



T LIBERTARIAN
PARTY OF TEXAS

PLATFORM COMMITTEE REPORT

2024 STATE CONVENTION

LPTexas Platform Committee Report

Suggested Motion

Empower the State Libertarian Executive Committee members to make minor numbering and/or grammatical adjustments to the final platform report.

Sunsetting Planks Review

Non-Controversial Renewals (No Changes Recommended):

Proposal 1 -

I.1.a. Word and Thought

LPTexas upholds the ideal that government should not interfere nor discriminate in matters of personal conscience, such as religion, speech, creativity, or political activity.

We encourage citizens to practice their freedom of speech liberally in an open marketplace of ideas. Likewise, freedom of thought and belief is essential to a free society. No one may force their own beliefs on others through use of government power or support.

Proposal 2 -

I.2 Property Rights

LPTexas stands firm with an individual's inherent right to own property; examples include land, buildings, belongings, and ownership of one's body and personhood. Property rights are subject to neither infringement nor interference by any individual or governmental entity.

Proposal 3 -

I.2.b. Civil Asset Forfeiture

LPTexas calls for the elimination of civil asset forfeiture, which allows for the unjust seizure of property from the accused without due process, with the exception of criminal conviction, in which such property may only be used in restitution to the victims.

Proposal 4 -

II.1.d. Occupational Licensing

The exercise of an occupation or profession should be regarded as a natural right, not subject to regulation or taxation by the government. Government's role in professional practices, if any, should be limited to protection against fraud or abuse. Therefore, LPTexas advocates for the repeal of all statutes regarding licensing occupations or professional practices.

Proposal 5 -

II.1.e. Government Debt

LPTexas supports a moratorium on bond issuance, Certificates of Obligation, and all other forms of government borrowing. Additionally, government-owned assets should be liquidated for the repayment of outstanding debt.

Sunsetting Planks With Suggested Changes

Proposal 6 - Suggested Language Change:

Statement of Principles

We, the Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas), seek the maximum protection for the rights of all people against any violation, be it by other people, other nations, or our own government. We oppose the initiation of force, threat of harm, coercion, or fraud as a means of achieving personal, political, or social goals.

Every human being is born sole owner of body and mind, free to live and act as each individual sees fit. It is our principle that a person who does not violate the rights of others should be left free and unrestrained.

LPTexas opposes coercion of peaceful individuals. Governments may only exist for the sole purpose of defending the freedoms of people.

Government is, essentially, raw concentrated force, and thus, prone to abuse. It is established and tolerated only as the agent and servant of the people--not their master. The force of government must be used only in response to an attack, fraud, or other initiation of force against an individual, group or government by another individual, group or government.

Governments have no business interfering in voluntary and contractual relations amongst individuals. All people should be equal before the law, free to deal with one another in a free market, the only system compatible with the principle of individual rights.

Government should reflect the consent of the governed and not subject individuals to tyranny of the majority. Where it exists, government must be kept to the minimum necessary to protect the rights of individuals. LPTexas holds that all human interaction should be voluntary and consensual, in accordance with the Non-Aggression Principle.

Original Language:

Statement of Principles

We, the Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas), seek the maximum protection for the rights of all people against any violation, be it by other people, other nations, or our own government. We oppose the initiation of force, threat of harm, coercion, or fraud as a means of achieving personal, political, or social goals.

Every human being is born sole owner of his or her body and mind, free to live and act as he or she sees fit. It is our principle that, so long as a person does not violate the rights of others, he or she should be left free and unrestrained.

LPTexas opposes coercion of peaceful individuals. Governments may only exist for the sole purpose of defending the freedoms of people. These freedoms include the right to life; the right to liberty of thought, speech and action; and the right to property.

Government is, essentially, raw concentrated force, and thus, prone to abuse. It is established and tolerated only as the agent and servant of the people--not their master. The force of government must be used only in response to an attack, fraud, or other initiation of force against an individual, group or government by another individual, group or government.

Governments have no business interfering in voluntary and contractual relations amongst individuals. All people should be equal before the law, free to deal with one another in a free market, the only system compatible with the principle of individual rights.

Government should reflect the consent of the governed and not subject individuals to tyranny of the majority. Where it exists, government must be kept to the minimum necessary to protect the rights of individuals. LPTexas holds that all human interaction should be voluntary and consensual, in accordance with the Non-Aggression Principle.

Rationale: From a communications perspective, this tightens the language for various public relations platforms.

Proposal 7 - Suggested Language Change:

I.1.b. Second Amendment – Right to Keep and Bear Arms

LPTexas supports the unalienable right of individuals to purchase, possess, manufacture, trade, own, and carry arms, including body armor, for the defense of person and property in a manner consistent with the Non-Aggression Principle and the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Original Language:

I.1.b. Defense of Person and Property

The defense of person and property are inherent individual rights, and must not be restricted or

impeded. Therefore, LPTexas supports the right of individuals to keep and bear arms in a manner consistent with the Non-Aggression Principle.

These rights have been infringed upon by the State, namely through Section 46 of the Texas Penal Code. Therefore, LPTexas calls for the repeal of this Code, specifically the following items:

- Section 46.01.(6) Illegal knife
- Section 46.02 Unlawful Carrying Weapons Section 46.03 Places Weapons Prohibited
- Section 46.035 Unlawful Carrying of handgun by License Holder Section 46.04 Unlawful Possession of Firearm
- Section 46.041 Unlawful Possession of Metal or Body Armor by Felon Section 46.05 Prohibited Weapons

Rationale:

The intent of the changes made to the Defense of Person and Property plank was to remove the statutes referenced. Statutes often change every two years, and the platform plank should reflect the ever-changing concepts of the party not statutes passed by the legislature. “Right to keep and bear arms” was not explicit enough to describe the everyday applications of the second amendment so numerous applications were spelled out such as manufacturing and trading. Additionally, although body armor is not exactly a weapon, everyone has the right to defend themselves even with protective materials.

Proposal 8 - Suggested Language Change:

I.1.c. Individual Equality and the Law

LPTexas supports the full and complete protection of all people from biased legislation that violates individual rights. Government should not discriminate based on individual characteristics or personal choices.

Original Language:

I.1.c. Individual Equality and the Law

LPTexas supports the full and complete protection of all people from biased legislation that violates individual rights. Government should not discriminate based upon gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, wealth, profession, creed, national origin, personal habits, or political affiliation. LPTexas believes government does not have legitimate authority to define or restrict personal relationships or associations to any group of citizens. We believe that "Hate Crime" legislation is unconstitutional, and that our nation has prospered under the concept of "equal protection under the law."

Rationale: This change encompasses all people rather than specifically drawing attention to subsets of populations while reducing excessive language.

Proposal 9 - Suggested Language Change:

I.2.a. Eminent Domain

LPTexas strongly opposes the use of eminent domain.

Original Language:

I.2.a. Eminent Domain

Under no circumstances should government have the power to force the transfer of land from a private entity to another against the will of the owner. LPTexas strongly opposes the use of eminent domain to establish toll roads, transportation corridors, and any other projects, public or private.

LPTexas supports vested property rights above, on, and below the surface, and there shall be no limitation by regulation, ordinance, or authority.

Rationale: By making a blanket statement, we reduce the language while maintaining a strong position. This assists campaigns and communications clearly articulate our position.

Proposal 10 - Suggested Language Change:

I.4.a. Privacy

LPTexas believes in an inherent right to privacy. As such, we oppose any legislation that restricts an individual's ownership and use of property or conduct of consenting adults. We also oppose any requirement to register property with a government entity as a condition of ownership except where it is reasonably necessary to document the holder of a clear title to said property. We hold that the only legitimate purpose of government is to protect our rights and property; it should never become a threat to the very things it was established to protect.

Original Language:

I.4.a. Privacy

LPTexas believes in an inherent right to privacy. As such, we oppose any legislation that restricts an individual's ownership and use of property (real, personal, or intellectual) or conduct of consenting adults while on their privately owned property. We also oppose any requirement to register property with a government entity as a condition of ownership, the exceptions being of real property and conveyances, for the sole purpose of documenting the holder of a clear title to

said property. We hold that the only legitimate purpose of government is to protect our rights and property, and should never become a threat to the very things it was established to protect.

Rationale: By removing the definitions of types of property, the statement is both broader and more succinct. This allows individual candidates to communicate to their constituency in a manner that reflects the needs and values of their geographic area.

Proposal 11 - Suggested Language Change:

I.5.b. Party Affiliation

LPTexas opposes mandatory party affiliation. We support voting as a voluntary expression of the right to freedom of association. LPTexas opposes partisan labels on the ballot and straight-ticket voting.

Original Language:

I.5.b. Party Affiliation

LPTexas opposes mandatory affiliation, at the time of voter registration, either as an Independent or with a political party. We support voting as a voluntary expression of the right to freedom of association. LPTexas opposes partisan labels on the ballot, as well as straight-ticket voting.

Rationale: The goal is to tighten language in this change.

Proposal 12 - Suggested Language Change:

II.1. TAXATION

LPTexas believes the individual is entitled to the entire fruits of their labor. Therefore, every confiscatory tax established by the government is theft.

LPTexas believes that regardless of their basis, taxes are inherently oppressive and destined to be misused and misappropriated.

LPTexas believes that infrastructure should be paid for by the end user. Private goodwill and charity are far more efficient than coerced wealth redistribution schemes. A voluntary society will solve more problems than government.

Therefore, LPTexas calls for an end to all taxation. Where taxes cannot be eliminated, they should be minimized or replaced with user fees.

Original Language:

II.1. TAXATION

All persons are entitled to the fruits of their labor. As such, LPTexas opposes the imposition of income tax by any governmental entity. Additionally, we support a Constitutional amendment that would require at least two-thirds majority vote by each house of the legislature to increase the rate of any tax. Taxation should be used only for services that cannot be provided by free market solutions.

We seek to reduce the size and scope of government. The budgets of all levels of government must be balanced, and government spending reduced. Each existing tax must have a clearly specified purpose, and be subject to sunset at the end of each legislative session following its effective start date.

Expanding on these general principles concerning taxation, LPTexas holds the following positions on issues specific to the state of Texas:

II.1.a. Gross Margin Tax

LPTexas seeks the complete repeal of the Gross Margins Tax adopted in 2006. Rather than a slow reduction in these franchise taxes, we call for the legislature to reduce the state's constitutional spending limits.

II.1.b. Property Tax

LPTexas supports the elimination of all property taxes, as ad valorem tax cannot be assessed objectively, and inequitably harms the poor. Until such taxes are eliminated, we call for a moratorium on appraisal valuation increases. Additionally, we call for the election (subject to the Texas Election Code), not appointment, of all members of any Board of Directors of any Appraisal District. These elected positions would be limited to two consecutive two-year terms, until the positions are abolished along with the ad valorem taxes.

II.1.c. Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones

Recognizing that Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) have been abused by many local governments as a means to enrich cronies, LPTexas calls for the abolishment of TIRZ districts.

Rationale: As all taxation is theft, the goal was to make a broader statement that reflects these values without calling out specific forms of taxation. As brevity is the soul of wit, this allows candidates to effectively communicate LPTexas principles.

Suggested Planks to Allow to Sunset:

Proposal 13 - I.2.c. Property Rights – Homeowner Associations (HOA)

LPTexas supports moving private homeowner associations to the current government code to protect private property owners from further violations of the constitution of this state and nation by such associations, until further remedies can be pursued. HOA's should only be incorporated by members residing within the property affected and governed by said HOA members. No HOA assessment fee shall be enacted without a simple majority of said members.

Rationale: Currently this topic is not at the forefront of concerns for the LPTexas constituency. The platform should reflect current needs while managing to communicate our principles.

New Planks to Consider:

Proposal 14 - I.6.f. Qualified Immunity

LPTexas supports the abolition of every legal doctrine that shields government employees from civil liability.

Rationale: No governmental employee should be above the law. If we have to follow the rules, so do they. Additionally, if a private person can be held civilly liable, so should governmental employees.

Proposal 15 - IV. Uncategorized – Defend the Guard

LPTexas opposes the mobilization of the Texas National Guard outside of the United States of America except upon Congressional declaration of war. LPTexas supports legislation that would make this restriction enforceable.

Rationale: The national guard has been used to respond to domestic emergencies, overseas combat missions, counterdrug efforts, reconstruction missions and more. However, it has almost always been sent on the authority of the President alone. While the use of the national guard for humanitarian purposes is commendable, because it has so often been used in a combat role by the President for prolonged periods of time, the Texas National Guard should only be used for interstate purposes except for when Congress has duly passed a declaration of war. Furthermore, it is imperative that enabling legislation be made to enforce such a restriction.

Suggested Plank with Minority Report:

Proposal 16 - I.6.g. Restoration of Rights

LPTexas advocates for the complete restoration of rights lost by non-violent offenders upon the completion of their sentence. By restoring rights to former offenders, we aim to foster a more just and compassionate society that values rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and rewards reintegration.

Rationale:

All felons are generally treated as a stain on society. Often felons are prevented from getting a job, being licensed for certain occupations, renting an apartment, buying a home, purchasing and possessing firearms, voting, and holding office. These prohibitions are above and beyond the original consequence of violating the law (prison or jail). The platform committee believes in a criminal justice system that values rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and rewards reintegrating back into society, instead of the overly punitive system continually punishing even non-violent offenders after they have served their sentence.

Minority Report:

LPTexas advocates for the complete restoration of rights lost by ~~non-violent~~ offenders upon the completion of their sentence. By restoring rights to former offenders, we aim to foster a more just and compassionate society that values rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and rewards reintegration.

Rationale:

Limiting to “non-violent” offenders would incentivize the state to prosecute political opponents for “violent” crimes. Everyone should be given the opportunity to make amends and restore their full rights.