

2010-2011 NH Republican Party Platform

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I. PREAMBLE

We, New Hampshire Republicans, are united by our belief in God, individual liberty, personal responsibility, limited government, limited spending, limited taxes, economic opportunity, homeland security, compassion for the truly needy and our confidence in the strength of families, places of worship, communities and volunteerism.

II. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

New Hampshire is proud to be the birthplace of the Republican Party. The "Grand Old Party" was established at a meeting of abolitionists convened by Amos Tuck in Exeter, New Hampshire on October 12, 1853. Since that first meeting, the New Hampshire Republican Party has flourished, forming the majority in our citizen legislature for over a century.

The Republican Party is, and historically has been, the Party of ideas and bold leadership in New Hampshire. The foremost convictions that distinguish our Party in New Hampshire are:

- Protecting the fundamental rights of the people and enhancing their freedom
- Promotes a limited government that is open, responsive and fully accountable to its citizens without interfering in their personal, daily lives.
- Electing Republican candidates who uphold the highest standards of integrity, morality, ethics, responsibility and accountability in their personal lives, during campaigns and while performing their official duties.
- Recruiting Republican candidates who uphold the Constitutions of the United States and New Hampshire, the proud and historic traditions of our Party and its Platform

III. THE FIRST IN THE NATION PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

New Hampshire's First-in-the-Nation Presidential Primary election began in 1910. For decades, the New Hampshire Presidential Primary has stood as a proving ground for candidates of all parties who seek the nation's highest office. The importance and integrity of the Presidential Primary to the people of New Hampshire and the nation is recognized by New Hampshire law (RSA 653:9) which requires our Primary be the first in the nation. New Hampshire's First-in-the-Nation Presidential Primary must be preserved.

IV. THE NEW HAMPSHIRE ADVANTAGE

We believe that New Hampshire's unique quality of life, as a place to live, raise a family, do business and visit, creates the New Hampshire Advantage as evidenced by NH being the most livable state in the union. Careful stewardship and the hard work of generations of visionary Republicans have nurtured New Hampshire's remarkable qualities. We are committed to preserving and protecting the quality of life that has made New Hampshire great. The chief components of the New Hampshire Advantage include:

- The character of individual citizens and the strength of traditional family life
- The productivity and work ethic of our workforce
- The Granite State's well deserved reputation as among the best places to live in America Freedom from sales and income taxes
- Our State's leading role in the economy of New England
- The top national performance rating of New Hampshire's students as well as the national reputation of our private colleges, University System and Community Technical Colleges

- Our 424 citizen legislature, unique among all states in the country, in ensuring a truly representative state government
- Living up to our state motto, "Live Free or Die"

V. A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE

The State of New Hampshire

The government of New Hampshire exists to preserve and protect inalienable rights endowed by our Creator for the benefit, protection and security of its citizens. Republicans reaffirm that New Hampshire is a sovereign state in a nation of states and oppose centralization of power. To maintain this doctrine, the Republican Party:

- Supports the constitutional principle that the three branches of government are separate from, and independent of, each other, as the nature of a free government will admit, or is consistent with the Constitution.
- Opposes the enactment of federal programs that contradict the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
- The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people Supports efforts to stop Washington from mandating unfunded federal programs on our state and local governments, and hold the federal government to the same standard against unfunded mandates as we do our state government under the New Hampshire Constitution
- Rejects the imposition on the citizens of New Hampshire of law contrary to our founding principles and documents and our system of government.
- Respects New Hampshire's honored veterans by ensuring that they receive the benefits that they have rightfully earned and deserve
- Supports English as the official language of the state
- Promoting voter registration to all eligible citizens and increased participation in the electoral process
- Believes voting in NH must be done by NH resident citizens only. To prevent voter fraud, we support the requirement to produce positive identification upon both registration and voting. Calls upon the Secretary of State and the Attorney General to enforce NH election laws
- Supports the concept of a people's veto
- Reaffirms support for the state constitution's Article 2, which protects the Natural Rights of all citizens under the law, regardless of their race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

New Hampshire's State Government

New Hampshire's government and its elected officials must, above all else, preserve and protect individual liberty. The New Hampshire Constitution affirms that our government is founded upon the people's consent and is instituted for the general good. The preservation of the rights of our people should always constrain the actions of government because our government has only as much power as the people choose to give it. We will advocate this concept of government by working to encourage greater voter participation at all levels of government, as well as reform our campaign finance laws to guarantee full and prompt disclosure. We believe in the citizens' right to access government information to the extent such disclosure does not violate the security of our state or the privacy of individual citizens.

VI. ENTERPRISE, JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

Economic Development

A strong New Hampshire economy secures the livelihoods of our families. We remain committed to making New Hampshire the best place in the nation to live, to visit and to do business. Our approach to economic development is founded upon:

- Creating a supportive business climate and increasing tourism
- Working to provide an environment favorable to increasing the creation of private sector jobs including state-of-the-art technology
- Working to prevent over-regulation of business, particularly with respect to small businesses
- Improving telecommunications and technology access to rural areas of our state
- Keeping state government lean to minimize its burden on taxpayers and businesses

New Hampshire's Work Force

New Hampshire's highly motivated work force is essential to our economic prosperity. In an effort to expand the market both at home and abroad and develop productive employment with safety, rewards and dignity for workers of all ages, we will work to:

- Continue our emphasis on educating and training our work force
- Affirm the right of all citizens to join labor organizations freely, whether they choose to bargain collectively or individually, without coercion or intimidation
- Support the "right to work" by adopting legislation necessary to ensure this principle for all workers
- Support the right of employees to a secret ballot for votes relating to forming or joining a union

VII. TAXES AND SPENDING

Low Taxes, Low Spending

Republicans realize that low taxes are the result of low spending. We believe that controlling spending and minimizing taxes are the best ways to protect the economic and civic well being of New Hampshire residents. We believe in promoting lower taxes to attract business development and expand economic opportunities by:

- Maintaining a locally controlled tax system consistent with our commitment to keep New Hampshire a desirable place for people to live, work, raise their families and locate their businesses
- Supporting local control of spending and taxes designed to support local services

Tax Free New Hampshire

We reject higher taxes and excessive government spending with the belief that taxes unfairly erode earnings, contribute to the growth of government and provide disincentives for economic growth. To affirm our strong opposition to any broad-based taxes, including an income, sales or capital gains tax, we will:

- Support cutting or eliminating taxes which inhibit enterprise, earnings and savings and investment, such as the Interest and Dividends Tax and the Business Enterprise/Business Profits Tax
- Oppose taxation of the Internet
- Support initiatives that lower property taxes for those in need
- Assessed value for the purpose of property taxation shall eliminate the subjective elements of value, such as view, and be determined on the basis of objective standards to determine the assessed land and building values
- Work to reduce New Hampshire's energy costs and remove New Hampshire from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
- Work to limit the growth of state spending to not more than the rate of inflation, taking into account population growth, by adopting a taxpayers bill of rights

Government

The state government needs to be effective and efficient. The following structural reforms are among those needed to refocus the state's activities on core functions, efficiently implemented:

- Zero-Based Budgeting. Instead of incremental increases in every program, all departments should justify and prioritize their full budgets.
- Measurable Goals. All state programs should justify expenditures against measurable benefits. Programs that fail to produce promised benefits should be eliminated, and only efficient and successful programs should be continued.
- Incentives. Employees who save money and/or exceed their goals should be rewarded.
- Sunset Clauses. Programs and regulations should sunset after, at most, six years. This will force the legislature periodically to reevaluate and eliminate ineffective legislation.
- Privatization. Programs and functions should be reviewed to identify those that can be implemented more effectively in the private sector.
- Staffing. Staffing levels should be evaluated to ensure that all employees are fully utilized.
- Benefits. Public employee benefits should be similar to those of the private sector.
- Transparency. Place the state's checkbook on-line

Gambling and Excessive Government Spending

We recognize that government over-spending forces discussions concerning additional sources of government revenue and that some view expanded gambling as a desirable means to further fund the government. We reject being compelled to have a discussion on gambling that focuses on government revenue and does not fairly assess its possible merits and risks. Republicans will first control spending before considering expanded gambling.

VIII. THE FAMILY

Preserving Marriage and Family

We realize that the family's most important function is to raise the next generation of Americans. We place our highest priority on promoting and preserving the family as the most important institution of human development by:

- Recognizing marriage as the legal union between one man and one woman
- Opposing recognition by the State of New Hampshire of all other forms of civil unions, regardless of where such unions were formed (other states, U.S. territories, and foreign countries)
- Believing the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed upon; supporting a human life amendment to the Constitution and endorsing legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children
- In light of current court interpretations, requiring parental consent for minors seeking abortions; barring the use of public resources to fund or promote abortion; banning the procedure of partial-birth abortion; supporting the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life
- The New Hampshire Republican State Committee not supporting financially or by in-kind contributions, any candidate or nominee of this party who opposes measures to end partial-birth abortions

- Commending and encouraging those individuals and organizations who provide alternatives to abortion by meeting the needs of mothers through adoption, support, counseling and educational services
- Encouraging scientific research using adult and cord blood stem cells; opposing the use of embryonic stem cells; and supporting a comprehensive ban on human cloning, the creation of human embryos solely for experimentation, and the public funding thereof

Protecting Marriage and Family

Family life can nurture love of country and faith in God. To protect marriages and families as the central core in society for enhancing morality, integrity, responsibility and concern for others, we:

- Advocate a presumption in favor of joint custody and favor equitable treatment of both parents in child custody and child support determinations
- Oppose actions that inhibit and/or supplant the role of parents in the care and upbringing of children
- Will work to ensure due process rights of those accused of child abuse or neglect
- Ensure that children are placed only in loving, non-abusive homes
- Are committed to respecting our senior citizens by improving their financial security, physical well being and quality of life
- Oppose euthanasia and physician assisted suicide, and support increased implementation of appropriate pain management
- Oppose casino and video-lottery gambling because of the negative social consequences

IX. LAW AND ORDER

Child Protection

Establish strict laws to protect our children from sexual predators including life incarceration as appropriate

Ensuring Safety

The New Hampshire Advantage cannot survive without safety and security for individual citizens. In order to ensure peace and tranquility in our communities, Republicans:

- Develop and implement an effective Homeland Security Program for New Hampshire
- Offer steadfast support for our law enforcement and emergency response personnel
- Emphasize self-control and personal responsibility as the primary means to reduce crime
- Believe in the rights of law-abiding citizens to own firearms to defend themselves, their families and their property; support Part I, Article 2-a of the New Hampshire Constitution guaranteeing law-abiding citizens the right to keep and bear arms; oppose passage of local, state or federal laws and/or regulations that violate this fundamental right or the imposition of any taxation, licensing restrictions, or registration of firearms; oppose fingerprinting and photographing citizens as a condition of obtaining a license to carry a concealed firearm. We oppose any "assault weapons" ban. We support the universal right of self defense wherever one has a legal right to be
- Support measures to protect and secure our international border with Canada, our airports, our water supply and the Seabrook nuclear power plant, without unnecessary infringement upon our civil rights
- Will work to reduce drunken driving and substance abuse through a comprehensive program of education, prevention, rehabilitation, treatment and law enforcement
- Will work to amend the wiretap statute to allow citizens to make audio/visual recordings of interactions with public officials

Enforcing Laws

We propose that those who commit crimes be swiftly and surely punished consistent with due process of law. We support increased efforts to enforce penalties against those who commit crimes by:

- Strengthening national border security, enforcing immigration laws, and opposing any form of amnesty for illegal aliens
- Supporting laws defining trespass to include illegal presence in New Hampshire
- Strengthening prosecution and fair enforcement of death penalty laws
- Enforcing the prosecution of perpetrators of voter fraud and election tampering
- Supporting the adoption of the Felony Murder Rule allowing prosecutors to seek a murder charge against those who commit a felony resulting in a death

X. THE LEGAL SYSTEM AND THE JUDICIARY

The Legal System

The Republican Party believes that the New Hampshire Advantage is, in part, secured and promoted by a legal system that upholds the safety, values and freedoms of law-abiding citizens. We will work to maintain a legal system that provides every citizen prompt and impartial justice by:

- Ensuring our belief that under the New Hampshire Constitution, the power to tax is reserved for the people and their elected representatives, not the judicial or executive branches
- Adopting a constitutional amendment to Part II, Section 73-a of the New Hampshire Constitution to restore the traditional role of our General Court as New Hampshire's supreme legislative authority
- Recognizing that frivolous lawsuits are burdensome to our legal system, a detriment to the New Hampshire economy, and an abuse of the judicial process
- Support jurors being instructed on the right of jury nullification

The Judiciary

New Hampshire's independent and impartial judiciary, as one of the three separate and independent branches of government, is entrusted with the protection of the constitutionally and otherwise guaranteed legal rights of the people. To ensure that the first priority of our judiciary is to serve the people's needs by expediting justice and ensuring fairness, we will:

- Support the appointment of judges who recognize their proper and limited interpretive role requires them to rely only on the original intent of the Federal and state constitutions
- Seek to extend the Right-to-Know Law to the non-adjudicatory functions of the judicial branch
- Support the reasonable and periodic oversight of judicial officers, including reasonable term limitations for judges
- Support the constitutional right of citizens to petition the general court for redress of grievances

Eminent Domain

The Republican Party recognizes that private ownership of property is fundamental to a free and well ordered society.

- Affirm that private property rights are fundamental under the Constitution and that we will ensure that property owners are compensated justly for property taken by government through regulation
- Support prohibiting public Eminent Domain taking of individual property to be used for private development

XI. EDUCATION

The Republican Party believes that the primary focus of education should be on academic achievement. In a global economy where outsourcing is commonplace, our students must be proficient in math and science. In order for our nation to survive and prosper, our students must have a thorough understanding of history, civics and the philosophical concepts upon which our government is based. Self-esteem based educational programs which undermine academic achievement do not serve the long term interests of our children.

Excellence in Education

Educating the citizens of New Hampshire is our hope for the future of this great state. We believe that New Hampshire must provide its children an education based upon excellence. We recognize parents as first and primary teachers. We oppose state interference with parental rights and believe that:

- Only parents can be entrusted to control the education of their children and choose schools that best suit their children's needs
- Laws should be implemented to encourage school choice and competition and allow all parents to choose the best public, private, charter or home school program for their children
- School vouchers or tuition tax credits should be made available to assist in school choice
- The so-called "Blaine Amendment" should be repealed so as to end discrimination against religious schools
- We support increased use of market forces to provide and improve education

Local Control and Education Funding

As Republicans, our goal is to meet the cost of education as efficiently as possible. It is our belief that citizens who control their own education budgets have the strongest incentives to spend their money wisely. It is the position of the Republican Party that:

- Local control of education policy and education funding creates the best-managed school systems
- The New Hampshire Constitution should be amended to empower the people and their elected representatives to set educational funding and policy goals
- State and federal school aid should not contain mandates that prevent parents and local taxpayers from making educational decisions for their own communities
- We demand that the federal government fully fund its commitment to special education mandates under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and NCLB (No Child Left Behind)

The Classroom

Republicans believe that a quality education advances good citizenship, knowledge, and self worth and enables informed participation in public and governmental affairs. To improve and strengthen the classroom, we believe in:

- Supporting innovative measures to reduce overly burdensome tuition costs while increasing the national competitiveness of our education system
- Working to implement the nation's highest competency and accountability standards for our teachers and students; empowering teachers to maintain orderly, disciplined classrooms; and compensating teachers based upon their performance (merit pay). Tenure for public school teachers removes the incentive to excel, and therefore should be eliminated
- Working to promote abstinence as the first line of defense in health education curricula
- Working to develop and teach a curriculum that emphasizes personal responsibility and consequences for one's actions, including responsible citizenship informed by a knowledge of civics, American history, and American politics and government
- Reviewing and reforming the teacher certification process
- Support payroll protection legislation to allow teachers to decide upon allocation of their dues for political purposes
- The language of public instruction be in English, except in the teaching of foreign languages

XII. THE ENVIRONMENT

Land Conservation

The beauty of New Hampshire as a place in which to live and work depends upon a healthy environment. It is vital that our society commits itself to the preservation of our natural resources and the wise use of our open spaces to maintain our special quality of life. As Republicans, we:

- Promote conserving open space, scenic vistas and historic and cultural landscapes, and especially New Hampshire's state historic sites
- Preserve sensitive ecosystems and effectively manage wildlife
- Encourage landowners to keep their property open and accessible to responsible recreation
- Will work to provide public access to all of New Hampshire's public lands and great ponds, subject to adequate protection for indigenous plants and animals
- Ensure all of New Hampshire's coal and oil-fired power plants remain in compliance with clean air standards
- Encourage the private sector to provide a balanced, safe and environmentally sensitive transportation system to provide greater commuter and commercial access to and within our state
- Will work to improve our highways and reduce traffic congestion while improving access for recreation and tourism to rural areas of our state

Natural Resources

Our parks, lands, waterways, wildlife, ground water, air quality, fuels and other natural resources are valuable assets. To preserve these important facets of New Hampshire's unequivocal quality of life, we recognize the need to:

- Deal effectively with waste disposal and pollution
- Preserve the multiple uses of the White Mountain National Forest
- Promote the wise use of our forest products
- Support low cost means to protect, develop and market New Hampshire agricultural and high value natural resource products

XIII. HEALTH CARE

Care for All Citizens

We believe that the health care of all citizens of the state is an important factor in the economic well being and success of the state. In order to improve the health care of all citizens:

- We support increased use of market forces to provide and improve health care and reduce costs
- We support efforts for higher quality health care and better access to health care and prescription drugs, while reducing costs of health care, health insurance and medical malpractice insurance coverage
- We are committed to providing for the special needs of our senior citizens, including opportunities for personalized home health care and less expensive alternatives to hospital stays and prescription medication
- We will work to provide citizen access to the information necessary to make informed health care decisions, including information about the quality and cost of services provided by physicians, hospitals and insurers
- We will support efforts to draw insurance companies back to New Hampshire, thereby increasing the health care options available to New Hampshire citizens
- We support efforts for higher quality healthcare, including the latest in technological advancements

XIV. CONCLUSION

The members of the Republican Party in the great state of New Hampshire established this Platform of Republican principles.

The delegates of the New Hampshire Republican Party, meeting in Convention in Concord New Hampshire on September 25, 2010 pursuant to RSA 667:21, I, hereby adopt the forgoing.

May God bless the United States of America and the State of New Hampshire.