

Political Parties

Wisconsin political parties: state organizations and current party platforms

Wisconsin's People



POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION IN WISCONSIN

What Is a Political Party?

A political party is a private, voluntary organization of people with similar political beliefs that vies with other parties for control of government. Political parties help voters select their government officials and create a consensus on the basic principles that direct governmental activities and processes.

Political parties in the United States have traditionally provided an organized framework for the orderly performance of several basic political tasks necessary to representative democracy. Parties act to:

- Provide a stable institution for building coalitions based on shared principles and priorities.
- Recruit and nominate candidates for elective and appointive offices in government.
- Promote the election of the party's slate of candidates.
- Guard the integrity of election procedures and vote canvassing.
- Educate the voters by defining issues, taking policy positions, and formulating programs.

U.S. parties offer a marked contrast to the party apparatus in other nations. In many parts of the world, political parties start out with defined ideologies and programs. Their members are recruited on the basis of these ideas, and there is not a lot of room for disagreement within the ranks. In other cases, parties represent regional interests or ethnic groups. By contrast, parties in the United States are loosely organized groups reflecting a broad spectrum of interests. They are truly populist parties in the sense that they accommodate diversity and are instruments of party activists at the grass roots level. Political ideology, as stated in a party's national platform, is formulated first at the local level and then refined through debate and compromise at meetings representing successively larger geographic areas.

Depending on the time, place, and circumstances, political party labels in the United States may have widely different meanings, and within a single party there may be room for members whose ideologies span a wide political spectrum. Individual Republicans or Democrats, for instance, are often further identified as "liberal", "conservative", "right-wing", "left-wing", or "moderate".

Despite the diversity within a party, specific philosophies are generally associated with the various political parties. In the public's perception, the name of a particular party conjures up a surprisingly distinct set of economic, social, and political principles.

Political Parties in Wisconsin

Throughout its history, the United States has operated with a two-party political structure, rather than single-party or multiparty systems found elsewhere. Although minor parties have always been a part of American politics, few have gained the support necessary to challenge the two dominant parties at the national level. Those that did lasted only briefly, with the predominant exception of the Republican Party, which replaced the Whig Party in the 1850s. The same cannot be said of politics on the state level. In Wisconsin, for example, the Socialist Party regularly sent one or more representatives to the legislature between 1911 and 1937, and the Progressive Party was influential between 1933 and 1947, capturing a plurality of both houses of the 1937 Legislature. Third parties were relatively quiet in Wisconsin in the 1950s, but the last 30 years have seen more activity with more parties officially recognized on the ballot.

Under Wisconsin law, a "recognized political party" is a political party that qualifies for a separate ballot or column on the ballot, based on its receiving a required number of votes at the previous November election or through acquiring the required number of petition signatures. At the beginning of 2003, Wisconsin had five recognized political parties: Constitution, Democrat, Libertarian, Republican, and Wisconsin Green.

The Wisconsin Statutes define a political party in Section 5.02 (13) as a state committee that is legally registered with the state Elections Board and "all county, congressional, legislative, local and other affiliated committees authorized to operate under the same name". It must be a body "organized exclusively for political purposes under whose name candidates appear on a ballot at any election".

The delegates from the political party's local units meet in an annual state convention to draft or amend the party's state platform (a statement of its principles and objectives), select national committee members, elect state officers, consider resolutions, and conduct other party business. Every four years, party delegates from throughout the United States meet in a national convention to nominate their candidates for president and vice president and to adopt a national platform for the next four years. In Wisconsin, the slates of national convention delegates are usually based on the April presidential preference primary vote.

Statutory and Voluntary Organizations

Wisconsin law provides that each major political party must have certain local officers and committees, but over the years, these statutory organizations have been merged within the voluntary party organizations that are governed by their own constitutions and bylaws. The actual power is found in the voluntary structures.

In the case of the majority parties, voluntary organizations are composed of dues-paying members, who are affiliated with Wisconsin chapters of the national political parties. Third parties vary in the amount of regional autonomy and/or national control allowed. Given minor organizational differences, voluntary parties operate to tend to their party's interests, collect money to finance campaigns, maintain cooperation between the various county and congressional district organizations, and act as liaison with national parties. (Currently recognized parties and their voluntary organizations are discussed in the party descriptions that follow this introduction.)

The History of Wisconsin's Political Parties

In *How Wisconsin Voted*, Professor James R. Donoghue divided Wisconsin's political history into four eras. From statehood in 1848 until 1855, the Democratic Party was the dominant political party, and the Whig Party provided major opposition. This was a continuation of the party alignment that had prevailed during the state's territorial period.

The second era was one of Republican domination from 1856 to 1900. The birth of the national Republican Party is attributed to a meeting in Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1854. Its founding was based on the conditions and events that eventually led to the Civil War, and within Wisconsin these same circumstances contributed to the rapid growth of the Republican Party and the demise of the Whigs.

The second era ended at the turn of the century with the election of Governor Robert M. La Follette. The third era, from 1900 to 1945, was a time of great stress and change, encompassing the Great Depression and World Wars I and II. Until 1932, the major political battles usually occurred not between two parties, but between two factions of the Republican Party – the conservative “stalwart” Republicans and the “progressive” (La Follette) Republicans. The Democratic Party was in eclipse, and election contests tended to be decided in Republican primary elections.

The third era also saw the high point of third party influence in Wisconsin. The progressive faction formally split from the Republicans to form its own party in 1934. The new Progressive Party won gubernatorial elections in 1936 and 1942 and a plurality in both houses of the legislature in 1936. Declining popularity, however, led to its dissolution in 1946, and Progressive Party leadership urged its members and supporting voters to return to the Republican Party. The period from 1900 to 1937 was also the time of greatest strength for the Socialists.

The fourth era, from 1945 to the present, witnessed a realignment of the major parties. A resurgence of the Democratic Party ended the long Republican domination, turning the state to a more balanced, two-party, competitive system. In the late 1940s, some former Progressives, Socialists, and others began moving into a moribund Democratic Party. This influx both revitalized the party and made it more liberal. In the following decade, the Democrats worked at uniting their party and building their strength at the polls. Meanwhile, the conservative faction solidified its control of the Republican Party with the departure of more liberal-minded Progressives and addition of conservative Democrats fleeing their former party as it became more liberal.

In the years following World War II, the resurgent Democratic Party began seriously challenging the majority Republicans. Steady Democratic growth culminated in the 1957 election of William Proxmire to the U.S. Senate, the first “new” Democrat to win a major statewide election, followed by the election of Gaylord Nelson as governor in 1958. These elections marked the

emergence on Wisconsin's political scene of a Democratic Party fully capable of competing successfully with the long dominant Republicans for public office. During this period, third party and independent candidates usually failed to garner any significant support on a statewide level.

The hallmark of contemporary Wisconsin politics is a highly competitive, two-party, issue-oriented system. At the beginning of the 1995 session, Republicans gained control of both houses for the first time since 1969. In 1993, 1995, and 1997, the majority party in the senate shifted during the session. Democrats controlled the senate in 1999 and 2001, while Republicans retained the control of the assembly they had won in the 1994 elections. For the first time since 1982, a Democrat was elected governor in November 2002.

Of the state's major elected partisan offices in January 2003, the Democrats held the positions of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and attorney general, as well as holding both U.S. Senate seats and four of the eight congressional seats. Republicans filled the position of state treasurer, held four congressional seats, and controlled both the senate and the assembly.

CONSTITUTION PARTY OF WISCONSIN
(Formerly U.S. Taxpayers Party of Wisconsin)
May 2003

Headquarters

State Headquarters: P.O. Box 193, Watertown 53094-0193, (920) 907-0886.

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National Office: 450 Maple Avenue East, Vienna, VA 22180, (800) 2-VETO-IRS.

National Internet Address: <http://www.constitutionparty.com>

State Committee – Officers

Chairman: DANIEL M. HOYT, Fond du Lac.

1st Vice Chairman: EDWARD J. FRAMI, Dousman.

2nd Vice Chairman: JOHN CLARK, Westfield.

Secretary: S. KENT STEFFKE, Milwaukee.

Treasurer: WILLIAM HEMENWAY, Pewaukee.

Parliamentarian: vacancy.

National Committee Members

Robert Bernhoft, Jackson

Gerald Haas, Racine

John P. DuPont, Waukesha

Robert Raymond, Town of Grafton

Edward J. Frami, Dousman

William Hemenway, Pewaukee

National Committee Alternates

Suzanne Hemenway, Pewaukee

Kevin Haning, Brookfield

Daniel M. Hoyt, Fond du Lac

State Committee – Congressional District Representatives

1st District

Tim Farness, Whitewater

Glenn Petroski, Kenosha

2nd District

Bob Bellard, Beloit

vacancy

3rd District

vacancy

vacancy

4th District

Ralph Denson, Milwaukee

William Olmstead, Milwaukee

5th District

Peter Economou, New Berlin

Tim Kasun, Brookfield

6th District

Linda Clark, Westfield

José Figueroa, Town of Waldo

7th District

Lonnie W. Stine, Town of Amherst

vacancy

8th District

Patrick Risch, Boulder Junction

George Zacher, Lake Tomahawk

At-Large

Mark Gabriel, Appleton

Daniel Gibson, Janesville

Randy Hamby, Appleton

Andrew Zuelke, Ripon

Source: Constitution Party of Wisconsin.

Membership. Individual membership in the Constitution Party of Wisconsin is based on state-wide affiliation. Anyone who is in good standing with the state party and has paid the annual membership fee may attend the state convention and participate in lesser party committees.

Lesser Committees. Members in congressional districts, state senate and assembly districts, and county and election districts may form party committees affiliated with the state committee. The purpose of the lesser committees is to help build the party and aid its candidates seeking election.

State Committee. The Constitution Party of Wisconsin is headed by a state committee composed of 26 members: 6 state officers, 2 representatives elected by the members in each of the 8 congressional districts, and 4 at-large members. The state officers are the chairman, first vice chairman, second vice chairman, secretary, treasurer, and parliamentarian. The state chairman serves as the party's executive and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the party. The officers are elected in odd-numbered years and serve 2-year terms. The congressional district representatives are elected in caucuses prior to the state convention each year.

National Committee. The Constitution Party is affiliated with the U.S. Constitution Party, with headquarters in Vienna, Virginia. The Wisconsin party currently has 6 representatives to the National Committee.

CONSTITUTION PARTY OF WISCONSIN PLATFORM

As Adopted at the State Party Convention, Waukesha, March 27, 1993 and Amended, Pewaukee, June 15, 2002

[LRB Note: The state planks are indicated below in italics. Some portions of the national platform are included but, because of space limitations, it cannot be reprinted in full here.]

National Party Planks

The Constitution Party National Platform planks shall serve as the foundation of the Constitution Party of Wisconsin Platform for National Issues. For state and additional perspectives on national concerns, the Constitution Party of Wisconsin shall adopt its own superseding state planks to complement the National Platform planks.

Preamble

We, the members of the Constitution Party, gratefully acknowledge the blessing of the Lord God as Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe and of this Nation. We hereby appeal to Him for aid, comfort, guidance and the protection of His Divine Providence as we work to restore and preserve this nation as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

The U.S. Constitution established a republic under God, rather than a democracy.

Our republic is a nation governed by a Constitution, which is rooted in Biblical law, administered by representatives who are constitutionally elected by the citizens.

In a republic governed by Constitutional law rooted in Biblical law, all life, liberty and property are protected because law rules.

We affirm the principles of inherent individual rights upon which these United States of America were founded:

- That each individual is endowed by his Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are the rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of the individual's personal interest;
- That the freedoms to own, use, exchange, control, protect, and freely dispose of property is a natural, necessary and inseparable extension of the individual's unalienable rights;
- That the legitimate function of government is to secure these rights through the preservation of domestic tranquility, the maintenance of a strong national defense, and the promotion of equal justice for all;
- That history makes clear that left unchecked, it is the nature of government to usurp the liberty of its citizens and eventually become a major violator of the people's rights; and
- That, therefore, it is essential to bind government with the chains of the Constitution and carefully divide and jealously limit government powers to those assigned by the consent of the governed.

The Constitution Party calls on all who love liberty and value their inherent rights to join with us in the pursuit of these goals and in the restoration of these founding principles.

Abortion, Euthanasia and Bio-research

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin calls upon our state officials to fulfill their obligations as lesser magistrates to uphold the U.S. Constitution and the state constitution by taking immediate action to end the practice of abortion in Wisconsin.

We condemn the practice of so-called "assisted suicide" and call upon our state legislators to resist any and all attempts to legalize euthanasia.

In addition we oppose the funding of and support the outlawing of bio-research involving human embryonic or pre-embryonic cells.

Borrowing Money

The CPoW calls upon Congress to refrain from incurring debt, except upon the formal Declaration of War pursuant to Article I, Section 8, and solely for the purpose of financing such a constitutional war for its duration or to fulfill obligations undertaken during and as part of that war, and to refinance the national debt to prevent default.

Census

The CPoW believes that the census, as presently administered, is an unconstitutional invasion of privacy, and that the census is being misused to provide the government with information to support unnecessary spending. We call upon Congress to fund the Census Bureau only to the extent necessary to achieve the Bureau's sole constitutional purpose: enumeration of the citizenry in order to reapportion the legislature. Additionally, the CPoW stands opposed to "statistical sampling" as a means of enumeration.

Citizen Initiative Referenda

Whereas the Wisconsin Constitution guarantees the citizens of Wisconsin a republican form of government with democratically elected representation and because Citizen Initiative Referenda are a form of pure democracy, which is akin to "mob rule" and therefore inconsistent with the Wisconsin Constitution and inconsistent with the intentions of this nation's founders, the CPoW stands strongly opposed to the adoption of Citizen Initiative Referenda in this state.

Crime

The amount of crime in a society is directly related to the level of moral restraint of its citizens. Government is a reflection of that moral restraint, not its legislator. Increasing the amount of moral restraint in our society is not the responsibility of government, but of those called to that mission; namely the family, and the clergy and their congregations. We call upon these to fulfill their mission, renewing the souls of our citizenry, thereby increasing the amount of moral restraint, which will result in a reduction of crime.

We assert that upon completion of his sentence, the person convicted of a crime shall be fully restored to society with full exercise of all rights of citizenship.

Crime

Crime, in most cases, is to be dealt with by state and local governments. To the degree that the federal government, in its legislation, in its judicial actions, in its regulations, and in its Executive Branch activities, interferes with the ability of the people in their communities to apprehend, judge, and penalize accused lawbreakers, it bears responsibility for the climate of crime, which has grown more destructive with each passing year.

We favor the right of states and localities to execute criminals convicted of capital crimes and to require restitution for the victims of criminals. Federal involvement in state and local criminal justice processes should be limited to that which is constitutionally required.

All who are accused of crimes, petty to capital, shall have a trial by jury upon request, and the jury shall be fully informed of its right to nullify the law.

Education

Education should be free from any State Government subsidy and government interference. The State Government has no legitimate role in either subsidizing or regulating education. To that end, the CPoW supports amending the Wisconsin Constitution to remove the State of Wisconsin from any role in education.

We support an orderly transition to free market education including Home Education and Private Schools (for profit and non profit) and encourage benevolence to provide effective education for those in need.

Education

All teaching is related to basic assumptions about God and man. Education as a whole, therefore, cannot be separated from religious faith. The law of our Creator assigns the authority and responsibility of educating children to their parents. Education should be free from all federal government subsidies, including vouchers, tax incentives, and loans, except with respect to veterans.

Because the federal government has absolutely no jurisdiction concerning the education of our children, the United States Department of Education should be abolished; all federal legislation related to education should be repealed, including but not limited to "Goals 2000," "Outcomes-Based Education," "School-to-Work," "Success by Six," and other similar programs. No federal laws subsidizing or regulating the education of children should be enacted. Under no circumstances should the federal government be involved in national teacher certification, educational curricula, textbook selection, learning standards, comprehensive sex education, psychological and psychiatric research testing programs, and personnel.

Because control over education is now being relegated to departments other than the Department of Education, we clarify that no federal agency, department, board, or other entity may exercise jurisdiction over any aspect of children's upbringing. Education, training, and discipline of children are properly placed in the domain of their parents.

We support the unimpeded right of parents to provide for the education of their children in the manner they deem best, including home, private or religious.

So that no parents need defy the law by refusing to send their children to schools of which they disapprove, compulsory attendance laws should be repealed.

Elimination of Elective Offices

The CPoW opposes any proposal to change any state wide (e.g., Secretary of State or State Treasurer) or local offices (e.g., County Clerk or Mayor) currently filled through popular election to appointed positions. Such changes will reduce that officeholder's accountability to the electorate and instead make the office essentially a political patronage position.

Eminent Domain

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin supports the return to the original constitutional meaning of "just compensation" as meaning the owner whose property is being taken is to be "made whole" in the same sense used in tort law litigation, rather than the recent court imposed doctrine of "fair market value."

The CPoW supports the limitation on the use of the condemnation proceedings to the acquiring of property only in the case of proven owner abandonment.

Energy (with CPoW addendum)

We call attention to the continuing need of the United States for a sufficient supply of energy to sustain the nation's standard of living and its agricultural, business, national security, and industrial activities.

Private property rights should be respected, and the federal government should not interfere with the development of potential energy sources, including natural gas, crude oil, coal, hydroelectric power, solar energy, wind generators, and nuclear energy.

We also encourage the use of coal, shale, and oil sands for the production of power, and the conversion of coal, shale and agricultural products to synthetic fuels.

We oppose any increase in federal fuel taxes. Federal fuel tax revenue should be used exclusively for the maintenance of federal highways.

Family

The CPoW calls upon our national and state officials to oppose any action by the U.S. Courts that would establish any recognition of "same-sex marriage." We also call upon the Wisconsin State Legislature to pass a law defining marriage so no union other than that of one man and one woman may be recognized in Wisconsin, despite any action(s) taken by any other state(s).

We further call upon the Wisconsin State Legislature to repeal the provisions in the Wisconsin State Statutes that allow for "no fault divorce".

Finally, we call upon all state officials to outlaw all acts of sodomy.

Family

The law of our Creator defines marriage as the union between one man and one woman. The marriage covenant is the foundation of the family. We affirm, therefore, that no government may authorize or define marriage or family relations contrary to what God has instituted. Parents have the fundamental right and responsibility to nurture, educate, and discipline their children. Assumption of any of these responsibilities by any governmental agency usurps the role of the parents.

Federal Government

Wisconsin is an independent, sovereign republic. As such, the federal government has no authority to trespass on or confiscate property within the state without due process of the law.

Legal Reform and Individual Rights

The content of a man or woman's thoughts is not within the civil magistrate's jurisdictional purview, and is, therefore, not punishable under civil law. The only permissible inquiry in this area is whether or not a defendant intended to commit the crime charged. Attempting to determine whether or not a defendant was motivated to commit a crime because the victim was a member of a certain class of persons is illegitimate. Therefore, the CPoW advocates abolition of all "hate crime" penalty enhancers.

In 1771, John Adams said of the juror: "It is not only his right, but his duty... to find verdict according to his own best understanding, judgment and conscience, though in direct opposition to the direction of the court." We support legal reform measures that will require the courts in all jury trials to inform the jurors that in addition to their responsibility to judge the facts of the case, they have a prerogative right to judge the law, itself.

Additionally, the CPoW opposes using state and national executive power to bring civil suits against private parties to obtain relief properly sought only through criminal process and procedure. These civil actions are initiated to bypass the higher standards of proof required in criminal prosecutions. Examples of such governmental overreaching are the application of civil forfeiture, RICO, and abortion protesting injunction laws. We therefore call for the repeal of all state and national statutes which authorize the executive power to initiate such actions.

Finally, we categorically oppose all efforts to criminalize a person's lawful challenge to, or disapproval or criticism of, any beliefs, speech or conduct.

Light Rail

The CPoW opposes the expenditure of Federal, State or Local tax dollars for the purpose of building a “Light Rail” system in any current state community. If an idea such as this has such great merit, the private sector should construct and operate it. We believe our gas tax dollars are better spent improving and expanding existing roadways.

‘No-Quota’ Constitutional Amendment

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin, believing that an individual should be allowed to succeed or fail based on his own merits and not because he is a member of a particular cultural subgroup, wholly supports the following amendment to the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin:

Neither the state of Wisconsin nor any of its political subdivisions or agents shall use race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin as a criterion for either discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to, any individual or group in the operation of the state’s system of public employment, public education or public contracting.

Non-related Legislative Provisions

It is common practice for provisions and amendments to be attached to bills that have no common relationship with the purpose of the bill. This practice results in the passage of laws and expenditures that have not been open to congressional and public scrutiny because of their hidden nature. It also results in presidential approval of provisions which may have been vetoed if allowed to stand on their own merits and not attached to desirable legislation. In addition, this practice aids in the continuance of the loathsome practice of “pork barrel” spending. For this reason the Constitution Party of Wisconsin calls upon Congress and the State Legislature to adopt the following policy:

Every law, or resolution having the force of law, shall relate to but one subject, and that shall be accurately expressed in the title.

Representation

We propose to amend the State Constitution to allow the State Senators to be appointed by the County Board, or elected county wide, and paid by the people of each county, so as to assure each county’s interests are represented in the State Legislature.

Smart Growth

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin stands against state directed land use planning. The notion of “Smart Growth” strikes at the very concept of private property. It attempts government control of property by allowing the property owner only title and responsibility for taxes, while imposing draconian legal use restrictions upon land, and relinquishing all other control of it to government bureaucracy.

Social Security

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin advocates phasing out the entire Social Security program, while continuing to meet the obligations already incurred under the system.

Social Security

The Social Security trust should not be a “rainy day” fund which politicians can pirate, or from which they can borrow to cover their errors and pay for their excesses.

The Constitution Party supports legislation to require that the federal government meet its obligations to protect Social Security funds as a trust which can be used only to fulfill its obligations to those who have contributed to the system.

Additionally, the party believes an individual who has contributed to Social Security should be allowed to withdraw funds contributed and transfer said funds into an IRA or similar investments under the control of the individual contributor.

The Constitution grants no authority to the federal government to require working citizens to participate in Social Security. Individual citizens should have the right to choose between private retirement and pension programs, either at their place of employment or independently. We support the right of those entering the labor market to elect to participate in private plans as an alternative to the federal Social Security program.

We call for the removal of earning limitations on persons aged 62 and over, so that they may earn any amount of additional income without placing their Social Security benefits at risk.

We urge the repeal of those provisions of the Social Security system which penalize those born during the “notch years” between 1917 and 1926, and argue that such persons be placed on the same benefit schedules as all other beneficiaries.

State Sovereignty

We demand that our State Legislature repudiate unconstitutional federal government mandates, regulations, programs, and encroachments, and that they assert their authority under the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution to defend the sovereignty of the State of Wisconsin.

State Sovereignty

Our federal republic was created by joint action of the several states. It has been gradually perverted into a socialist machine for federal control in the domestic affairs of the states.

The federal government has no authority to mandate policies relating to state education, natural resources, transportation, private business, housing, health care, ad infinitum.

The Constitution Party calls for the federal government to divest itself of operations not authorized by the Constitution. We call upon Congress to get the federal government out of such enterprises, which compete with private free enterprise.

Taxes

While it is morally correct and necessary that government exists, the CPoW agrees with George Washington that “it is the government which governs least which governs best”. Individual freedom is best safeguarded by keeping local government strong and distant government less powerful. In order to protect that freedom, county and local governments must have greater power with respect to state authority than is presently the case. To reach this end, the system of taxing authority must change.

We, therefore, oppose all progressive taxes and any form of taxes on property, both real or personal, or on compensation paid for services rendered. However, we recognize that provisions must be made for support of state, county, and local governments through taxation.

For the state government, we support user fees and excise taxes. To the degree that these taxes are insufficient to cover the legitimate costs of state government, we will offer a “county-rate tax” in which the responsibility for covering the cost of unmet obligations will be divided among the seventy-two counties in accordance with their proportion of the total population of the State of Wisconsin. Thus, if a county contains 10% of our state’s population, it will be responsible for assuming 10% of the annual deficit. The effect of this county rate tax will be to encourage politicians to argue for less rather than more state spending.

For county and local levels, we support the people’s freedom to tax themselves by the following means: user fees, excise taxes, flat-rate sales taxes on goods purchased and services rendered, and head taxes.

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin opposes imposing any tax on internet commerce, services or the internet as a whole at either the state, national or both levels.

Taxes

The Constitution, in Article I, Section 8, gives Congress the power “to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.”

In Article I, Section 9, the original document made clear that “no Capitation, or other direct Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census of Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.” It is moreover established that “No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.”

Since 1913, our constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property have been abridged and diminished by the assumption of direct taxing authority on each of us by the federal government.

We will propose legislation to abolish the Internal Revenue Service, and will veto any authorization, appropriation, or continuing resolution which contains any funding whatsoever for that illicit and unconstitutional agency. We are opposed to the flat-rate tax proposals that are being promoted as an improvement to the current tax system. The Sixteenth Amendment does not provide authority for an unapportioned direct tax.

Moreover, it is our intention to replace entirely the current tax system of the U.S. government (including income taxes, Social Security taxes, estate taxes, inheritance taxes).

To the degree that tariffs on foreign products are insufficient to cover the legitimate constitutional costs of the federal government, we will offer an apportioned “state-rate tax” in which the responsibility for covering the cost of unmet obligations will be divided among the several states in accordance with their proportion of the total population of the United States, excluding the District of Columbia. Thus, if a state contains 10 percent of the nation’s citizens, it will be responsible for assuming payment of 10 percent of the annual deficit.

The effect of this “state-rate tax” will be to encourage politicians to argue for less, rather than more, federal spending, and less state spending as well.

We endorse ratification of the Liberty Amendment which would repeal the Sixteenth Amendment.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN
June 2003

Headquarters

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Membership Director: CRAIG J. TROST.

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Internet Address: <http://www.wisdems.org>

State Administrative Committee

Chair: LINDA HONOLD, Milwaukee.

First Vice Chair: TIM SULLIVAN, Verona.

Second Vice Chair: JEFF RAMMELT, Watertown.

Secretary: MELISSA SCHROEDER, Merrill.

Treasurer: ROB FYRST, Madison.

National Committee Members: STAN GRUSZYNSKI, Green Bay; KEN OPIN, Madison; MARY RASMUSSEN, Boyceville; PAULA ZELLNER, Shawano.

Legislative Representatives: SENATOR JON ERPENBACH, Middleton; REPRESENTATIVE GARY SHERMAN, Port Wing.

College Democrats President: STEPHEN SINGH, Madison.

County Chairs Association Chair: TOM LOHR, Grafton.

Milwaukee County Chair: MARTHA LOVE, Milwaukee.

At Large Members: TANA ARCHIQUETTE, Oneida; LYNN DAVIS, Racine.

Congressional District Representatives:

1st District

Ken Howell, chair

Marilyn Nemeth, Racine

2nd District

Glenn Carlson, chair

Liz Schmidt, Mount Horeb

3rd District

Karen Dahl, chair, Viroqua

Jerry LaPoint, Eau Claire

4th District

Jason Fields, chair, Milwaukee

Theresa Gabriel, Milwaukee

5th District

Jim Shinnors, chair, Wauwatosa

Chris Marshall

6th District

Jan Banicki, chair

Woody Weber

7th District

Marlys Matuszak, chair, Wausau

Gary Hawley, Stevens Point

8th District

Jack Krueger, chair, Green Bay

Dottie LeClair

Source: Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

County Organization. The county organization is the basic unit of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin. In each county, the membership elects the county officers. They include a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer (or secretary/treasurer). Their terms of office are usually one year, but some county organizations may provide for 2-year terms.

Congressional District Organization. Congressional district organizations function mainly as a base of support for Democratic congressional candidates. They also select representatives to the state administrative committee. An executive committee directs each congressional district organization.

State Convention. The party holds its annual state convention in June. Each year, the convention considers amendments to the state party constitution and other resolutions and party business. State party officers are elected in odd-numbered years, and state party platforms are adopted in

even-numbered years. State convention delegates elect Democratic National Committee members every four years.

Each county unit elects delegates to the state convention, and all party members are eligible. The state administrative committee determines the number of delegates that represent each county by using a formula based on the number of party members and the percentage of the vote cast for the Democratic candidate in the most recent U.S. Senate election. In addition to the regular quota, certain Democratic officeholders are automatically delegates to the state convention.

State Officers and Administrative Committee. The Democratic Party of Wisconsin is headed by a state administrative committee, composed of 32 party officials chosen in a variety of ways. Delegates to the state convention elect the 5 party officers and the 4 Democratic National Committee members. The 8 congressional district conventions each select 2 representatives to serve on the state administrative committee in the spring of each odd-numbered year: the district chairperson and an additional representative of the opposite sex. The remaining voting committee members include the County Chairs Association chairperson; the Milwaukee County chairperson; a representative of the College Democrats; 2 state legislative representatives, elected by their house caucuses prior to the beginning of the new legislative term; the immediate past state chairperson and an at-large administrative committee member.

The party officers are the state chairperson, first vice chairperson, second vice chairperson, treasurer, and secretary. The chairperson and first vice chairperson must be of the opposite sex. Party officers are elected in the odd-numbered year for 2-year terms. Democratic National Committee members are elected each presidential election year and serve 4-year terms. The state chairperson and the first vice chairperson are also *ex officio* members of the Democratic National Committee.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the chairperson, with the concurrence of the entire state administrative committee, appoints a successor to serve until the next annual convention, where the delegates elect an individual to fill the position for the remainder of the unexpired term.

National Committee. The Democratic National Committee is composed of the chairperson and the highest ranking officer of the opposite sex in each recognized state Democratic Party. In Wisconsin these are the chairperson and the first vice chairperson of the state administrative committee. An additional 200 committee memberships are apportioned to the states on the same basis as delegates to the national convention, and other specified members are appointed. Wisconsin's Democratic National Committee members are selected every 4 years at the annual state conventions held in presidential election years.

2002 WISCONSIN DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

Adopted at the State Party Convention, Madison, June 8, 2002

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin stands open to all citizens, responds sensitively, promotes outreach to and inclusion of all segments of society, and works actively for open and honest government responsive to the will of the people.

HUMAN CONCERNS

We reaffirm our commitment to equality of rights, privileges, and opportunities for all individuals, without regard to race, color, sex, marital or domestic partner status, age, occupation, national origin, disability, physical appearance, living arrangements, sexual orientation, and political or religious preference. We expect vigorous enforcement of civil rights and anti-discrimination laws.

Government should ensure that everyone can lead a dignified, healthy, secure, fulfilling and useful life: one free of abuse and unjust discrimination and with excellent, affordable health care; safe, sanitary, accessible, and affordable housing; access to quality public education; and opportunities for rewarding work, wholesome recreation, and meaningful participation in community affairs.

We are committed to the principle that women and men are equal.

We support equity in pay and benefits.

We oppose all racial profiling.

We support strict enforcement of the constitutional principle of separation of religion and government.

We urge all governments to abide by treaties with Native American Nations.

We support individuals' rights to make their own moral, religious, philosophical, and medical decisions.

We support an individual's right to privacy, and oppose its being narrowed.

We support an individual's right to choose death with dignity.

Family-planning services must be readily accessible, provided confidentially, and available without interference by government or others.

We support the Roe v. Wade decision. We support freedom of choice and oppose all measures that interfere with it or the doctor-patient relationship. Safe abortion must be kept readily available without harassment or danger to patients, health-care providers, or their friends and families.

We support a single-payer health care system that provides universal access, covers all physical and mental illnesses, promotes preventive health care, and covers costs of prescription drugs.

We support the Social Security system and oppose its privatization.

We support Medicare and favor reimbursement for prescription drug costs. We support Medicaid. We favor enhancing programs for the aging and the developmentally, mentally, or physically disabled, including subsidizing in-home and long-term nursing-home care.

There must be adequate funding to provide all veterans medical treatment, rehabilitation, housing, education, and employment opportunities.

Health insurance companies should be required to treat physical and mental illnesses the same and include contraceptives under prescription drug coverage.

Drug use should be addressed primarily as medical and social problems. Treatment, rehabilitation, education, and employment will be more effective than imprisonment.

We oppose the death penalty.

There must be adequate funding for AIDS research, treatment, humane care and prevention.

We support fair wages, decent living conditions and adequate health insurance for agricultural workers and their families.

We advocate a welfare system in which people who are able to work be gainfully employed whenever jobs are available and enables their employment with adequate support for child-care, health insurance, transportation and job-training. The system must not be destructive of parent-child relationships and must provide an effective "safety net" for all.

We call for additional affordable, quality, licensed daycare centers.

EDUCATION

Quality public education for all is critical for individual well being, our economic prosperity and national security, and the health of our democracy.

We oppose public funding of private schools and privatization of public educational institutions through vouchers or other means.

Federal and state governments should increase funding of public education at all levels. We support expansion of early-childhood and preschool public education programs.

The public school teachers of Wisconsin must be better paid.

We oppose government burdening teachers and students with excessive, discriminatory testing that diverts attention from learning.

State government should increase funding for the UW and Technical College Systems. Tuition in these systems must not increase more rapidly than inflation.

We support students' right to participate in governance of state post-secondary schools.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The health of our Earth depends on preserving clean air and water, uncontaminated land, wilderness, wildlife and other natural resources.

We must conserve energy, develop sustainable food production systems, and protect biodiversity. We must develop and use safe and renewable energy sources.

We must protect resources and human and animal populations from resource mismanagement, pollution, and exposure to unnatural radiation and harmful substances.

Mining must be strictly controlled to prevent environmental damage.

Environmentally threatening activities like mining, oil or gas extraction, logging, or cattle-grazing, should be banned in public parks and wilderness areas.

We oppose diversion of Great Lakes water and large-scale extraction of spring water for commercial bottling.

We urge improvement of soil and water-conservation programs.

We support a balanced transportation system. Walking and bicycling should be encouraged, and public transportation improved and made affordably available to all. We support efficient, modern passenger rail service and passenger and car ferries.

Laws to halt global warming and acid rain must be enforced and strengthened. Power-plant emissions must be strictly controlled. Fuel-efficiencies of all motor vehicles must be increased.

We support land-use plans that encourage compact development in urban areas, where municipal services can be efficiently provided, and preserve Wisconsin's rural and agricultural flavor by preventing sprawl and preserving valuable topsoil and green space.

Recycling and composting must be priorities to reduce waste and preserve limited landfill space and raw materials. We encourage use of biodegradable and post-consumer recycled packaging and discourage excessive packaging.

Communities and workers are entitled to know about and strictly control hazardous substances located or transported near them.

We support prompt clean-up of toxic-waste sites, paid for by polluters, and banning residential development on or near them.

We oppose massively polluting factory farms and encourage use of farming methods which minimize environmental damage.

RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT, CITIZEN AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Government must be responsive to the needs and will of the people while protecting human rights, civil rights and civil liberties and complying fully with the law.

We support improvements in government efficiency and encourage initiatives to involve and empower citizens in civic affairs.

Consumer- and worker-protection laws must be strengthened.

Usurious lending practices should be made illegal.

We support re-establishment of the Public Intervenor's Office.

The Department of Natural Resources must be restored as independent of the Governor.

All government meetings must comply with open meetings laws. All government agencies must comply with freedom of information laws fully and promptly and make all records available through the Internet.

The Internet must be affordably available to all Wisconsin citizens without unlawful intrusion on privacy.

Public libraries and library systems must be adequately supported, and all citizens guaranteed free access to uncensored information through them.

We call for full public financing of all election campaigns, reform of campaign finance laws to lessen the influence of money on public policy, and programs to enhance election participation by all citizens. We vigorously oppose measures which make voting more difficult. Elections should include open, full, and fair debate of issues in the public forum. All licensed broadcasters should be required to provide time for such debate without charge.

Government must deal effectively with crime and its causes, while protecting the constitutional rights of all.

We support adequate funding for law enforcement.

Government must heed the fact that people having access to education and jobs with decent wages is more effective in preventing crime than building and filling prisons.

We support equitable sentencing standards commensurate with the crime, updating the criminal code, and providing judges with sentence-modification authority.

Marijuana offenses should be handled locally as ordinance violations.

We support the right to hunt.

We support reasonable firearm regulations, which protect the health and safety of law-abiding citizens, including requiring safety locks on guns and background checks on all gun-purchasers.

We oppose taxes or legislation imposed under the guise of gubernatorial partial veto, and support a Constitutional amendment to assure that all taxes and laws are approved by the Legislature.

Our wealth should be officially measured not by the GNP alone but by broader measures of well-being such as the United Nations' Human Development Index.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Working people are the backbone of our economy. Our top priority is full employment.

All workers must have the right to organize, bargain collectively, and strike to achieve and maintain fair wages, benefits, and safe working conditions. We support public employees' rights to speedy mediation and binding arbitration of labor disputes.

The anti-teacher Qualified Economic Offer system must be repealed.

We favor strengthening OSHA and other safety agencies to ensure enforcement of workers' rights to a safe workplace.

We oppose right-to-work legislation. Hiring strikebreakers must be prohibited.

We believe the minimum wage must be a living wage with benefits so that workers can remain out of poverty.

We support measures to encourage equitable ratios of management to labor pay.

We advocate national industrial policies to ensure thriving basic industries.

We urge management and labor to work together to compete successfully in domestic and foreign markets. We support disincentives for American industries to set up plants in foreign countries. We recommend a selective tariff on imports from nations which have unfair conditions that make it impossible for American exporters to develop foreign markets.

No employer should be allowed access to employee pension fund assets.

Workers owed wages by a bankrupt business must have first claim to the business' assets to cover the wages.

Businesses must be required to give sufficient notification of job cutbacks and plant closings to help affected communities and workers adjust.

Unemployment compensation should be improved by the addition of health insurance and having benefit periods automatically extended in long recessions.

We favor investment in research, technology, and worker retraining for nonmilitary domestic jobs.

THE ECONOMY AND TAXES

We favor policies fostering environmentally sound economic growth and property development.

We support a tax system which treats work and investment incomes equally, is based on ability to pay, and has a progressive income tax as its core.

Estate taxes should be adjusted for inflation but not eliminated.

We must lessen our dependence on regressive levies such as property and sales taxes. Taxation of land should be according to use. Property taxes should not be the primary source of school funding.

State and federal governments must fund programs they mandate.

The state must grant municipalities and school districts equitable funding sources and remove all revenue caps from municipalities, counties, and school districts.

We must limit corporate welfare and tax loopholes and discourage corporate activities which result in unemployment and unfair competition.

We oppose further tax cuts for wealthy individuals and corporations, as such cuts exacerbate federal and state deficits and do not spur job growth.

Leases for commercial use of, or extraction of resources from, public land should be at fair market value and permitted only for activities that are not environmentally damaging.

We are proud of our state's tradition of cooperatives. We support these community-owned and controlled businesses.

AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS

We are committed to preserving family-farm agriculture. We favor a long-term agricultural policy that preserves existing family farms and creates economic systems that allow people to succeed with their farms and farm-related enterprises. We support supply management programs that enhance the income of family farmers.

We oppose the current high levels of processor-concentration in agriculture. We support verifiable price discovery.

We call for distribution of farm subsidies that favors family over large corporate farms.

We favor agricultural practices which provide a safe and wholesome food supply and ensure the health of the land.

We support accurate labeling of all food products, including "organic".

We seek the development of international markets for our agricultural products.

There must be adequate government support of rural health care, public education, and other social services.

We discourage non-farmer ownership and operation of farms and support watchful regulation of corporate farms.

We oppose farmland ownership by foreign interests.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WAR AND PEACE

We recognize our responsibilities as citizens of the world.

The United Nations Charter directs that members settle their disputes peacefully. Law must replace force in international decision-making. We call on the President to follow international law, and the House and Senate to use their powers of the purse and advice and consent toward that end.

We must strengthen, appropriately fund, use, and cooperate with international institutions like the United Nations, its agencies, the International Court of Justice, and the new International Criminal Court.

We need a foreign policy of befriending all nations and addressing grievances that foster terrorism.

We should be working with other nations seeking global solutions to scourges such as hunger, homelessness, disease, illiteracy, unemployment, overpopulation, and pollution.

Economic sanctions should be applied sparingly and without genocidal effects. The U.S. should eliminate the sanctions on Cuba and restore our "good neighbor policy" of non-intervention in Latin America.

We should demonstrate cooperation for a better world by ratifying and observing the Treaty Banning Land Mines, the Law of the Sea Treaty, and the Kyoto Protocol to control global warming. We should be leading the world to negotiate additional measures to protect the world's environment and wildlife.

We support the Universal Declarations of Human rights, and urge ratification of treaties implementing it – including the Conventions on Rights of the Child and Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Our foreign policy should encourage growth of democracy worldwide. Our economic aid should be allocated on the basis of meeting human needs and encouraging observance of human rights. We should be working urgently against racism and denial of equal rights for women. We should offer refuge to victims of oppressive regimes, regardless of political persuasion, and promote fair immigration policies.

The U.S. must lead the world in halting the arms race. We should continue the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty process with Russia and work with other nuclear powers until the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons we set in 2000 with Russia, China, Britain, and France is achieved. Existing nuclear weapons should be taken off hair-trigger alert, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty should be ratified, and nuclear material from dismantled weapons should be safeguarded and disposed of with appropriate concern for the environment. We should rejoin negotiations on the Biological Weapons Convention to strengthen its verification protocol. As arms are reduced, our war industries should be encouraged to convert to civilian products. The international arms trade should be brought under international control.

Our government should reaffirm the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and abandon all ballistic missile defense plans. These plans are technically unproven, costly, and unnecessary, but likely to provoke an arms race in space, in violation of the Outer Space Treaty.

We support expansion of international trade as beneficial to consumers and world peace, so long as environmental and worker safety and compensation standards are not eroded and democracy is not impaired. We oppose fast-track legislation limiting Congress' authority to amend trade agreements. The monopolistic practices of multinational corporations require international controls.

CONCLUSION

We expect Democratic candidates and public officials, and all whom we help to gain office, to support and work to implement this Platform.

WISCONSIN GREEN PARTY May 2003

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Corresponding Secretary: BRIAN LUTENEGGER, Madison.

Recording Secretary: PAUL PROCES, Oshkosh.

Treasurer: JAKE SCHNEIDER, Menasha.

Council Members: Amy Heart, Stevens Point.

Matt Filipiak, Madison.

Nick Kaufman, Black River Falls.

Susan Tweedale, Franksville.

Larry Harding, Kenosha.

Tom Depies, Oconomowoc.

Erik Pettersen, Madison.

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Brenda Konkel, Madison.

Colleen Coy, Madison.

Jessa Thompson, Oshkosh.

Shelley Fite, Madison.

Chris Burkley, Ogdensburg.

Bill Hensley, Kenosha.

Source: Wisconsin Green Party.

Officers. The officers of the Wisconsin Greens are two spokespersons, a recording secretary, a corresponding secretary, and a treasurer. The spokespersons serve staggered 2-year terms and may not be reelected for successive terms. The other officers serve one-year terms and may be reelected. Elections are held at the fall meeting.

Coordinating Council. The Wisconsin Greens are headed by a coordinating council consisting of at least 10 members confirmed at the fall membership meeting. The officers are members of the coordinating council.

State Convention. The Wisconsin Greens hold state conventions in the spring and fall of each year. Officers are elected at the spring convention.

2001 WISCONSIN GREEN PLATFORM

Adopted at the Spring Gathering in Sun Prairie, March 18, 2001

And amended in Marathon County, September 16, 2001

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that we must treat each other with love, respect and fairness, and that we must protect the earth for future generations.”

PREAMBLE

The crises of our times demand a fundamental shift in human values and culture, and in our social, economic and political institutions. The way we live today is based on using things up: our air, our water, our natural resources, our people. We need a new way of doing things that is sustainable, that will allow our people and our environment to flourish now and in the future. We can't keep spending today what we – and our children and their children – will need tomorrow.

The Wisconsin Greens offer a new vision for change, for a sustainable future. We recognize that one of the great obstacles to that change is the fact that government no longer responds to the needs of citizens. Only by building grass-roots democracy can we be sure that changes will be real, not just appearances or promises. Since neither the Democratic Party nor the Republican Party has shown a real commitment to running government in the public interest, the Wisconsin Greens believe another political party is needed: one that people can believe in; one that they can trust.

Our vision is of a sustainable society in harmony with the environment, one that meets all people's needs for security, self-respect, freedom, creativity, and community. We recognize that personal, cultural, social, economic, political, and ecological problems are inter-connected. We reject the current simplistic solutions to these problems. New, creative solutions are needed which allow us to live well and happily without destroying our environment or our society. We are confronted with the challenge of letting go of old ways and creating a new vision and a new way of life.

1. ECOLOGY

Wisconsin is primarily an agricultural and forest products state. Sustainable yields of agricultural and forest products must be enhanced without reliance on practices which destroy these resources for future generations. Stewardship and ecological responsibility are integral parts of land ownership, whether held by individuals, corporations, land trusts, or as a public heritage. The “public trust doctrine,” which holds that public land, water, minerals, forests, and other natural resources are held in trust for the public and used for the common good, must be enforced.

A. Agriculture

Sustainable Agriculture: Wisconsin's modern agricultural economy relies heavily on intensive, high-tech systems that depend on expensive, petrochemically based fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides and phosphates to maintain yields. This dependence has diminished the vitality of Wisconsin's agricultural lands through loss of top soil, decreased fertility, poisoning of ground and surface waters, and increased indebtedness and fiscal insecurity of farm operators.

A sustainable system of agriculture should be based upon the use of crop rotation, unprocessed natural fertilizers, disease resistant indigenous plants, integrated pest management, and crop cultivation instead of petrochemical based farming practices.

Subsidies for a change to organic farming methods are mandatory. New and ecologically sound agricultural products, including nonfood uses of plant fiber, hemp and agricultural waste should be encouraged to help local farm producers and distributors retain a larger share of value added products in the local community. Community and family organic gardens must be supported. Organic Certification Standards must be established for products sold to others. Other potentially sustainable methods of food production such as hydroponics and greenhouses should be supported as well. Regionalization of the food production system should be encouraged.

The state must provide more support to universities and technical schools to teach sustainable farming practices. The University Extension must expand its ability to teach these techniques.

Family Farms: Current farm programs, taxes and fiscal policies favor corporate agribusiness over the family farm. This must shift to reestablish the family farm as an indispensable part of a diverse and healthy agricultural economy.

Farmers must receive a reasonable price for their products. The Wisconsin Greens call for an immediate end to the current dairy price support formula that discriminates against Wisconsin.

Farmland Preservation: To insure the continuity of farmland in farm use, a state funded farmer retirement system, funded by real estate transfer taxes, subdivision fees and other methods, should be created. This should be combined with state land banking of prime farmland to prevent diversion to nonfarm use through first-option state acquisition of the land, annuities to retiring farmers, subsidies to beginning farmers and farm land trusts, and restricted farm resale agreements. Farmland preservation must be strengthened by statutory adoption as a comprehensive state land use planning goal, including a mechanism of enforcement within state and local land use regulatory arenas.

Biotechnology: Hybridization and genetic engineering must be reexamined to protect from dangers to agricultural species diversity. Growth producing hormones and the preventative use of antibiotics in the production of livestock must be eliminated. Genetically engineered organisms must be subjected to much more comprehensive testing on their impacts on human health and the environment. BGH products must be labeled and products made with genetically engineered organisms boycotted.

B. Forestry

Sustainable Forestry Practices: Sustainable forestry practices must be applied throughout the state of Wisconsin. This means that some forests should be managed for human economic, social, ecological, cultural and aesthetic bene-

fits and other forests must be left to their own development without human intervention. The primary tenet of forestry should be that of sustainability – that of considering the seventh generation. The forest and all other ecological communities must be maintained by the present generation in a manner which allows future generations to benefit from the full range of opportunities offered by the forest – environmental, aesthetic, spiritual, recreational, social and economic – and which also respects the needs of other beings.

Public Forests: Forestry practices on public lands must be truly multipurpose. We advocate the maintenance of all native components of the forest ecosystem, especially old-growth preserves. The primary goal of forestry on public lands must be ecological sustainability, maintenance of biodiversity and provision of recreational benefits to the public; timber harvesting must be secondary and complimentary to these goals.

Private Forest: As most of Wisconsin's forests are owned by private individuals, and many of the benefits of these forests serve a much larger population, we believe that private forest owners must be supported in maintaining their land in a forested state. To ensure this, we support the use of government incentives to promote sustainable forestry on private lands. We also support tax and other incentives to maintain private land in forests.

Forest Economy: We advocate for sustainable rural communities. Rural communities in forested regions should include ecosystem-based industries which locally process and add value to those components that are harvested from the local ecosystem. Our rural communities are subject to colonization by natural resource extraction and financial corporations. We demand true accounting and full disclosure of the costs of forestry practices and an elimination of government subsidies for the timber industry.

Forest Fragmentation: Fragmentation is one of the biggest threats to our state's forests. We support city, county and state zoning which would protect forest land from development and protect forest owners from excessive taxes that often make selling land to developers their only option. Roads are a primary culprit in fragmenting the forest. We support a general moratorium on road building in public forests within Wisconsin and limiting construction of new roads in privately owned forests.

C. Energy

The current ecological crisis is partially the result of an energy use lifestyle based upon the consumption of nonrenewable fossil fuels and nuclear power. A full cost pricing policy should reflect the environmental and social costs of various energy production and use technologies.

Conservation and Renewables: Major government investments and incentives should be used to encourage renewable energy technology and conservation at every level of energy use. Wind, solar and biomass (plant matter) all need to be included in Wisconsin's energy future. In particular, Wisconsin should develop at least one major commercial wind farm before the year 2000.

High energy efficiency standards should be required in new construction and encouraged for the retrofitting of existing structures.

Fossil fuels should be phased out. Nonrenewable energy production and consumption should be taxed, and the revenue used to cover the hidden costs of fossil fuels and the development of alternatives. The state should support the development of biomass (plant matter) for generating fuels, as a renewable alternative to oil.

Nuclear Power: Nuclear power as a way of generating electricity must be phased out. It is far too expensive and far too dangerous, especially to future generations who will suffer from leaking wastes. New plants should not be built or licensed, and existing ones should not have their licenses extended. The power generated by nuclear plants in Wisconsin should be replaced with reduced demand (conservation) and renewable energy. Workers at closing nuclear plants should be re-trained and given top priority for jobs at Wisconsin's new wind farms.

Nuclear waste must be kept out of the waste stream and regional high level nuclear waste dumps must not be located in Wisconsin.

Transportation: New vehicles must have higher average miles per gallon requirements and stricter emission control requirements. Wisconsin should impose "gas guzzler" taxes and renewable fuel and "gas sipper" rebates. Fuel needs should be met with renewables least damaging to the environment.

Further major new highway construction should be delayed until adequate need has been demonstrated and full consideration given to alternatives such as mass transit, light rail, high speed rail, commuter rail, bicycling and walking. Cost benefit analyses must account for the full social and environmental costs of all transportation alternatives and should encourage compact urban and suburban land use patterns to facilitate public transportation.

An elected, citizen oversight board should set highway policy, in place of the current Governor-appointed Transportation Projects Commission. Financial interest in projects should disqualify people from serving on the board.

Utilities: State laws and regulations should support local ownership of utilities. This will increase public accountability in energy decisions, reduce costs, and give citizens a personal stake in conservation. Electric power should be decentralized as much as possible, and an emphasis placed on meeting future demand through conservation and local renewable power generation.

D. Mining

Moratorium: There must be moratorium on metallic mining in Wisconsin until the full impacts are more fully documented. Mining in wetlands and on all state lands must be banned. Sulfide ore mining should be prohibited until technologies are developed for effectively dealing with acid mine drainage.

Mining Law Reform: Current mining laws must be strengthened by preventing DNR rules from granting variances to many important environmental criteria. Mining of ore deposits must be carried out with complete protection of the air, surface and ground waters and wildlife, and with respect for sacred sites and medicines of Native Americans.

Mining companies must have no violations of federal, state or local environmental and workplace safety laws in this or other jurisdictions before being granted permits to mine in Wisconsin.

All future mining projects must be preceded by local and regional impact statements. Mining companies must prove that their activities will have no adverse impacts on the environment or a local economy before being granted a permit. Local units of government may ban mining activities within their jurisdictions by local ordinance, notwithstanding state laws permitting mining activities. Mining companies should be taxed on the net value of their holdings, not on net profits from extracted ore.

Mineral Recycling: To the greatest extent possible, Wisconsin's needs for minerals should be met through recycling.

E. The Natural Environment

Although we forget it sometimes, our natural environment is where we live. We have no other choice, so we'd better take care of it. No one has a right to hurt all of us by destroying our home for their profit.

Water and Air: Commercial practices which pollute or degrade air and water resources must be ended through substitution of nonpolluting alternatives. The use of pollution credits to curb industrial air and water pollution is inadequate, since it implies that industry has an inherent right to degrade the environment.

State initiatives to accelerate conservation and reduce the release of hydrocarbons and other gases that contribute to global warming; to completely eliminate industrial gases that deplete the ozone layer; and to control industrial emissions that contribute to acid rain must be instituted immediately.

The current DNR water quality rules must be amended to require absolute nondegradation of existing water bodies, rather than allowing for zones of dilution, mixing zones, and for increasing pollution of water bodies up to maximum contaminant levels (MCL's). DNR rule 182.075, which allows pollution of groundwater to MCL levels by mining projects must be repealed.

Further restriction by DNR for designation of Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) must be reversed. State agencies must inventory the water quality in Wisconsin lakes and rivers and take all measures needed to reduce nonpoint and point sources of pollution.

More stringent enforcement and monitoring of surface water pollution by the DNR, and changing surface water pollution levels to conform to those for groundwater, must be required.

Mandatory rather than voluntary controls over nonpoint pollution sources such as construction sites, street runoff, agricultural soil erosion and fertilizer, and pesticides must be implemented. There must be state wide standards for landfill siting and construction. The state must provide educational and material assistance to those who will have difficulty meeting new standards.

Conservation and Restoration: We must learn to appreciate and respect native prairies, forest and wetland flora and fauna, and support the reintroduction of indigenous plant and animal life where it has dwindled or been lost. We support the preservation and restoration of remnant native plant communities to maximize ecological diversity, and to foster an understanding and appreciation of our state's unique ecosystems.

State and federal wildlife agencies must preserve and reestablish habitat for native Wisconsin wildlife and plants. Drainage of wetlands and development of lake and river shorelines should be severely restricted.

Wild areas must be established and maintained, where native plants and animals (including large predators) can live in their natural relationships. The state must give this land use a priority just like other land uses.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

A. Pollution Prevention

The best (and only really effective) solution to pollution is prevention. The Greens believe that this idea should be the basis for all government policies related to pollution.

Elimination of Toxics: The Greens call for the eventual elimination of discharges of toxic substances, particularly those that persist in the environment and accumulate in plants, animals and people. This process should start with a freeze on new discharges. Policy priority should be: (1) new technologies for eliminating the toxic chemicals, (2) recycling of toxics in industrial processes, (3) mitigating or controlling discharges (as a last resort).

In particular, the Wisconsin Greens support the goal of zero discharge for the Great Lakes, in keeping with the current U.S. - Canadian agreements.

An acid rain and heavy metal atmospheric deposition tax on cars, and on all industrial and commercial applications that generate pollutants affecting Wisconsin lakes and forests should be implemented. Use of ozone depleting substances must be banned. Source reduction of waste, as an alternative under NR207, the water anti-degradation rule, should be required.

Support for Technological Change: To make pollution prevention possible, the state must support industries which are converting to clean technologies. This should be done through tax incentives, loans, grants, and assistance with research and development.

B. Waste

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Waste reduction should be maximized and disposal minimized. The focus of waste handling needs to be changed from waste handling to resource management, with the priorities: reduce, reuse, recycle.

Reuse of products in their initial form, and the recycling of products into similar products to reduce the use of virgin materials should be required whenever possible. Deposits for glass and metal beverage containers as well as wet and

dry cell batteries (for the promotion of rechargeable batteries) should be required. Nonrecyclable products such as disposable diapers and nonrecyclable food packaging should be heavily taxed, and the revenue used to pay for waste disposal and waste reduction programs.

The recycling tax incidence should fall more directly on those firms generating the waste. The standardization and overall reduction of packaging should be encouraged. State loans and subsidies to businesses should require toxic waste use reduction plans.

The state government must use its purchasing power to build markets for recyclable and reusable products. It should be required to buy such products whenever possible.

All products should be rated and labeled as to their total environmental impact, for example: the level of persistent toxic substances released during production, use, repair, or disposal; the frugal use of energy; and the use of renewable resources. Economic incentives for the production of toxic wastes need to be removed through “full-cost” pricing.

Deregulation of low-level radioactive waste is unacceptable. High-level waste storage should be only for waste generated in Wisconsin, and should not be sited until the elimination of nuclear power in the state is complete.

New incinerators should be banned in all cases where alternative disposal methods can be used. Incentives to phase out existing incineration, by substitution of recycling, reuse and source reduction must be implemented. Dilution of toxic incinerator ash must be discontinued. Ash must be classified and disposed of as hazardous waste.

The waste generation history and environmental record of a recycling or waste disposal firm will be a major criteria in considering competitive bids by municipalities for such services.

C. Pesticides

Large signs explaining the potential dangers of pesticide use should be required for at least two days before and after any commercial or private pesticide application, indoors or outdoors.

The state should create and maintain a central data base, which citizens can access at all times, to find out the chemical contents, products used, dosage applied, health effects, and company responsible, for any private or commercial pesticide application.

Pesticides should not be used on or in public property, except as a last resort, after demonstrating the failure of other organic alternatives. Major tax incentives for phaseout of pesticides in agricultural application should be implemented. The use of atrazine should be banned.

Funding for public education on alternative forms of lawn and garden care should be increased. Tax incentives should reward the use of organic pest control methods. Communities in the state should have the right to pass stronger controls on pesticides than those specified in state and federal regulations.

D. Public Right to Protection

Public’s Right to Know: The public should have an absolute right to know when substances are being put in the environment that can harm our health or the health of plants and animals, and when such substances are being handled or transported. This requirement must apply not only to businesses and individuals but to the government and the military.

Personal and Corporate Responsibility: We believe that individuals should not be able to harm public health and safety and then hide behind the mask of a corporation. The DNR and State Attorney General must be more vigorous in prosecuting offenses, particularly large-scale ones, and should be willing to hold individuals accountable when appropriate. Corporations which engage in gross violations should be faced with revocation of their corporate charter. State policies should favor companies that uphold the “Valdez Principle” of environmental responsibility.

3. POLITICAL REFORM

Reenfranchisement of the individual is fundamental to the development of grassroots democracy. The domination of politics by money rather than debate of issues is the greatest factor separating governmental leaders from the interests of their constituents.

A. Grassroots Power

The public must have the right to participate more directly in the state government. The DNR board, VTAE board and other policy making boards should be elected at large or by geographic areas. There should be a state wide right of binding initiative/referendum in Wisconsin, so that citizens can bypass the legislature on issues of importance.

The Greens absolutely support open meetings and open records laws.

In situations where testimony from experts is required (such as environmental impact statements), funding must be available to citizens groups to provide expert witnesses.

The legislature should make laws and the governor should enforce them, as originally established in our constitution. The “partial veto” power of governors has been abused by both major parties, and should be eliminated.

B. Campaign Financing

PACs must be eliminated. Limits should be imposed on the money that candidates can spend on campaigns, with the amount determined for each race by the size of constituency of the office being contested. We support removing economic interests from the electoral process by limiting contributions of cash and services by businesses and individuals. We do not support term limits since they restrict the rights of people to choose their representatives.

C. Conflicts of Interest

Governmental decision-making bodies must be free of conflicts of interest that would cause their members to put personal interest above the public good. Ethics laws must be strengthened in this regard, and rigorously enforced.

D. Third Party Rights

The current two-party system has a stranglehold on state politics, through regulations and funding systems. Laws must be changed to level the playing field for other parties. Subsidies which favor the current major parties (such as “caucus staffs”) must be eliminated.

The Wisconsin Greens believe that the current winner-take-all system of voting stifles the voices of many Americans and ensures the perpetuation of a two-party duopoly. To remedy this, we advocate for the immediate adoption of Instant Runoff Voting and the gradual transition to a system of Proportional Representation.

4. ECONOMICS

A. “Growth” vs. Development

Current economics is oriented toward perpetual growth. The current worship of growth has only accelerated the concentration of wealth and the deterioration of people’s lives and the environment.

The Greens believe that economic development is different from simply unlimited growth. Our society must develop into a sustainable economy, where the goal is to improve quality of life for people.

Government economists today (the ones we see on TV) talk only about more economic activity; they don’t talk about quality of life or what we are leaving for future generations. A perfect example of this occurred during the 1980s, when we were told the economy was rosy because Wall Street and real estate were booming, while America’s industries were closing, the average person was making less each year, and the health of the environment was declining.

Government economists must be required to develop measurements for quality of life, quality of the environment, and long-term effects of policies. These figures must be part of any government policies related to the economy.

B. Trade

Wisconsin Greens oppose the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These “free” trade agreements sacrifice the sovereignty of our people, by giving a small body of international bureaucrats the ability to override our federal, state and local laws on working conditions, discrimination, health and safety, consumer protection, and environmental protection. These agreements will tend to reduce the living conditions of people to the lowest common denominator. They would also rob us of our right to use trade sanctions to pressure other countries to be responsible about environmental protection and human rights.

The exportation of pesticides, and other products prohibited for use in the United States must be banned, as well as the importation of food produced with banned products. Tax policies and tariffs should favor products which were produced in a sustainable way (such as sustainable harvest timber) and penalize products that use up or destroy resources (such as “rainforest beef”).

C. Responsible Technology

Progress and technology have given us comfort, but provide no assurance for long-term survival. “Progress” is too often defined as anything that is new from science or technology, regardless of the consequences for people, the environment and other life forms. Programs of applied research need to have democratic citizen oversight to assure that technology applications developed with public support are carefully screened based on the public interest, including: quality, need, safety, durability, and the lifecycle toxicity/environmental cost of the products and processes.

D. True Cost Pricing

Today, the true cost of environmentally damaging products is being pushed off on future generations, or is being paid out of general tax revenues when it is clean-up time. The Greens support taxes and other policies to make the price of goods reflect their true cost. This will finance clean-up and education efforts, and will also make environmentally safe products more competitive in the marketplace.

E. Jobs and Quality of Life

Everyone needs a chance to work, to keep our economy healthy and to give people a sense of self-worth. But four very important changes must happen: (1) Everyone who works must be able to live on what they make. (2) We must open up the definition of work to allow for people who do important work that isn’t paid – such as women and men who run households, or people who work as volunteers. (3) Economic development must focus on jobs that are based in the community and that will last. (4) The workplace must accommodate people’s human needs.

Living Wages: Any business that does not pay an employee enough to live off of is costing the rest of society by driving that person on to public support such as welfare. The minimum wage must be raised to a level which comfortably allows support of a family of four. Health and unemployment benefits must cover everyone who does not work. Part-time and temporary workers must also make a living wage and have reasonable health coverage.

Unpaid Work: Health coverage and other “safety nets” must extend to people who are doing unpaid but important work in society, such as raising children, running households, getting educated, and working as volunteers.

Economic Development: It’s not enough to see employment rates going up: Wisconsin needs jobs that pay well, and ones that will last. Policies must be focused on businesses that have a vested interest in the community where their employees live – especially small businesses and employee-owned businesses. These companies are less likely to leave town or lay off workers simply to increase profits.

Workplace Conditions: The Wisconsin Greens support family leave legislation, paid vacation time, job sharing, and more flexibility in work scheduling. Employers also need to make sure that the workplace is safe. Workplace safety regulations (including safety from toxins) are absolutely necessary to prevent abuses. The workplace can also be made better and more efficient by involving workers in decision-making and management.

Unions: The Wisconsin Greens support the right of people to form unions, bargain collectively, and strike if necessary. We oppose unfair “union-busting” tactics used by the government and corporations. The State should assist management in working more closely and cooperatively with unions.

F. Welfare Reform

Almost all people have a natural incentive to want to work, if meaningful employment at a living wage with some kind of future is available to them. The biggest welfare “pockets” occur in places where very little high-quality employment is available.

Wisconsin must support and reward investment in areas that have few high-quality jobs. Job development incentives should concentrate on companies that will offer local people a direct stake in the business, through local ownership, worker ownership, and profit sharing.

Pushing people off of welfare does no good if there aren’t any good jobs for them to apply for. “Bridefare” and “Learnfare” are classic examples of this negative approach to welfare reform. These “reforms” must be replaced with job training programs and community investment programs that will build the base of locally-owned enterprises in areas that are now job-poor.

5. COMMUNITY

The Greens believe that the basic unit of politics is the local community. Communities must be strengthened politically and economically if our democracy is going to be healthy.

A. Community Economics

Although our economy is always changing, the Greens believe that it shouldn’t be unreasonable for a person to want to work and live in the town or neighborhood where they grew up. Urban areas and rural small towns are seeing their economic base evaporate, and even some suburbs are becoming “crabgrass ghettos” as jobs and business keep moving to other communities or overseas.

End Subsidies for Sprawl: The state must cut subsidies and incentives for new development to move to cheap land in the countryside. This process destroys cities, suburbs and farmland, and costs everyone more in the long run when services (roads, sewer, etc.) have to be extended.

Create A State Development Bank: In competition with private banks, the state should create a development bank. This bank would strengthen community economies through loan guarantees, loan participation, and direct loans to high-risk ventures including: new and small businesses, cooperatives and worker owned firms, organic and beginning farmers, and community land trusts.

B. Rural Communities

Many of our state’s small towns are losing their economic base. This trend must be reversed. State tax policies should favor businesses that stay in the community where their employees live. Farmers must receive decent prices for their products, so that they continue to act as an important economic support to small towns.

C. Urban Vision and Revitalization

Ecological interdependence and integrity are touchstones of healthy communities – both natural and human. When urban neighborhoods are ghettoized by race and class, when social and economic inequities are pervasive, when the built environment and the pressures of survival separate people from the natural environment and from each other – it becomes difficult for human beings to know, express and honor their true nature, or to develop to their full potential. Our inability to create and maintain harmonious urban places which encourage thriving, vital communities and whole human beings – and our callousness to the unmet human needs of most people – is mirrored in unsustainable and callous relationships with nature, and disregard for the impacts our behavior now has on future generations.

Our job skills, our hopes, the very lives of our young people are being wasted in our urban centers. Residents in the poorest communities are often locked into a cycle of joblessness, welfare, crime, homelessness, inadequate housing, drug addition, physical and economic violence, poor health, environmental poisoning, and hopelessness. We support initiatives to remedy these problems that are hemorrhaging many neighborhoods.

Thousands of neighborhood self-help organizations have discovered effective ways to address these problems on a local level through innovative, participatory programs and experiments designed to empower people, offer support and alternative channels for frustration and rage. These programs range from youth art centers to community development corporations, from affordable, tenant-controlled housing, to community gardens and participatory planning of infrastructure projects. We support the cultural traditions, strong families and initiative and creativity within our cities’ many cultural groups that will, within the context of a political movement and values transformation, restore cities to economic, ecological and social health.

What is needed is a massive, coordinated program of public intervention based on a major infusion of federal, state and corporate funds to local residents and their grassroots organizations with no strings attached. This would include major public works programs to rebuild our cities as well as joint ventures, private sector and non-profit local initiatives, and locally controlled cooperatives, and employee-owned and public enterprises. These initiatives need to be based on ecologically sound reindustrialization programs, with conversion of military facilities and harmful technologies/industries, and with massive worker and management retraining. We support safe neighborhoods and a non-toxic environment in every community.

Urban centers also need to be mindful of our relationship to other peoples and places as well. Cities can no longer be colonizers of rural and wilderness resources. Urban centers in regional watersheds need to become sustainable, with clean, renewable energy and safe food produced regionally, and our waste recycled, reused or stored safely, locally.

Economic resources as well as natural ones must be managed and shared fairly between suburb and city, as well as between urban and rural communities.

D. Planning

State law should be changed to require more compact urban and suburban land use patterns by mandating comprehensive state planning goals that include determination of permanent urban growth boundaries in conjunction with local governments, while establishing the primacy of the right to farm.

Local zoning and infrastructure investment should be made more democratic: planning commissions should be elected, and planners should be accountable to local legislative bodies, rather than to the chief executive. Neighborhood planning councils should be created in large cities with the power to veto major projects in their communities.

The state should set down guidelines for planning, which should include preservation of prime farmland, wetlands, woodlands, and strict management of urban growth.

6. VIOLENCE AND CRIME

A. The Nonviolent Ethic

One of the key values of the Greens is nonviolence. Historical evidence proves that with violence there is always at least one loser. Greens contend that, with nonviolence, there is at least a chance that a win-win solution can be found in any situation.

There are many types of violence, not just street crime, and all must be addressed.

B. Crime and Punishment

Greens emphasize that the solutions to violence, poverty, alienation, anger and political inequality are the key to solving the dilemma of crime and punishment. Good individual value choices combined with private and government initiatives are all essential.

People must be held accountable for their behavior. Crimes against people and communities must be punished through restitution and/or jail time. Alternative sentencing, such as meaningful community service, must be emphasized as much as possible for nonviolent offenders.

While imprisonment keeps the criminal away from society for a while, it is increasingly less effective for rehabilitation of those criminals who return to society. Ex-offenders need to come out into a healthy community that both supports them and holds them accountable. Without this, the cycle of violence and property crime will continue and more prisons will be built. Greens insist that prisons will be run by the government in a humane manner and in Wisconsin.

Our justice system must begin to attach equal importance to justice for white collar criminals, including environmental violators. Corporate executives should be held personally responsible for the consequences of their corporate actions.

Community members must be involved directly in crime control in their own communities, through citizen police boards, recruitment of police officers from areas to be patrolled, and neighborhood watch programs.

C. Drugs

No “war on drugs” can ever be won as long as communities that are overrun with drug abuse and the drug trade have no economic alternatives. The more Wisconsin can do to promote locally-based economic opportunities, the more the drug problem will fade into the background. Drug abuse of all kinds should be treated as a disease, rather than a criminal offense.

7. TAXATION

A. Fair Taxation Rates

Wisconsin Greens support progressive methods of taxation, including: higher income taxes for the wealthy, especially the top one percent of households, and graduated corporate income taxes with loopholes removed.

Public policy has up to now largely favored fossil fuels, nuclear energy, chemical farming, pesticides, and automobile/highway culture through massive subsidies. We support removing such subsidies to nonrenewable resource use, and enacting a nonrenewable energy tax, higher motor fuel and auto taxes, and property-related taxes on trip generation including a property tax on automobiles – all with provision for refundable income tax credits for low-income households.

A portion of funds from an increase in the motor fuel tax should be earmarked to go for development of alternative transportation.

We favor eliminating tax loopholes for corporations and the wealthy, including the state capital gains deduction and the exemption of manufacturing machinery and equipment from property tax.

The Greens oppose state caps on property taxes – not because those taxes should not be kept under control, but because it is the community’s right to decide how to control its own spending.

B. Spending

The Greens believe that government decisions should be made as close to the people as possible. When money comes to a community from the state and federal government, the people of the local community must have greater say in how that money is spent. The state may suggest spending, but should not force a community unless the community is acting unconstitutionally – for example engaging in racial or religious discrimination – or unless the safety of the public is at stake.

State budgets must be independently audited for unnecessary “pork barrel” spending and that spending eliminated. State agencies must be prepared to defend their budgets, and to submit to external audits of their efficiency and effectiveness.

Management of state agencies must be changed to a model such as total quality management which emphasizes efficiency and effectiveness.

Giving individuals or corporations tax breaks is similar to spending, since it deprives the government of revenue it would otherwise receive. Therefore, special tax breaks should only be granted when there will be a benefit to society to justify the cost. In particular, the Greens believe that the state must crack down on tax incremental financing tax breaks, which are often granted in questionable situations.

8. EDUCATION

Everyone needs to have life-long access to educational opportunities, to allow them to develop to the fullest of their individual abilities. Lifelong education helps our state economically, since it gives people the chance to pursue new job opportunities.

A. Institutional Policy

Educational systems must be decentralized with greater input and control at the local level by teachers and families.

After-school programs for the children of single or working parents must be available. Parent education programs should be developed in areas such as child development and learning.

We support a family’s right to educate its children at home. The state and local school districts should assist with home schooling by providing curriculum materials if needed.

The state’s educational system (including universities) should teach principles of sustainable development as part of the curriculum in economics, agriculture, engineering and other fields. Developing these skills in our society will be absolutely essential to our future survival. In particular, the Greens call for creating an “Institute for Sustainable Development,” based at one or more of the UW system campuses and involving the UW Extension and the Technical Colleges.

B. Educational Techniques

Expansion beyond the traditional concept of the classroom and structure of the school day – to allow flexibility in how individuals learn – should be encouraged.

Teachers must bring the world into the classroom, and bring the classroom out into the community. Opportunities for nonclassroom learning, and the use of “teachers” from the local community must be developed. Educational experiences can involve community service, field work, political activity, and job training. The curricula of schools needs to be focused on actually encouraging people to learn how to learn, at their own rate, rather than encouraging rote learning and submission to authority.

In addition to critical thinking, students must be helped to learn nonintellectual skills such as interpersonal relations, dealing with emotions, conflict resolution, environmental appreciation, and manual skills. Students should be taught the arts of democracy, including how to be involved politically in their communities. The Wisconsin Greens oppose the use of ‘high stakes’ standardized tests where such tests are used as the primary determinant for grade advancement, graduation or teacher pay. Neither do we believe that the averaged scores from such tests can be used to make fair or meaningful comparisons between schools.

C. Funding

Educational funding should be sufficient to assure true equality of educational opportunity. The state share in public school costs should be increased, to compensate for state and federal support cuts in recent years.

Our country’s public school system should be a cornerstone of our democracy, assuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to become educated. School “choice” programs should be limited to public schools. Funding competing schools in the same area may not be cost-effective, and funding private or religious schools with public tax dollars is unacceptable.

Ways must be found to improve the quality of our public schools, particularly ways that involve parents, students and the community. Giving up on our public schools by letting people opt out will simply make things worse.

The state should provide technical assistance to communities to make their schools better and more cost-effective, rather than just slapping them with budget cuts and mandated standardized tests.

9. HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS

The Greens believe that protecting civil rights and human rights must take top priority over other concerns. Rights are absolute: our government should not be allowed to deny people’s rights simply by claiming there is some practical need to do it. Similarly, we cannot allow anyone to deny rights to particular groups in society, such as people of a particular sex, race, education, or income. If rights are denied to anyone, it is the same as denying them to everyone.

A. Individual Freedom

The Wisconsin Greens oppose any attempt by the government to restrict individual freedom, unless a person’s actions threaten the safety or welfare of others.

B. Nondiscrimination

No one should be treated unfairly or segregated because of who they are: if they are from a particular racial or ethnic background; if they are young or old; if they have or don’t have a family; if they are educated or uneducated; who they love or who they share their household with; what their physical or mental abilities are.

The Wisconsin Greens believe the government must play an active role in stopping discrimination against particular people or groups. This includes supporting nondiscrimination in housing and employment.

The key to nondiscrimination is understanding. State and community governments must not only prevent discrimination, but actively work to bring all groups into decision-making processes.

C. Native American Rights

The Wisconsin Greens support full tribal sovereignty: members of Indian tribes have certain rights not because our government has “granted” them, but because the tribes retain those rights under treaties with the U.S. government.

We believe that public education should foster an understanding of the history of our conflicts and treaties with Wisconsin’s tribes and a respect for native cultures. We also support the efforts of tribes to protect our state’s environmental future.

10. HEALTH

A. Health Care System

The Wisconsin Greens support the idea that health care should be a service everyone has access to – like police and fire protection – rather than something only certain people can afford. This idea is not only fair but economical: when people don’t get good health care – especially preventative medicine – all of society eventually pays for it.

Health Coverage: A universal, single-payer system for funding health care will be the most effective and will eliminate the “middleman” of the insurance company, which takes a large slice of the health care dollar. The system should be funded through state and federal taxes. The system must be designed to minimize bureaucracy and paperwork, and to allow citizens to select health care providers and treatment. The state and federal government should impose cost controls and efficiency requirements (such as hospitals sharing expensive high-tech equipment) to keep costs as low as possible without rationing or denying care.

Health Policy: Regional consumer boards to assure equal access to quality services should also be created. Scholarships should be given to health care practitioners willing to work in areas of need, to be reimbursed through public service. Greater education in occupational medicine, preventive medicine, and alternative medicine should be implemented.

Comprehensive health education needs to be offered to all in schools and community centers including information on sex education, AIDS, and substance abuse prevention. The use of technology to prolong life without regard to the quality of life and the wishes of the person involved should be avoided. The participation of family members in the processes of life and death should be supported along with family leave policies to make participation possible. Living wills to assure a persons’ right to make decisions about their death should be encouraged. People with long-term illness or disabilities must have the right to live at home in their community.

B. Contraception and Abortion

Research in contraceptive technologies to make birth control safe, inexpensive and easy to use must be fully supported. Contraceptives need to be made widely available to all people, along with educational programs regarding sexuality and birth control. We make no judgment about whether abortion is right or wrong, since we believe it is a personal moral or religious decision. However, since it is a personal decision, the state should make no laws punishing a person for making the decision one way or another. Safe, legal abortion services must be available.

C. Food and Health

Citizens have a right to know what is in the food they eat, and to be protected from substances that are toxic. Untested food additives and genetically engineered food should be kept off the market until tested, or at least should be required to be labelled.

It is unacceptable for the government to prohibit a food from being labelled as free of a particular substance (such as BGH) or produced in a particular way (such as organically grown), as long as the company can prove the claim is true.

The benefits of vegetarianism for the environment, health, the alleviation of world hunger should be taught in all public health education programs. Vegetarian meal options should be made available at all public institutions, including schools.

11. SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The state government should recognize that cultural activities like art, music, and dance are important to all parts of our society, and should support these activities not just for well-to-do or highly educated people but for everyone.

The Greens respect all spiritual traditions, new or old, and support the freedom of people to worship or not worship as they choose. We support freely chosen individual and group participation in spiritual communion, and the separation of spiritual or religious practices from the activities of government. We encourage the development of all aspects of our being: body, emotions, mind and spirit.

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN
May 2003
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State Executive Committee

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Secretary: RANDY PALMER, Altoona.

Treasurer: CRAIG MOHN, Woodville.

Past Chair: BOB COLLISON, Brookfield.

At-Large Member: JIM MUELLER, Verona.

At-Large Member: ROBERT HAYNES, Eau Claire.

Congressional District Representatives:

1st District: Jim Sewell, Racine

Alternate: Don Bernau, Greenfield

2nd District: Ben Masel, Madison

Alternate: Adrian Augustine, Madison

3rd District: Paul Kitzmann, Bangor

Alternate: Carl Schoen, Eau Claire

4th District: Mike McKenna, Milwaukee

Alternate: vacancy

5th District: Dave Howard, West Allis

Alternate: Corey Scholtka, Waukesha

6th District: Nick Piergrossi, Neenah

Alternate: vacancy

7th District: Tim Krenz, Osceola

Alternate: Jim Maas, Stevens Point

8th District: Brian Pitlik, Eagle River

Alternate: vacancy

Source: Libertarian Party of Wisconsin.

State Convention. The Libertarian Party of Wisconsin holds its state convention in the spring of each year to adopt a state party platform and resolutions and conduct other party business. In even-numbered years, the convention selects delegates to the national convention and may endorse candidates for election. In odd-numbered years, it elects party officers and members-at-large to the executive committee.

State Officers and Executive Committee. The party is headed by an executive committee consisting of the 4 party officers, the immediate past state party chair, a representative and alternate from each of the 8 congressional districts, and 2 members-at-large.

The 4 party officers and the 2 members-at-large serve 2-year terms, which begin at the end of the convention at which they are elected. Party officer or member-at-large vacancies are filled by a vote of the committee.

Congressional district members are not assigned fixed terms but generally serve for one year. Congressional district conventions meet annually, although state party members within a congressional district may hold an election at any time. Any vacant congressional district position is filled by a vote of state party members residing within that congressional district. A party member receiving the most votes at a congressional district election becomes a representative when the executive committee accepts his or her credentials.

National Committee. The Libertarian National Committee is composed of the 4 national officers, the immediate past chair, 5 members-at-large, and 9 regional representatives. A state's affiliation with a region is determined by the convention delegates from that state and is often the subject of negotiations before and during the national convention. Members of the Libertarian

National Committee are selected at each biennial national convention and serve for 2 years from one national convention to the next. The Libertarian National Committee addresses national issues and serves, but does not control, the state parties.

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN PLATFORM

Adopted at the State Party Convention, Pewaukee, April 28, 2001

Preamble

As Libertarians, we defend each person's right to engage in any activity that is peaceful and honest and we welcome the diversity that freedom brings. We seek a world of liberty; a world in which all individuals control their own lives and are never forced to compromise their values or sacrifice their property. We believe that no conflict exists between civil order and individual rights and that individuals, groups, or governments should not initiate force against other individuals, groups, or governments.

Principles

Life:

We believe that all individuals have the right to control their own lives and live in whatever manner they choose, as long as they do not interfere with the identical rights of others.

Liberty:

The only proper functions of government are the protection of the people from actual foreign or domestic threats to their lives and freedoms; and the protection of their individual rights, namely – life, property, and liberty of speech and action.

Property:

The only economic system compatible with the protection of individual human rights is the free market; therefore, the fundamental right of individuals to own property and to enjoy the rewards of their just earnings should not be compromised.

Platform

Preface:

While members of the Libertarian Party of Wisconsin advocate abolishing laws governing certain voluntary behaviors, this does not necessarily imply endorsement of such behaviors. We only make the statement that in such matters an individual's right to free choice must be recognized and the morality of such choices is not a concern of government. It follows that our silence regarding any other government activity should not be interpreted as implying our approval of such activity.

Taxes:

We advocate phasing out taxes on incomes, personal property, and real property, along with corresponding decreases in the size of government.

Term Limits:

We advocate limits on the time any elected official may serve in office.

Elections:

We advocate election law reforms that make it easier for the people to nominate and finance the election of the candidates of their choice.

Treating Adults as Children:

We believe laws mandating automobile insurance, use of seat belts and helmets, minimum wage, and curfews hamper individual freedom and the responsibility that must go with it. We further believe that laws restricting such things as cruising and tattoos trivialize the law and breed disrespect for it.

State Mandates:

We believe that state mandates, such as the Binding Arbitration Law, are unreasonable burdens on those who must comply with and pay for them. They only represent the desires of special interest groups and their advocates in the legislature. When these mandates are unfunded they become even more unacceptable.

Gun Ownership:

We believe in the inviolability of the right to keep and bear arms. We therefore oppose all laws restricting the ownership, manufacture, transfer, or sale of firearms or ammunition. We further oppose all laws requiring registration of firearms or ammunition. We support an amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution to guarantee the right to keep and bear arms. We cannot ignore the clear lessons from history of the suffering which can befall a disarmed people.

Children and the Family:

We believe that children are a special group of citizens possessing fundamental rights involving their life and health. However, until they reach the age of legal responsibility, their other rights are limited and their parents or guardians

are responsible for their actions and upbringing. Therefore, the rights and authority that parents or guardians need to fulfill their child raising responsibilities must be respected, but never at the expense of the child's life and health.

Education:

Since private education is today outperforming public education at half the cost, we call for the phase out of all state and federal involvement in education. We therefore endorse "School Choice".

Government Welfare:

Today's confusion between a person's material needs and that person's rights has led to our current system of taxpayer provided, government welfare programs. These programs often invade privacy and have proven to be demeaning and inefficient. Welfare is not charity. Charity must be freely given. More charity needs to be substituted for welfare. It is also good to remember that for people to be truly free they must become responsible for their own welfare and actions.

Federal "Strings":

The federal government often uses the threat of withholding "federal" funds to coerce states into specific actions. We strongly urge elected officials of Wisconsin to resist such pressure and applaud them when they do.

Environment:

A clean environment is in everyone's interest. Our legal system should protect public and private property from pollution. However, a balance must be found between environmental regulation and the long term economic health of a free society. The right of property owners to prosecute any polluter under trespass, nuisance, and negligence laws should be reinstated. It follows that bureaucracies should not be allowed to harass alleged environmental violators or restrict their direct access to just treatment under the judicial system.

Transportation:

We support the maximum possible privatization of all publicly owned transportation systems and therefore oppose the creation of any new publicly funded or managed transportation systems.

Victimless Crime:

Because only actions that infringe on the rights of others can properly be termed "crimes", we favor the repeal of federal, state, and local laws restricting our fundamental freedom to govern our own lives.

In particular, we advocate: The repeal of laws restricting the production, sale, possession, or use of prohibited drugs and medicines. The repeal of laws regarding a minimum drinking age which are in conflict with the legally recognized age for maturity and responsibility. The repeal of laws restricting consensual sexual relations between adults. The repeal of laws regulating or prohibiting gambling. The decriminalization of assisted suicide.

Health Care:

We believe the problems with our current health care system are due to government interference and mandates and that any government program to "provide" health care to some at the expense of others will most certainly reduce the overall quality, responsiveness, and individuality of health care for everyone. It would also reduce the influx of the most talented people our society has to offer into the medical profession and diminish the exemplary worldwide progress and leadership our medical system has demonstrated. For these reasons, we advocate the free enterprise system as the only system capable of making quality, affordable, individualized medical care available to all.

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN June 2003

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Administrative Assistant: PATTY SHERMAN.

Political Director: RICK WILEY.

Director of Party Development: KARI GOLDADE.

Communications Director: CHRIS LATO.

Controller: LESLIE OEHMEN.

Finance Director: DAWN SUGASA.

Finance Assistant: MARY MCCORMACK.

Telemarketing Manager: RICHARD DICKIE.

State Executive Committee

State Chairman: RICHARD GRABER, Shorewood.

Finance Chairman: JAMES BARRY III, Milwaukee.

Vice Chairmen: 1st – BRAD COURTNEY, Whitefish Bay; 2nd – E.D. COOPER, Mukwonago;

3rd – DON TAYLOR, Waukesha; 4th – DARLENE ROSS, Shawano; 5th – BRIAN MURRAY, Appleton.

Secretary: DAVID ANDERSON, Wausau.

Treasurer: BUCK SCHILLING, Minocqua.

National Committeewoman: MARY BUESTRIN, Mequon.

National Committeeman: TERRY KOHLER, Sheboygan.

Wisconsin College Republican Chairman: ANGELA FROZENA, Madison.

Wisconsin African American Council: EDWARD BOLTON, Milwaukee.

Wisconsin Heritage Council Chairman: JERRY GONZALEZ, Milwaukee.

Wisconsin Labor Council Chairman: JOHN RUDIG, Wauwatosa.

Wisconsin Senior Council Chairman: ROD NELSON, Sheboygan.

Immediate Past Chairman: DAVID OPITZ, Port Washington.

Congressional District Chairmen and Vice Chairmen:

1st District

Reince Priebus, Racine

Robert Trapp, Salem

2nd District

Kim Babler, Madison

Regina Schaar, Lake Mills

3rd District

Dennis Shaw, Menomonie

Gary Arneson, La Crosse

4th District

Edward Schultz, Milwaukee

Bob Spindell, Milwaukee

5th District

Crystal Berg, Hartford

Curt David, Brookfield

6th District

Mike Hert, Oshkosh

Don Zahalka, Oshkosh

7th District

Bill Johnson, Hayward

Sean Duffy, Ashland

8th District

William Ross, Shawano

Shirley Kaufman, Marinette

Source: Republican Party of Wisconsin.

County Organization. County party organizations are the basic building blocks of the Republican Party of Wisconsin. County party leaders are elected in county caucuses prior to April 1 of the odd-numbered year. Each committee has a chairman, first vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer.

Congressional District Organization. Each congressional district has an organization which coordinates the activities of the county organizations in the district, with special emphasis on the

election of Republican congressional candidates. The district organization is directed by a committee consisting of district members of the state executive committee and, at minimum, an elected chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer. Committee officers are elected in odd-numbered years prior to the state convention.

State Officers and Executive Committee. Party leadership is vested in a 33-member state executive committee, consisting of the 11 party officers (including the chairman of the county chairmen's organization, the president of the Wisconsin Federation of Republican Women, and the chairman of the Young Republicans, who are designated respectively as the third, fourth, and fifth vice chairmen of the committee); the immediate past state party chairman; the chairman and vice chairman from each of the state's 8 congressional district organizations; and the chairmen of the Wisconsin College Republicans, the Wisconsin Republican African American Council, the Wisconsin Heritage Council, the Wisconsin Senior Citizen Council, and the Wisconsin Labor Council. In addition, one member of the state's Republican congressional delegation, chosen by the delegation, and 2 state legislators, one from each house, chosen by the respective party caucus at the start of the legislative term, are attached to the state executive committee as nonvoting members. State committee vacancies are filled by the committee.

Five of the 11 party officers – the chairman, first and second vice chairmen, secretary, and treasurer – are selected in odd-numbered years by the state executive committee at an organizational meeting within 30 days following the state convention. Their 2-year terms begin upon adjournment of the organizational meeting. The persons holding those offices and the immediate past state party chairman may not vote in the selection of the new officers.

The national committeeman and committeewoman are included among the 11 state executive committee officers and are elected for 4-year terms by state convention delegates in presidential election years. They serve from the adjournment of one national party convention to the end of the next and must be approved by the assembled delegates at the party's national convention.

The party finance chairman is also included among the 11 party officers. The finance chairman serves at the pleasure of the newly elected state chairman and is appointed with the consent of the committee to a term that continues until a successor is named.

State Convention. The party holds its state convention in May, June, or July of each year to pass resolutions and conduct other party business. In even-numbered years, the convention adopts a state party platform. A national committeeman and committeewoman are selected in those years in which a national party convention is held.

National Convention and National Committee. The Republican National Committee consists of a committeeman, committeewoman, and a chairman from each state, plus American Samoa, Washington, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Each state and territory has its own method of electing representatives. National committee members serve from convention to convention. The national committee is led by a chairman and cochairman, who serve 2-year terms.

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN PLATFORM

Adopted at the State Party Convention, May 31-June 2, 2002, Green Bay

Introduction

For too long our culture has said, "If it feels good, do it." Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: "Let's roll."

President George W. Bush

We live in a remarkable time in the lives of our country and our state. Wisconsin Republicans are optimistic about our future. Last September 11th, our people faced an hour of shock and suffering. We experienced a tumultuous time of evil and testing when our enemies expected us to react in fear and selfishness. America's enemies thought us to be a weak people, dependent on materialistic gain. We have proven them wrong!

Wisconsin Republican optimism is well founded. We have seen Wisconsinites respond to crisis with courage, compassion, strength and resolve, confidence and hope when our country's peace and tranquility were shattered. The Wisconsin spirit joined with the spirit of America and united in prayer, goodness, patriotism and generosity.

The platform of the Republican Party of Wisconsin is uplifting and visionary. It reflects the true character of all Wisconsinites, who have responded to adversity with determination, hope and confidence. The people of Wisconsin, like all Americans, have been challenged and tested over the past eighteen months in many different and unexpected ways.

Seventeen counties in Western Wisconsin were tested by floodwaters of the mighty Mississippi over one year ago. Destructive tornadoes tested our resolve in Western and Northern Wisconsin. We were tested by terrorism and a faltering national economy that took its toll on Wisconsin and 44 other states, causing budget shortfalls and forcing a serious re-examination of our spending habits at every level of government.

Governor Scott McCallum

Our State Republican Party joins the National Republican Party in recognition of a special calling. Since the election of 1860, we have advanced the founding principles of freedom and limited government and the dignity and worth of every individual. We seek to be faithful to the traditions of our party. Our vision is one of clear direction, bold reforms, civility in public life and leadership with honor and distinction.

Individual States' Rights

We believe our citizens and the fifty states must vigorously reclaim all power not expressly given to the federal government, as guaranteed through the Ninth and Tenth Amendments to the Constitution.

Family Values

We commit ourselves to the values that strengthen our culture and sustain our state and nation: faith, family, personal responsibility and a belief in the dignity and value of human life. Prosperity with a purpose and compassionate conservatism bind us together in a great enterprise for our children's future.

We continue to believe that traditional families, homes and communities are the foundation of strength in our society and we reaffirm our commitment to them. Parents should be responsible for the overall sex education of their children and schools should only teach abstinence and monogamy. We specifically pledge to support marriage as a union between one man and one woman only.

Republicans support legislative and judicial efforts that would affirm legal protection for all innocent human beings from conception until natural death and affirm our support for the Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We strongly support President Bush's ban on human cloning. We call on the federal government to follow the Wisconsin State Legislature's lead to outlaw the cruel practice of partial-birth abortion, which is utterly shocking to the conscience and has absolutely no place in a civilized society.

Restructuring Government

In his inaugural address, Governor McCallum laid out this vision for state government: lowering Wisconsin's tax burden, improving education for all students, protecting Wisconsin's environment, promoting a more efficient and effective state government, building Wisconsin's economy and helping the neediest in Wisconsin.

Our Republican Party believes that we will fulfill our motto of "forward" by instilling a new spirit of accountability, honesty and coordination in government.

It's time for government to demand less, so citizens can do more for themselves and their families.

Governor Scott McCallum

The Republican Party of Wisconsin commits itself to continue to work to lower Wisconsin's overall tax burden. We commend Governor Scott McCallum, Senate Minority Leader Mary Panzer, and Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen and the Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature for their efforts to make this goal a reality.

Wisconsin's state tax-cutting efforts are paying off. In fiscal year 2001, Wisconsin dropped to 14th on the list of state taxes. That's quite an improvement from fiscal year 2000 when Wisconsin ranked sixth. Wisconsin has made great progress in easing the state tax burden for our citizens, but we won't stop there.

Governor Scott McCallum

Thirty years of studies have concluded that Wisconsin has too much government. Wisconsin has 3,060 local governments, including city, town, school, village, county and special taxing districts – more than most other states. The Budget Reform Act is seen by some as a controversial package because it holds the line on taxes and dramatically reins in government spending at every level, limits government spending while retaining vital emergency services for those who need us the most – our children, the elderly and the disabled. Under Republican leadership we will boldly reduce unnecessary government.

Education – Investing in Our Future

We commit ourselves to bold reforms in education to make every school a safe place of achievement and learning for every child. We will promote local control of public schools while demanding accountability for results and high standards.

We recognize that parents are the first teachers of their children. We support neighborhood schools and oppose forced busing. We advocate pay for performance for teachers and administrators. We support the Milwaukee School Choice program and call for its expansion statewide.

The Senate Democrat leadership may be willing to threaten the future of 10,000 children already in choice schools – and the future of 60 children who will be walking through the doors at Hope Christian in the fall – but I am not. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program has been one of the most successful educational reform programs in the country and I will vigorously fend off attacks by those who want to eliminate it.

Governor Scott McCallum

Freedom of Religion

We call for an end to governmental discrimination against religion. We specifically support student-initiated voluntary school prayer.

Growing Wisconsin's Economy

Growing Wisconsin's economy is a high priority for Wisconsin Republicans as we continue to build Wisconsin through economic development and job creation. We are proud to note that under Republican leadership, Wisconsin has outpaced the nation in job growth over the last ten years.

Recognizing that federal, state, and local tax collections are all at or near record highs, we oppose any net increases in taxes and call for significant tax relief immediately. Although the state government has cut taxes every year, Wisconsin citizens still carry a heavier tax burden than citizens of other states. Our goal is to further reduce state and local taxes. Specifically, we call for the elimination of the capital gains and business personal property taxes and we support replacing the current Wisconsin income tax with a simple and fair tax that treats everyone equally.

Environment

It is the Republican viewpoint that Wisconsin can have a strong economy and protect the environment at the same time. Both private and public interests have a responsibility to preserve the rich heritage that our state has been blessed with, both in its great natural beauty and precious resources.

Republicans believe a balance must be struck between protection of our resources and protection of private property rights. We support tax incentives for people to preserve wetlands, particularly farmers and landowners. We support compensation for individuals when their property is taken, or its value is reduced by government actions. We support mining which meets our state's environmental protection laws.

Campaign Finance Reform

We call for sensible campaign finance reform which will allow individuals to freely express their political opinions through their financial contributions, with full, prompt disclosure. We insist that neither employers nor unions should force individuals to contribute to political causes against their will. We oppose public financing of all campaigns.

Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms

The Republican Party of Wisconsin is a vigilant supporter of the right to keep and bear arms embodied in both the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 25, of the Wisconsin Constitution. We therefore oppose all efforts to restrict the ownership, manufacture, transfer, or sale of firearms by law-abiding adult citizens. We further oppose all efforts to require registration of firearms in the possession of law-abiding citizens, as well as efforts to bankrupt firearms manufacturers through frivolous, unethical lawsuits. Instead, we call for proper enforcement of the many existing laws against those who commit crimes. We believe in self control, not gun control. For safety's sake, we encourage voluntary training in the use of firearms and voluntary use of trigger locks. We cannot ignore the clear lessons of history regarding the tyranny and suffering which can fall upon a disarmed and vulnerable people.

Independence Through Welfare Reform

Clearly, the most compassionate way to break the cycle of poverty, dependency and hopelessness is through work. Tommy set the national tone for Welfare Reform when he was Governor, and Governors across the nation are looking for his strong leadership and expertise in this important area of public policy. The President's plan makes it easier for states to help low-income families become fully engaged in the workforce.

Governor Scott McCallum

We support former Governor Tommy Thompson's effort as HHS Secretary to expand Wisconsin's successful welfare reform nationwide.

Equal Treatment for Everyone

The Republican Party of Wisconsin believes that all human beings are created equal in the eyes of God, that all human beings have inherent civil rights and that government should promote equal opportunity for all. We believe that individuals should be allowed to succeed or fail based upon their own merits, not because they are members of particular subgroups. We therefore support an amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution that would prohibit the state or any of its political subdivisions or agents, from using race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex or religion as criterion for discriminating against or granting preferential treatment including the lowering of standards to any individual or group with regard to public education, government employment, or government contracting.

We ask for the participation and support of all who substantially share our agenda.

This platform is dedicated to the memory of

Donald Lyle Moecker, Sr. (1927 – 2001)

Member of the RPW Executive Committee

9th Congressional District Chairman

Chairman of the Constitution Committee

A practical, detailed, principled man, faithful husband, proud father, loyal American and our friend.

