe Klatsch!!!

- Readings
- Discussion
- Theory and Philoso

Our last was a wonder again! We'll have avail sweet rolls, coffee, and 8683 for more details! 35205-2912 03

This is your # of free issues remaining. To renew, please call 328-8683 and leave your name and address! There is no charge! LPA members will automatically renew for 1 year.

The Greater Birmingham Libertarians  
 Freeman Presson, District Representative  
 2330 Highland Avenue  
 Birmingham, AL 35205



## Alabama LP Wins Major Party Status with State Attorney General's Ruling

**Montgomery, August 18th** — Thanks to a favorable ruling by the state's attorney general, the Alabama LP has officially achieved "major party" status — marking the first time in 30 years three parties have been recognized in the state.

"This is a huge step forward for liberty," said Alabama LP Vice Chair Matthew Givens. "Voters who are disenchanted with the Democrats and the Republicans now have a place to go."

On August 18, Attorney General Bill Pryor ruled the LP had gained major party status under the state's election laws. His decision ended months of controversy over whether Libertarians would join the Republicans and Democrats as a "major party" in the eyes of the state.

According to Alabama law, any party whose candidate for statewide office wins at least 20% of the votes cast in the last election cycle qualifies as a major party.

Libertarians argued they had met that burden in 2000 when LP candidate Sydney Albert Smith ran for Supreme Court Place 2 — a statewide race — and received 20.16% of the 1,120,677 votes cast. That amounted to nearly a *quarter million votes* for a third party candidate...a record number.

However, state election officials challenged the LP's contention, claiming that to obtain major party status, a third-party candidate must win 20% of the vote in the most popular statewide race — not in any statewide race.

In response, the LP sent a letter arguing its case to Secretary of State Jim Bennett in July. Bennett then asked for an advisory opinion from Attorney General Bill Pryor, who subsequently affirmed the LP's position.

"We are delighted that the Attorney General ruled as he did," said Givens. "The legal precedent was plain, and the Libertarian Party has achieved a significant milestone."

The greatest benefit for the Libertarian Party — as an official major party — is automatic ballot access, said Givens, which will allow the LP to spend money publicizing candidates that would otherwise be spent on petition drives.

Previously, the LP had to obtain valid signatures equal to 3% of the number of people who voted in the most recent gubernatorial race (or about 40,000 signatures) to get a statewide candidate on the ballot.

Givens also said major parties can request taxpayer-funded primary elections, although the LP would not do so.

Another benefit the LP gains is a tax check-off box on the Alabama state income tax return. An individual may voluntarily give \$1 to the political party of their choice, or a couple may give \$2. State Chair Mark Bodenhausen said this may become a significant source of donations to the party. "Since we take no matching funds from the government, this is an opportunity to give a little. The box you check on April 15th says a lot about your beliefs. And having a relatively steady source of funds year after year allows us to make a more robust push into the political sphere."



"Watchdog leader"  
Mark Bodenhausen

Bodenhausen says the LP's new status will allow the party to become the new "watchdogs" on big-government politicians.

"That means no more midnight deals, political backscratching, or free-for-all spending of our tax dollars without any recourse," he said. "Competition is good for politics. In American politics, the smaller party traditionally takes the role of 'watchdog' giving voters another choice. Twenty years ago, the Republicans held that role. Today, we have the honor."

Although Givens said winning major party status is a significant victory, he said more difficult fights over public policy lie ahead.

"This is just the beginning of a long process," he said. "We know that what we are doing here is worthwhile, and that our dedication to a free society will make Alabama better for future generations."

## Congress, get off your Bass and pass the beer tax-cut bill!

WASHINGTON, DC — Congress should immediately pass a bill that would cut the federal tax on beer in half — because cheaper beer is as all-American as Killian's Red, Sam Adams White, and Labatt's Blue, say Libertarians.

"For beer lovers, this bill tastes great and is less taxing," said Bill Winter, the party's director of communications. "If Congress refuses to act on this beer tax cut, then Joe Sixpack will be sadder, Budweiser, about politicians' priorities." The bill, HR 1305, is currently on tap for Congressional consideration. Filed by U.S. Rep. Phil English (R-PA), it would slash the federal tax on beer from \$18 per barrel to \$9 per barrel — saving beer-drinkers an average of 16 to 32 per six pack.

U.S. Representatives should support the bill, said Winter, because such a tax cut fosters good feeling among ordinary Americans. "This is a Molson Golden opportunity for Congress to repeal the 1990 tax hike that doubled the federal levy on beer," he said. "When, in the Coors of human events, it becomes possible to give America's 30 million regular beer drinkers a tax break, politicians should do so with gusto.

"The fact is, 44% of the price of beer is swallowed by federal, state, and local taxes. It is a Grolsch violation of human rights to tax beer so steeply — especially when cutting the tax in half would reduce federal revenues by only \$1.7 billion per year."

But what about people who say the federal government needs that extra revenue? "In a Pig's Eye Pilsner politicians need the money," said Winter. "Congress ought to be debating how Lowenbrau taxes can go, not how high they can remain."

However, Congress does deserve a Pabst Blue Ribbon for even considering the bill, he acknowledged. "Now they should get off their Duffs and pass it, and send it to Presidente George W. Bush for his signature," he said. HR 1305 already has 187 co-sponsors, which shows that a sizable number of Congresspeople are willing to go to Labatt's for beer-drinkers, said Winter. But more are needed to ensure passage.

"This bill deserves support across the partisan spectrum — whether you are a Lone Star Republican, a Red Dog Democrat, or a Sam Adams-style Libertarian," he said. "After all, this bill benefits every American, from St. Pauli Girls to Old Milwaukee boys. It cuts taxes across the USA — from Brooklyn Browne Ale to Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, and from Molson Canadian to Mexico's Corona.



"HR 1305 also benefits Americans 365 days a year — from Pete's Wicked Springfest ale to Saranac Summer Wheat beer to Kirins Autumn Lager to Red Brick Winter Brew."

In addition, the beer tax-cut bill would promote diversity, said Winter. "This bill will encourage Americans to drink Murphy's Irish Stout, Harpoon India Pale Ale, Paulaner Bavarian Alpine Extreme, Thames Welsh Ale, Flying Fish Belgian Style Dubbel, Baron Premium Czech Dark Lager, and Belhaven Scottish Ale," he said. "This could help bring Americans out of the Becks Dark days of beer-drinking intolerance and into the Miller Lite of multiculturalism."

For all these reasons, Congress should pass HR 1305 as soon as it returns from its August break, said Winter. "Congress, don't wait any lager," he said.

"Demonstrate that you are Guinness Extra Stout-hearted. Get off your Bass, hops to it, prove the Kaliber of your convictions — and Pabst HR 1305."

### The Libertarian Party of Alabama Rejects Tax Funded Primary!

On August 27, 2001 the Executive Committee of the Libertarian Party of Alabama unanimously rejected the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for their primary.

For the first time in Alabama history a major political party has said NO to publicly funded primary elections. The Libertarians will choose their candidates through a state convention, paid for entirely through voluntary donations.

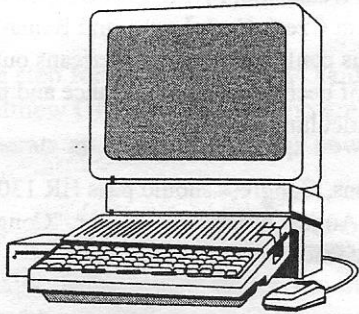
"We reject the idea that you, the taxpayer, should be forced to pay for the internal politics of political parties," said Chairman Mark Bodenhausen. "The 2000 primaries alone cost the taxpayers around \$3 million dollars, according to the Secretary of State's office."

As to charges that the Libertarians act as spoilers costing one party or another a race, Bodenhausen responded, "Your vote does not belong to the Democrats or the Republicans. A vote is like a voucher. People cast votes for the candidate they trust the most, and we have built that trust based on principle, action, and by example."

"We have held true to our principles," said Alabama Libertarian Party Vice-Chairman Matthew A. Givens. "Just as Harry Browne our Presidential candidate rejected tax dollars to fund his campaign, we reject tax payer dollars to fund our own politics. The precedent was plain, and the Libertarian Party will not compromise when it comes to principle."

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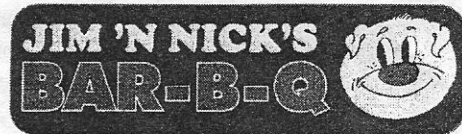
### JOIN THE LPA PLEDGE PROGRAM!

The LPA Pledge Program has grown to over SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS. We are charging toward our \$1000 a month pledge goal!

BE THE ONE TO TAKE US TO THE FINISH LINE.

CALL 1-205-328-8683 - PLEASE  
LEAVE A MESSAGE OR SEND AN EMAIL  
TO  
GALLATIN76@AOL.COM.

The Greater Birmingham Libertarian Supper Club is open to everyone. We discuss issues of the day, politics, taxes, and personal freedom. Meetings are held the second Monday of the month unless there is a holiday, when meetings are moved to the third Monday. We begin at 6:30 (dinner 6:45) unless otherwise noted. There is no charge to attend and contributions are gladly accepted. And of course, bring a friend. This month's meeting is being held at::



**Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q**

**220 Oxmoor Road**

**Just off I-65**

**942-3336**

#### The Libertarian Billboard Poll:

Which slogan do you prefer?

Last election, 1 in 5 Alabamians Voted Libertarian. 47%

Save a Life - End the War on Drugs 53%

The results of this poll reflect the number of responders in the "We're a Major Party" fundraising letter. Donors were given the opportunity to select the billboard of their choice. Results are current as of September 4th, 2001 and will be updated regularly.