

2008 WASHINGTON STATE REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM

SPOKANE, WA – May 31st, 2008

Platform Committee Chair: Dr. Mathew Manweller

Platform Committee Vice-Chair: Christine Webb

“For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us”

John Winthrop, 1630

Washington State Republican Party

Luke Esser, Chairman

PREAMBLE

The Washington State Republican Party is dedicated to helping elect Republicans at the county, state, and national levels. We believe that active participation by citizens is absolutely necessary to protect and preserve conservative values which include: preserving a free society, free markets, free trade, the sanctity of human life, limited government, low taxes, a minimal bureaucracy, a strong national defense, private property rights, and the concept that government should do for individuals only those things they cannot do for themselves.

Washington State Republicans believe that good government is based on respect for, and trust in, the ability of individuals to chart the course of their own lives. We believe that respect for each person's ability, dignity, and liberty is the foundation for a free and prosperous civic body politic. Good citizenship begins with protected rights and ends with accompanying responsibilities.

It is our belief that individuals are more enlightened than governments, that markets are more efficient than bureaucracies, and that the citizen is more visionary than the collective. To this end, we reaffirm the words in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these Truths to be self evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness -That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed."

At the turn of this new century, these values are more important than ever. To each generation falls the responsibility to uphold the values that have made the United States the most free, wealthy, compassionate and successful civilization in history. As we confront security threats from international terrorism, economic threats from globalization, and social threats from liberal cultural elites, we must also see these times as an opportunity to move society in the right direction. We, the members of the Washington State Republican Party are committed to doing our part to ensure that the two-century old experiment that is America, never fails.

The Republican Party supports the principle of federalism and local control. To that end, we respect the wide-ranging diversity of opinion that exists within the 39 county Republican Party platforms. Respecting honest and strongly held differences of opinion allows the people a greater voice in and choice of approaches to public policy. We encourage grass roots activists, elected legislators, and Republican candidates to read, consider and support the various ideas offered in our 39 county platforms.

It has been over two centuries since our Founders established the American creed—government under God and accountable to the people. We believe their vision is best preserved by supporting the policies outlined below.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL, CIVIL and RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe all the civil liberties found in the US Constitution are God given and therefore inalienable. These fundamental rights are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and reaffirmed in Article I of the Washington State Constitution. It is the obligation of every government to perpetually observe and respect those rights. The role of the judiciary and the legislature is to uphold the law in a manner faithful to the state and federal constitutions, and the Bill of Rights. We affirm the individual right recognized by the 2nd amendment to keep and bear arms. It is essential that the judiciary respect legislative intent, and at all times understand that the power to write law is vested in the legislature or the people.

SECTION 2: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Because governments spend other people's money, the state should practice fiscal responsibility. Believing that the power to tax and regulate are some of the most dangerous powers held by the state, Republicans support policies that do not interfere with private sector job growth, encourage entrepreneurship, and protect our economic base while minimizing the need to seize the wealth of its people. Assurance that money is being spent efficiently can only be achieved through practical performance measures, regular performance audits of administrative agencies, and the enforcement of audit recommendations. The Republican Party of Washington State supports the re-examination of the national income tax and opposes the imposition of a state income tax

SECTION 3: NATIONAL DEFENSE

We believe that a free America is a strong America. Republicans support and honor the past and continuing service of all veterans and members the armed forces and the Washington State National Guard. At a time when the United State faces a variety of external threats ranging from Jihadist terrorism, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and emerging regional powers, it is important to endorse policies that will ensure peace through strength, security, and human rights at home and abroad. National security is best preserved when America's national sovereignty is never abdicated to any foreign or international organization.

SECTION 4: BORDERS, IMMIGRATION, AND HOMELAND SECURITY

The individual rights, political stability, and the economic opportunity, growth, and prosperity we enjoy in America and which attracts immigrants from all over the world are only possible and secure because of our system of law and order. We welcome those who wish to build a new and better life in America and Washington State, and who recognize that the only price of such opportunity is their willingness to embrace our language, culture, and legal system, beginning at our national borders. Legal immigration can best be facilitated by a transparent, traceable, and enforceable guest worker program that does not include amnesty or birthright citizenship.

SECTION 5: FAMILY

The family unit is the cornerstone of a free and moral society. It is the responsibility of parents, not the state, to guide their children to be good citizens. Government's responsibility is to uphold and respect traditional institutions, such as marriage between one man and one woman, protect the elderly and children from the harmful elements of society, and defend the sanctity of life from conception to natural death.

SECTION 6: EDUCATION

The primary authority and responsibility for educating children resides with parents. School boards should be free to determine priorities, emphasizing basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics. It is also important that schools teach the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, civics, history, economics and provide opportunities for vocational and technical training. As public teachers and professors are in a position of power and paid by taxpayers, it is important that instructors educate but do not indoctrinate their students. We believe that competition in education, as it does in business, commerce, healthcare, and other free-market endeavors would result in wider choices, higher quality, more innovation, more efficiency, and lower costs.

SECTION 7: HEALTH CARE

Individuals and families should have the freedom and opportunity to make healthcare decisions that are best for them. Our healthcare system should be focused on individual responsibility and healthy living, the

ability to choose a healthcare plan to meet individual needs, and the ability of people to choose their own doctor. Citizens can best accomplish these goals when the state promotes competition among health care providers and avoids health care mandates. Changing the culture of healthcare to that of prevention and personal responsibility instead of over utilization and entitlement will best save our health care system.

SECTION 8: PROPERTY RIGHTS

As John Locke observed, the proper role of government is to protect “life, liberty and property”. Washington Republicans believe there is a fundamental relationship between free societies and the protection of private property rights. When governments abuse the power of eminent domain and regulatory takings, everyone’s freedom is at risk. There are appropriate times to regulate private property for the betterment of the general population and the environment, we believe that the government should seize and regulate property only when it is exceedingly necessary to promote the general welfare and never done to enrich some members of society at the expense of others.

SECTION 9: LAW AND JUSTICE

We believe laws should reduce and deter crime through strong and appropriate punishment. Accordingly, we believe that an effective criminal justice system should include the appropriate use of the death penalty, strict punishment of sexual predators, deter recidivism and that whenever possible, require criminals to fully compensate those they have harmed.

SECTION 10: ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Republicans believe that prosperity and environmental stewardship go hand in hand. As Washington’s economy has grown, our air quality has improved, we have become more energy efficient and the overall environmental quality of our state has improved. Regulations and government programs that hurt Washington’s economy make it more difficult for families and businesses to continue those positive environmental trends.

We also believe that creativity and technology offer the best solutions to improve energy efficiency and to protect clean air. This market based approach is superior to a top-down approach that emphasizes limits on personal freedom and the economy, expensive government programs and regulation. We also believe that market-driven improvements in efficiency are the best solution to reducing harmful pollutants.

SECTION 11: AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is Washington’s number one industry. It creates new wealth and therefore is vital to the economic well being of the state. In the free market system, government should attempt to reduce agricultural subsidies as soon as prudent and take measures to judiciously protect our agricultural industries from unfair practices around the world.

SECTION 12: TRANSPORTATION

Investment in our transportation infrastructure is critical to both rural and urban economies in Washington State. Washington taxpayers deserve accountability for the money they provide to transportation agencies. Assurance that money is being spent efficiently can only be achieved through practical performance measures, regular performance audits of transportation agencies, and the enforcement of audit recommendations.

SECTION 13: THE INITIATIVE PROCESS

We recognize that Article 1, Section 1 of the Washington State Constitution provides that "All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights." To that end, the State Constitution provides that "The first power reserved by the people is the initiative" and "The second power reserved by the people is the referendum." We believe that these fundamental rights of initiative and referendum should be free from unnecessary and burdensome regulation imposed by the state and that the legislature and judiciary should respect the will of the people when they pass laws using the initiative process.