

FROM THE PLATFORM COMMITTEE CHAIR

National convention delegates have a lot of work to do on the convention floor in Denver. Our party platform needs a significant amount of rebuild work.

It's an election year. What will voters find when they look at the two major parties and ask, "Isn't there a better option?"

If they read our current platform (included in your delegate manual) they'll see an unbalanced and even strange selection of 15 topics, covered in great detail. But they won't see coverage of current political topics on their mind, subjects that distinguish the Libertarian Party from the status quo, such as: Social Security, education, health care, taxation, national defense, and international affairs.

That's because our current platform wasn't a planned document.

Like government, our platform had grown over the years and had become bloated with uninspiring negativity, long lists of everyone's pet issues, extremism that many Libertarians found to be unrealistic, promises that presented credibility problems, and the kitchen sink.

Many of our party's candidates complained that our platform made it impossible to custom tailor their campaigns by emphasizing a selected subset of incremental changes in the direction of more liberty.

Our 2006 national convention delegates decided that change was needed. At average convention pace it could take 15-20 years to rework all of the 62 large planks in the 2004 platform. So instead the 2006 delegates mass-deleted most of the platform, and our current platform is just the random leftovers.

Unique situations call for unique approaches. In early preference polling among Platform Committee members, there was significant support for taking a different approach to the platform this year.

But large-scale change to the platform can only happen if the convention delegates are determined to make it happen. It only takes a majority vote to delete platform planks, but it takes a 2/3rds vote to adopt new plank recommendations.

In January, many of you responded to a questionnaire I sent out asking your opinion about what should be done with the platform. The results (see Appendix B) indicated a strong preference for something different - deleting the remaining content of the current platform and replacing it with something that is more positive, more relevant to voters, is shorter, includes fewer implementation details, and unites libertarians by speaking about topics that reflect internal agreement.

Given the 2/3rds vote requirement for plank adoption, and considering how much language the delegates would need to debate and approve to build a replacement platform, the Committee choose to work with language that past conventions had already vetted.

When the Committee met in February, we adopted recommendations that the convention delegates: 1) delete the current platform planks and section introduction text, leaving only the Preamble and the Statement of Principles, and 2) adopt a series of shorter replacement planks constructed with the best "recycled" language we could copy directly from previous platforms.

Many of you then responded to a second questionnaire I sent out asking what you thought of the platform changes recommended by the Committee. The results (see individual plank recommendations in the Committee report) indicated that the Committee had succeeded in creating a product that, though not perfect, could achieve the broad support levels needed at convention to rebuild our platform.

Though we used language that has been approved by past conventions, the new platform would be a style change from our current platform. The planks are more succinct, and content is generally limited to stating broad principles without excessive commentary or implementation detail.

Adoption of the Committee recommendations would fill critical topic coverage gaps, would make it easier for our candidates to choose the tone for their own campaigns, and would welcome more libertarians to the party.

The Committee has recommended a platform in the style and length chosen by our party founders. The original Libertarian Party platform in 1972 contained 27 planks with a length of around 2,500 words. The Committee's recommendations would result in a platform with (coincidentally) 27 planks and around 2,300 words. By comparison, the 2004 platform had 62 planks and 14,000 words.

To transition from our current platform to a new one, the committee report contains a separate recommendation for the adoption of each new plank, intended to be brought to the floor separately rather than asking you to vote on it all at once. Then the report contains recommendations for deletion of each of the current platform planks.

I hope you'll take the time to review our work before you get to the convention floor. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to this process!

Alicia G. Mattson

Alicia Mattson
Chair, 2008 Libertarian Party Platform Committee

2008 Libertarian Party Platform Committee Report

Adopted February 15-16th, 2008

The 2008 Libertarian Party Platform Committee recommends that the national convention delegates adopt each of the motions below.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: The cumulative effect of all of these motions would be to create a complete replacement for our current platform. This would be accomplished by adopting new platform planks (Recommendations 1 to 27) and deleting the 15 planks and section introduction text in our current platform (Recommendations 28 to 46).

The planks below are constructed with “recycled” language copied from previous party platforms, with two exceptions. For those two planks, the Committee is recommending that the delegates choose between two options, the first one (a) with language recycled from previous platforms, and the second (b) with some new language. Each recommendation listing indicates the overall % support indicated in the Platform Committee chair’s recent survey.

To see what the new platform would look like if all of the below recommendations were adopted, see Appendix A included with this report. It shows the unchanged Preamble, the modified Statement of Principles (see recommendation in the Joint Bylaws/Platform Committee report), and the new planks in a suggested structure.

LEGEND: [text to insert](#) ~~text to strike out (delete)~~

Recommendation 1 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Omissions”:

(Survey support 94%)

[Our silence about any other particular government law, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, or machination should not be construed to imply approval.](#)

Recommendation 2 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Self-Determination”:

(Survey support 82%)

[We support the right of political entities to renounce their affiliation with any government, and to be exempt from the obligations imposed by that government, while in turn accepting no support from that government. Exercise of this right, like the exercise of all other rights, does not remove legal and moral obligations not to violate the rights of others.](#)

Recommendation 3 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Representative Government”:

(Survey support 96%)

[We support electoral systems that are more representative of the electorate at the federal, state and local levels. As private voluntary groups, political parties should be allowed to establish their own rules for nomination procedures, primaries and conventions. We call for an end to any tax-financed subsidies to candidates or parties and the repeal of all laws which restrict voluntary financing of election campaigns. We oppose laws that effectively exclude alternative candidates and parties, deny ballot access, gerrymander districts, or deny the voters their right to consider all legitimate alternatives.](#)

Recommendation 4 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Rights and Discrimination”:
(Survey support 92%)

We condemn bigotry as irrational and repugnant. Government should not deny or abridge any individual's rights based on sex, wealth, race, color, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference or sexual orientation. Parents, or other guardians, have the right to raise their children according to their own standards and beliefs.

Recommendation 5 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Free Trade and Migration”:
(Survey support 81%)

We support the removal of governmental impediments to free trade. Political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. Economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national borders. However, we support control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a threat to security, health or property.

Recommendation 6 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “International Affairs”:
(Survey support 91%)

American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world and its defense against attack from abroad. We would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid. We recognize the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights. We condemn the use of force, and especially the use of terrorism, against the innocent, regardless of whether such acts are committed by governments or by political or revolutionary groups.

Recommendation 7 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Internal Security and Individual Rights”: (Survey support 92%)

The defense of the country requires that we have adequate intelligence to detect and to counter threats to domestic security. This requirement must not take priority over maintaining the civil liberties of our citizens. The Bill of Rights provides no exceptions for a time of war. Intelligence agencies that legitimately seek to preserve the security of the nation must be subject to oversight and transparency. We oppose the government's use of secret classifications to keep from the public information that it should have, especially that which shows that the government has violated the law.

Recommendation 8 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “National Defense”:
(Survey support 88%)

We support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression. The United States should both abandon its attempts to act as policeman for the world and avoid entangling alliances. We oppose any form of compulsory national service.

Recommendation 9 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Securing Liberty”:
(Survey support 92%)

The protection of individual rights is the only proper purpose of government. Government is constitutionally limited so as to prevent the infringement of individual rights by the government itself. The principle of non-initiation of force should guide the relationships between governments.

Recommendation 10 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Retirement and Income Security”: (Survey support 92%)

Retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. We favor replacing the current government-sponsored Social Security system with a private voluntary system. The proper source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals.

Recommendation 11 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Health Care”:
(Survey support 92%)

We favor restoring and reviving a free market health care system. We recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health insurance they want, the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they will use and all other aspects of their medical care.

Recommendation 12 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Education”:
(Survey support 87%)

(NOTE: This recommendation is likely to be amended in the Committee’s May 22nd meeting)

Education, like any other service, is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality and efficiency with more diversity of choice.

Recommendation 13 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Labor Markets”:
(Survey support 94%)

We support repeal of all laws which impede the ability of any person to find employment. We oppose government-fostered forced retirement. We support the right of free persons to associate or not associate in labor unions, and an employer should have the right to recognize or refuse to recognize a union. We oppose government interference in bargaining, such as compulsory arbitration or imposing an obligation to bargain.

Recommendation 14 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Monopolies and Corporations”:
(Survey support 93%)

We defend the right of individuals to form corporations, cooperatives and other types of companies based on voluntary association. We seek to divest government of all functions that can be provided by non-governmental organizations or private individuals. We oppose government subsidies to business, labor, or any other special interest. Industries should be governed by free markets and held to strict liability.

Recommendation 15(a) – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Money and Financial Markets”: (Survey support 85%)

We favor free-market banking, with unrestricted competition among banks and depository institutions of all types. Individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use as money any mutually agreeable commodity or item. We support a halt to inflationary monetary policies, the repeal of legal tender laws and compulsory governmental units of account.

Recommendation 15(b) – Amend recommendation 15(a) as follows:
(Survey support 86%)

We favor free-market banking, with unrestricted competition among banks and depository institutions of all types. Individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use as money any mutually agreeable commodity or item. We support a halt to inflationary monetary policies, the repeal of legal tender laws and compulsory governmental units of account. Government regulation of financial and capital markets inhibits investment and often creates marketplace advantage for those with political access, so such regulation should be limited to prohibition of fraud.

Recommendation 16 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Government Finance and Spending”: (Survey support 91%)

All persons are entitled to keep the fruits of their labor. We call for the repeal of the income tax, the abolishment of the Internal Revenue Service and all federal programs and services not required under the U.S. Constitution. We oppose any legal requirements forcing employers to serve as tax collectors. Government should not incur debt, which burdens future generations without their consent. We support the passage of a "Balanced Budget Amendment" to the U.S. Constitution, provided that the budget is balanced exclusively by cutting expenditures, and not by raising taxes.

Recommendation 17 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Energy and Resources”: (Survey support 87%)

(Note: This recommendation is likely to be amended in the Committee’s May 22nd meeting)

We support the development of an objective system defining resource rights as individual property rights. We oppose all government control of energy pricing, allocation, and production.

Recommendation 18 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “The Environment” (Survey support 80%)

(Note: This recommendation is likely to be amended in the Committee’s May 22nd meeting)

Pollution of other people's property is a violation of individual rights.

Recommendation 19 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Property and Contract”: (Survey support 94%)

Property rights are entitled to the same protection as all other human rights. The owners of property have the full right to control, use, dispose of, or in any manner enjoy, their property without interference, until and unless the exercise of their control infringes the valid rights of others. We oppose all controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates. We advocate the repeal of all laws banning or restricting the advertising of prices, products, or services. We oppose all violations of the right to private property, liberty of contract, and freedom of trade. The right to trade includes the right not to trade — for any reasons whatsoever. Where property, including land, has been taken from its rightful owners by the government or private action in violation of individual rights, we favor restitution to the rightful owners.

Recommendation 20 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Economic Liberty”: (Survey support 95%)

A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected. All efforts by government to redistribute wealth, or to control or manage trade, are improper in a free society.

Recommendation 21 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Self-Defense”: (Survey support 87%)

The only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights — life, liberty, and justly acquired property — against aggression. This right inheres in the individual, who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group. We affirm the right to keep and bear arms, and oppose the prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights of self-defense. We oppose all laws at any level of government requiring registration of, or restricting, the ownership, manufacture, or transfer or sale of firearms or ammunition.

Recommendation 22 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Crime and Justice”:

(Survey support 96%)

Government exists to protect the rights of every individual including life, liberty and property. Criminal laws should be limited to violation of the rights of others through force or fraud, or deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm. Individuals retain the right to voluntarily assume risk of harm to themselves. We support restitution of the victim to the fullest degree possible at the expense of the criminal or the negligent wrongdoer. We oppose reduction of constitutional safeguards of the rights of the criminally accused. The rights of due process, a speedy trial, legal counsel, trial by jury, and the legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty, must not be denied. We assert the common-law right of juries to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law.

Recommendation 23 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Abortion”:

(Survey support 88%)

We recognize that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on both sides. Taxpayers should not be forced to pay for other people's abortions, nor should any government or individual force a woman to have an abortion.

Recommendation 24(a) – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Personal Relationships”:

(Survey support 92%)

Sexuality or gender should have no impact on the rights of individuals. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships. Government does not have legitimate authority to define or license personal relationships.

Recommendation 24(b) – Amend recommendation 24(a) as follows:

(Survey support 74%)

~~Sexuality or gender~~ Sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity should have no discriminatory impact on the ~~rights~~ treatment of individuals by government, such as in current marriage, adoption, immigration, or military service laws. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships. Government does not have legitimate authority to define or license personal relationships.

Recommendation 25 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Personal Privacy”:

(Survey support 94%)

We support the protections provided by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. Only actions that infringe on the rights of others can properly be termed crimes. We favor the repeal of all laws creating "crimes" without victims, such as the use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes.

Recommendation 26 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Expression and Communication”: (Survey support 96%)

We support full freedom of expression and oppose government censorship, regulation or control of communications media and technology. We favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others. We oppose government actions which either aid or attack any religion.

Recommendation 27 – Amend platform by inserting the following new plank titled “Personal Liberty”
(Survey support 90%)

Individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. No individual, group, or government may initiate force against any other individual, group, or government. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.

Recommendation 28 – Delete introduction paragraph to existing section “I. Individual Rights and Civil Order”:

~~No conflict exists between civil order and individual rights. Both concepts are based on the same fundamental principle: that no individual, group, or government may initiate force against any other individual, group, or government.~~

Recommendation 29 – Delete plank I.1 “Freedom and Responsibility”:

~~**The Issue:** Personal responsibility is discouraged by government denying individuals the opportunity to exercise it. In fact, the denial of freedom fosters irresponsibility.~~

~~**The Principle:** Individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. We must accept the right of others to choose for themselves if we are to have the same right. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices. We believe people must accept personal responsibility for the consequences of their actions.~~

~~**Solutions:** Libertarian policies will promote a society where people are free to make and learn from their own decisions.~~

~~**Transitional Action:** Repeal all laws that presume government knows better than the individual how to run that person's life. Encourage private sector dissemination of information to help consumers make informed decisions on products and services. Enforce laws against fraud and misrepresentation.~~

Recommendation 30 – Delete plank I.2 “Freedom of Communication”:

~~**The Issue:** We oppose any abridgment of the freedom of speech through government censorship, regulation or control of communications media, including, but not limited to, laws concerning:~~

- ~~a) Obscenity, including "pornography", as we hold this to be an abridgment of liberty of expression despite claims that it instigates rape or assault, or demeans and slanders women;~~
- ~~b) Reception and storage equipment, such as digital audio tape recorders and radar warning devices, and the manufacture of video terminals by telephone companies;~~
- ~~c) Electronic bulletin boards, communications networks, and other interactive electronic media as we hold them to be the functional equivalent of speaking halls and printing presses in the age of electronic communications, and as such deserving of full freedom;~~
- ~~d) Electronic newspapers, electronic "Yellow Pages", file libraries, websites, and other new information media, as these deserve full freedom; or~~
- ~~e) Commercial speech or advertising. We oppose speech codes at all schools that are primarily tax funded. Language that is deemed offensive to certain groups is not a cause for legal action.~~

~~We strongly oppose the government's burgeoning practice of invading newsrooms, or the premises of other innocent third parties, in the name of law enforcement. We further oppose court orders gagging news coverage of criminal proceedings—the right to publish and broadcast must not be abridged merely for the convenience of the judicial system. We deplore any efforts to impose thought control on the media, either by the use of anti-trust laws, or by any other government action in the name of stopping "bias."~~

~~**The Principle:** We defend the rights of individuals to unrestricted freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the right of individuals to dissent from government itself. We recognize that full freedom of expression is possible only as part of a system of full property rights. The freedom to use one's own voice; the freedom to hire a hall; the freedom to own a printing press, a broadcasting station, or a transmission cable; the freedom to host and publish information on the Internet; the~~

(continued...)

freedom to wave or burn one's own flag; and similar property-based freedoms are precisely what constitute freedom of communication. At the same time, we recognize that freedom of communication does not extend to the use of other people's property to promote one's ideas without the voluntary consent of the owners.

Solutions: We would provide for free market ownership of airwave frequencies, deserving of full First Amendment protection. We oppose government ownership or subsidy of, or funding for, any communications organization. Removal of all of these regulations and practices throughout the communications media would open the way to diversity and innovation. We shall not be satisfied until the First Amendment is expanded to protect full, unconditional freedom of communication.

Transitional Action: We advocate the abolition of the Federal Communications Commission.

Recommendation 31 – Delete plank I.3 “Freedom of Religion”:

Issue: Government routinely invades personal privacy rights based solely on individuals’ religious beliefs. Arbitrary tax structures are designed to give aid to certain religions, and deny it to others.

Principle: We defend the rights of individuals to engage in (or abstain from) any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others.

Solution: In order to defend freedom, we advocate a strict separation of church and State. We oppose government actions that either aid or attack any religion. We oppose taxation of church property for the same reason that we oppose all taxation. We condemn the attempts by parents or any others — via kidnappings or conservatorships — to force children to conform to any religious views. Government harassment or obstruction of religious groups for their beliefs or non-violent activities must end.

Transitional Action: We call for an end to the harassment of churches by the Internal Revenue Service through threats to deny tax exempt status to churches that refuse to disclose massive amounts of information about themselves.

Recommendation 32 – Delete plank I.4 “Property Rights”:

The Issue: The right to property and its physical resources, which is the fundamental cornerstone of a free and prosperous society, has been severely compromised by government at all levels. Public Policy instruments including eminent domain, zoning laws, building codes, rent control, regional planning, property taxes, resource management and public health legislation remove property rights from owners and transfer them to the State, while raising costs of property ownership. Public ownership of real property, beyond that which is explicitly authorized in the Constitution, and claims against resources both owned and unowned (such as the oceans or waterways) is illegitimate and creates scarcity and conflict where none would otherwise exist.

The Principle: Only individuals and private entities have the full right to control, use, dispose of, or in any manner enjoy their property without interference, until and unless the exercise of their control infringes on the valid rights of others. Resource management and planning are the responsibility and right of the legitimate owners of land, water and other natural resources. Individuals have the right to homestead unowned resources, both within the jurisdictions of governments and within such unclaimed territory as the ocean, Antarctica and extraterrestrial bodies.

Solutions: All public lands and resources, as well as claims thereto, except as explicitly allowed by the Constitution, shall be returned to private ownership, with the proceeds of sale going to retire public liabilities. Resource rights shall be defined as property rights, including riparian rights. All publicly owned infrastructures including dams and parks shall be returned to private ownership and all taxing authority for such public improvements shall sunset. Property related services shall be supplied by private markets and paid for by user fees, and regulation of property shall be limited to that which secures the rights of individuals. There will be no legal barriers to peaceful, private, voluntary attempts to explore, industrialize and colonize any extra-terrestrial resources. The federal government shall be held as liable as any individual for pollution or other transgression against property or resources.

(continued...)

Transitional Action: Rescind all taxation of real property. Property, resources and rights taken from their legitimate owners by government or by government supported private action, shall be restored to the rightful owners. Reverse the Supreme Court decision regarding eminent domain—Kelo v City of New London. Repeal all legislation that transfers property rights to the state, including those enacted in the name of aesthetic values, risk, moral standards, cost-benefit estimates, the promotion or restriction of economic growth, health or national security claims. Sunset all federal agencies that own, regulate or administer property, as well as agencies at the local level which exercise control over private property and resources. Rescind and oppose all international treaties that exercise government control over unowned resources.

Recommendation 33 – Delete plank I.5 “The Right to Privacy”:

The Issue: Privacy protections have been eroded gradually over many years. The Social Security Number has become a universal ID number, causing rampant and massive identity theft. Government routinely keeps records on the bank accounts, travel plans, and spending habits of law-abiding civilians, for no other reason than they “might” commit a crime in the future.

The Principle: The individual's right to privacy, property, and right to speak or not to speak should not be infringed by the government. The government should not use electronic or other means of covert surveillance of an individual's actions or private property without the consent of the owner or occupant. Correspondence, bank and other financial transactions and records, doctors' and lawyers' communications, employment records, and the like should not be open to review by government without the consent of all parties involved in those actions. Private contractual arrangements, including labor contracts, must be founded on mutual consent and agreement in a society that upholds freedom of association. On the other hand, we oppose any use of such screening by government or regulations requiring government contractors to impose any such screening.

Solutions: We support the protections provided by the Fourth Amendment and oppose any government use of search warrants to examine or seize materials belonging to innocent third parties. We oppose all restrictions and regulations on the private development, sale, and use of encryption technology. We specifically oppose any requirement for disclosure of encryption methods or keys, including the government's proposals for so-called “key escrow” which is truly government access to keys, and any requirement for use of government specified devices or protocols. We also oppose government classification of civilian research on encryption methods. If a private employer screens prospective or current employees via questionnaires, polygraph tests, urine tests for drugs, blood tests for AIDS, or other means, this is a condition of that employer's labor contracts. Such screening does not violate the rights of employees, who have the right to boycott such employers if they choose. We oppose the issuance by the government of an identity card, to be required for any purpose, such as employment, voting, or border crossing. We further oppose the nearly universal requirement for use of the Social Security Number as a personal identification code, whether by government agencies or by intimidation of private companies by governments.

Transitional Action: We also oppose police roadblocks aimed at randomly, and without probable cause, testing drivers for intoxication and police practices to stop mass transit vehicles and search passengers without probable cause. So long as the National Census and all federal, state, and other government agencies' compilations of data on an individual continue to exist, they should be conducted only with the consent of the persons from whom the data is sought. We oppose government regulations that require employers to provide health insurance coverage for employees, which often encourage unnecessary intrusions by employers into the privacy of their employees.

Recommendation 34 – Delete plank I.6 “The Right to Keep and Bear Arms”:

The Issue: Governments at all levels often violate their citizens' right of self-defense with laws that restrict, limit or outright prohibit the ownership and use of firearms. These “gun control” laws are often justified by the mistaken premise that they will lead to a reduction in the level of violence in our society.

The Principle: The Bill of Rights recognizes that an armed citizenry is essential to a free society. We affirm the right to keep and bear arms.

Solutions: We oppose all laws at any level of government restricting, regulating or requiring the ownership, manufacture, transfer or sale of firearms or ammunition. We oppose all laws requiring registration of firearms or ammunition. We support repeal of all gun control laws. We demand the immediate abolition of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

(continued...)

~~**Transition:** We oppose any government efforts to ban or restrict the use of tear gas, "mace" or other self-protection devices. We further oppose all attempts to ban weapons or ammunition on the grounds that they are risky or unsafe. We favor the repeal of laws banning the concealment of weapons or prohibiting pocket weapons. We also oppose the banning of inexpensive handguns ("Saturday night specials") and semi-automatic or so-called assault weapons and their magazines or feeding devices.~~

Recommendation 35 – Delete plank I.7 “Conscription”:

~~**The Issue:** Any form of coerced national service program is a type of involuntary servitude. Examples include conscription into the military and compulsory youth labor programs.~~

~~**The Principle:** Coerced national service programs presume the government can claim ownership of the lives of individuals. Such programs are a form of involuntary servitude and are a clear violation of the US Constitution 13th Amendment.~~

~~**Solutions:** All forms of national service will be staffed by willing participants without the need for conscription or other means of mandating such service. When people perceive a just cause, history has shown that they willingly volunteer to serve.~~

~~**Transitional Action:** All schemes for automatic registration through government invasions of the privacy of school, motor vehicle or other records should be immediately eliminated. The still-functioning elements of the Selective Service System should be abolished and all associated records should be destroyed. The President should immediately pardon, providing unconditional exoneration, for all who have been accused or convicted of draft evasion, desertion from the military in cases of conscription or fraud and other acts of civil resistance.~~

Recommendation 36 – Delete plank I.8 “Reproductive Rights”:

~~**The Issue:** The tragedies caused by unplanned, unwanted pregnancies are aggravated and sometimes created by government policies of censorship, restriction, regulation and prohibition.~~

~~Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on both sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.~~

~~**The Principle:** Individual rights should not be denied nor abridged on the basis of sex, age, dependency, or location. Taxpayers should not be forced to pay for other people's abortions, nor should any government or individual force a woman to have an abortion. It is the right and obligation of the pregnant woman regardless of age, not the state, to decide the desirability or appropriateness of prenatal testing, Caesarean births, fetal surgery, voluntary surrogacy arrangements and/or home births.~~

~~**Solutions:** We oppose government actions that either compel or prohibit abortion, sterilization or any other form of birth control. Specifically we condemn the practice of forced sterilization of welfare recipients, or of mentally retarded or "genetically defective" individual. We support the voluntary exchange of goods, services or information regarding human sexuality, reproduction, birth control or related medical or biological technologies. We oppose government laws and policies that restrict the opportunity to choose alternatives to abortion.~~

~~**Transitional Action:** We support an end to all subsidies for childbearing or child prevention built into our present laws.~~

Recommendation 37 – Delete plank I.9 “Sexuality and Gender”:

The Issue: Politicians use popular fears and taboos to legally impose a particular code of moral and social values. Government regularly denies rights and privileges on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Principle: Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships. Government does not have legitimate authority to define or license personal relationships. Sexuality or gender should have no impact on the rights of individuals.

Solutions: Culture wars, social friction and prejudice will fade when marriage and other personal relationships are treated as private contracts, solely defined by the individuals involved, and government discrimination is not allowed.

Transitional Action: Repeal the federal Defense of Marriage Act and state laws and amendments defining marriage. Oppose any new laws or Constitutional amendments defining terms for personal, private relationships. Repeal any state or federal law assigning special benefits to people based on marital status, family structure, sexual orientation or gender identification. Repeal any state or federal laws denying same sex partners rights enjoyed by others, such as adoption of children and spousal immigration. End the Defense Department practice of discharging armed forces personnel for sexual orientation. Upgrade all less than honorable discharges previously assigned solely for such reasons to honorable status, and delete related information from military personnel files. Repeal all laws discriminating by gender, such as protective labor laws and marriage, divorce, and custody laws which deny the full rights of each individual.

Recommendation 38 – Delete introduction paragraph to existing section “II. Trade and the Economy”:

We believe that each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. Therefore we oppose all intervention by government into the area of economics. The only proper role of existing governments in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected.

Efforts to forcibly redistribute wealth or forcibly manage trade are intolerable. Government manipulation of the economy creates an entrenched privileged class—those with access to tax money—and an exploited class—those who are net taxpayers.

We believe that all individuals have the right to dispose of the fruits of their labor as they see fit and that government has no right to take such wealth. We oppose government enforced charity such as welfare programs and subsidies, but we heartily applaud those individuals and private charitable organizations that help the needy and contribute to a wide array of worthwhile causes through voluntary activities.

Recommendation 39 – Delete plank II.1 “Government Debt”:

The Issue: The national debt imposes debt upon Americans without their consent, and loads our economy with a fiscal anchor that will burden many future generations. Our escalating national debt is nothing less than theft from our grandchildren.

The Principle: The government should operate on a "pay as you go" basis, and not incur debt.

Solutions: A debt free government frees up economic resources, allowing for lower taxes, economic growth and lower interest rates.

Transitional Action: Eliminate the national debt using an incremental approach, being careful to avoid social disruption. We support the passage of a “Balanced Budget Amendment” to the US Constitution that restricts Congress from spending any more than it collected in revenue the previous year.

Eliminate earmarks, pork barrel spending, and other forms of political corruption.

Congress should sell assets and reduce spending on non-essential functions to pay off the national debt as quickly as possible.

Recommendation 40 – Delete plank II.2 “Corporate Welfare, Monopolies, & Subsidies”:

The Issue: Subsidies, government-granted monopolies, and other forms of corporate welfare today exist as privileges granted by government to those with political access. These destroy the level playing field that free markets depend on, create a corrupt relationship between government authority and special interests, and are unconstitutional. Furthermore, the loans by government-sponsored entities, even when not guaranteed by the government, constitute another form of subsidy.

The Principle: Individuals must be free to be aggressive competitors and form corporations, cooperatives and other types of companies based on voluntary association in the market place, and must enjoy no state-sponsored advantage. Those who best supply a good or service in the market will enjoy natural dominance only as long as they continue to benefit consumers. Subsidies and government-granted monopolies protect the non-competitive from market forces.

Solutions: Replacement of all government-granted monopolies and subsidies with deregulated free markets and informed consumers will benefit both consumers and producers, eliminate political favoritism, and maintain a strict separation of markets and state authority. Genuine crimes committed to create a monopoly, such as blackmail, bribery, fraud, libel or slander are prosecuted as any other crime.

Transitional Action: Eliminate all federal grants of monopoly or subsidy to any private companies, such as utilities, airlines, energy companies, agriculture, science, medicine, broadcasting, the arts and sports teams. Repeal all anti-trust laws. All federal agencies whose primary function is to make or guarantee corporate loans must be abolished or privatized.

Recommendation 41 – Delete plank II.3 “Public Services”:

The Issue: Federal, state and local governments have created inefficient service monopolies throughout the economy. From the US Postal Service to municipal garbage collection and water works, government is forcing citizens to use monopoly services. These are services that the private sector is already capable of providing in a manner that gives the public better service at a competitive price.

The Principle: A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Consumers of services should not have their choices arbitrarily limited by law.

Solutions: Libertarian policies will seek to divest government of all functions that can be provided by non-governmental organizations or private individuals.

Transitional Actions: All rate regulation in utilities should transition to free market pricing.
End the Postal Service's monopoly and allow for the free competition in all aspects of mail delivery.
State and local monopoly services should be opened to free market competition.
Local and state governments can auction assets such as utility systems and landfills to private industry, thereby immediately reducing the tax burden on their citizens.

Recommendation 42 – Delete introduction paragraph to existing section “III. Domestic Ills”:

Current problems in such areas as energy, pollution, health care delivery, decaying cities, and poverty are not solved, but are primarily caused, by government. The welfare state, supposedly designed to aid the poor, is in reality a growing and parasitic burden on all productive people, and injures, rather than benefits, the poor themselves.

Recommendation 43 – Delete plank III.1 “Crime and Victimless Crime”:

The Issue: Violent crime and fraud threaten the lives, happiness and belongings of Americans. Government's ability to protect the rights and property of individuals from crimes of violence and fraud is compromised because resources are focused on vice rather than on real crimes. Laws that codify "victimless crimes" turn those who simply conduct voluntary transactions and exercise free choice into criminals. This results in the United States having one of the highest percentages of the population in prison of any country in the world; yet real crime remains prevalent in many parts of the country.

Principle: Government exists to protect the rights of every individual including life, liberty and property. Criminal laws should be limited to violation of the rights of others through force or fraud, or deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm. Individuals retain the right to voluntarily assume risk of harm to themselves in the exercise of free choice.

Solution: The appropriate way for the federal government to address crime is through consistent and impartial enforcement of laws that protect individual rights. The law enforcement resources of the federal government can be used most efficiently if limited to appropriate federal concerns. Limiting law enforcement to true crime will restore respect for the law and those who enforce it.

Transitional Action: Immediately reform the justice system's mandatory sentencing policies to ensure that violent offenders are not released from jail to make room for non-violent offenders. Repeal criminal laws which work against the protection of the rights and freedom of American citizens, residents or visitors, particularly laws which create a crime where no victim exists.

Recommendation 44 – Delete plank III.2 “The War on Drugs”:

The Issue: The suffering that drug misuse has brought about is deplorable; however, drug prohibition causes more harm than drugs themselves. The so-called "War on Drugs" is in reality a war against the American people, our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It is a grave threat to individual liberty, to domestic order and to peace in the world.

The Principle: Individuals should have the right to use drugs, whether for medical or recreational purposes, without fear of legal reprisals, but must be held legally responsible for the consequences of their actions only if they violate others' rights.

Solutions: Social involvement by individuals is essential to address the problem of substance misuse and abuse. Popular education and assistance groups are a better approach than prohibition, and we support the activities of private organizations as the best way to move forward on the issue.

Transitional Action: Repeal all laws establishing criminal or civil penalties for the use of drugs. Repeal laws that infringe upon individual rights to be secure in our persons, homes, and property as protected by the Fourth Amendment. Stop the use of "anti-crime" measures such as profiling or civil asset forfeiture that reduce the standard of proof historically borne by government in prosecutions. Stop prosecuting accused non-violent drug offenders, and pardon those previously convicted.

Recommendation 45 – Delete introduction paragraph to existing section “IV. Foreign Affairs”:

American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world and the defense — against attack from abroad — of the lives, liberty, and property of the American people on American soil. Provision of such defense must respect the individual rights of people everywhere.

The principle of non-intervention should guide relationships between governments. The United States government should return to the historic libertarian tradition of avoiding entangling alliances, abstaining totally from foreign quarrels and imperialist adventures, and recognizing the right to unrestricted trade, travel, and immigration.

Recommendation 46 – Delete plank IV.1 “Immigration”:

The Issue: Our borders are currently neither open, closed, nor secure. This situation restricts the labor pool, encouraging employers to hire undocumented workers, while leaving those workers neither subject to nor protected by the law. A completely open border allows foreign criminals, carriers of communicable diseases, terrorists and other potential threats to enter the country unchecked. Pandering politicians guarantee access to public services for undocumented aliens, to the detriment of those who would enter to work productively, and increasing the burden on taxpayers.

The Principle: The legitimate function and obligation of government to protect the lives, rights and property of its citizens, requires awareness of and control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a threat to security, health or property. Political freedom and escape from tyranny demands that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. Economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national borders.

Solutions: Borders will be secure, with free entry to those who have demonstrated compliance with certain requirements. The terms and conditions of entry into the United States must be simple and clearly spelled out. Documenting the entry of individuals must be restricted to screening for criminal background and threats to public health and national security. It is the obligation of the prospective immigrant to demonstrate compliance with these requirements. Once effective immigration policies are in place, general amnesties will no longer be necessary.

Transitional Action: Ensure immigration requirements include only appropriate documentation, screening for criminal background and threats to public health and national security. Simplifying the immigration process and redeployment of surveillance technology to focus on the borders will encourage the use of regular and monitored entry points, thus preventing trespass and saving lives. End federal requirements that benefits and services be provided to those in the country illegally. Repeal all measures that punish employers for hiring undocumented workers. Repeal all immigration quotas.

Appendix A

Proposed New Platform

This is what the new party platform would look like if all of the recommendations adopted by the committee on February 15-16th were adopted by the delegates.

Preamble

As Libertarians, we seek a world of liberty; a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their own lives and no one is forced to sacrifice his or her values for the benefit of others. We believe that respect for individual rights is the essential precondition for a free and prosperous world, that force and fraud must be banished from human relationships, and that only through freedom can peace and prosperity be realized. Consequently, we defend each person's right to engage in any activity that is peaceful and honest, and welcome the diversity that freedom brings. The world we seek to build is one where individuals are free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government or any authoritarian power. In the following pages we have set forth our basic principles and enumerated various policy stands derived from those principles. These specific policies are not our goal, however. Our goal is nothing more nor less than a world set free in our lifetime, and it is to this end that we take these stands.

Statement of Principles

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, hold that governments must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life — accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action — accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property — accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

1.0 Personal Liberty

Individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. No individual, group, or government may initiate force against any other individual, group, or government. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.

1.1 Expression and Communication

We support full freedom of expression and oppose government censorship, regulation or control of communications media and technology. We favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others. We oppose government actions which either aid or attack any religion.

1.2 Personal Privacy

We support the protections provided by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, and property. Only actions that infringe on the rights of others can properly be termed crimes. We favor the repeal of all laws creating "crimes" without victims, such as the use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes.

1.3 Personal Relationships

Sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity should have no discriminatory impact on the treatment of individuals by government, such as in current marriage, adoption, immigration, or military service laws. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships. Government does not have legitimate authority to define or license personal relationships.

1.4 Abortion

We recognize that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on both sides. Taxpayers should not be forced to pay for other people's abortions, nor should any government or individual force a woman to have an abortion.

1.5 Crime and Justice

Government exists to protect the rights of every individual including life, liberty and property. Criminal laws should be limited to violation of the rights of others through force or fraud, or deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm. Individuals retain the right to voluntarily assume risk of harm to themselves. We support restitution of the victim to the fullest degree possible at the expense of the criminal or the negligent wrongdoer. We oppose reduction of constitutional safeguards of the rights of the criminally accused. The rights of due process, a speedy trial, legal counsel, trial by jury, and the legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty, must not be denied. We assert the common-law right of juries to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law.

1.6 Self-Defense

The only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights — life, liberty, and justly acquired property — against aggression. This right inheres in the individual, who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group. We affirm the right to keep and bear arms, and oppose the prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights of self-defense. We oppose all laws at any level of government requiring registration of, or restricting, the ownership, manufacture, or transfer or sale of firearms or ammunition.

2.0 Economic Liberty

A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected. All efforts by government to redistribute wealth, or to control or manage trade, are improper in a free society.

2.1 Property and Contract

Property rights are entitled to the same protection as all other human rights. The owners of property have the full right to control, use, dispose of, or in any manner enjoy, their property without interference, until and unless the exercise of their control infringes the valid rights of others. We oppose all controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates. We advocate the repeal of all laws banning or restricting the advertising of prices, products, or services. We oppose all violations of the right to private property, liberty of contract, and freedom of trade. The right to trade includes the right not to trade — for any reasons whatsoever. Where property, including land, has been taken from its rightful owners by the government or private action in violation of individual rights, we favor restitution to the rightful owners.

2.2 The Environment

Pollution of other people's property is a violation of individual rights.

2.3 Energy and Resources

We support the development of an objective system defining resource rights as individual property rights. We oppose all government control of energy pricing, allocation, and production.

2.4 Government Finance and Spending

All persons are entitled to keep the fruits of their labor. We call for the repeal of the income tax, the abolishment of the Internal Revenue Service and all federal programs and services not required under the U.S. Constitution. We oppose any legal requirements forcing employers to serve as tax collectors. Government should not incur debt, which burdens future generations without their consent. We support the passage of a "Balanced Budget Amendment" to the U.S. Constitution, provided that the budget is balanced exclusively by cutting expenditures, and not by raising taxes.

2.5 Money and Financial Markets

We favor free-market banking, with unrestricted competition among banks and depository institutions of all types. Individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use as money any mutually agreeable commodity or item. We support a halt to inflationary monetary policies, the repeal of legal tender laws and compulsory governmental units of account. Government regulation of financial and capital markets inhibits investment and often creates marketplace advantage for those with political access, so such regulation should be limited to prohibition of fraud.

2.6 Monopolies and Corporations

We defend the right of individuals to form corporations, cooperatives and other types of companies based on voluntary association. We seek to divest government of all functions that can be provided by non-governmental organizations or private individuals. We oppose government subsidies to business, labor, or any other special interest. Industries should be governed by free markets and held to strict liability.

2.7 Labor Markets

We support repeal of all laws which impede the ability of any person to find employment. We oppose government-fostered forced retirement. We support the right of free persons to associate or not associate in labor unions, and an employer should have the right to recognize or refuse to recognize a union. We oppose government interference in bargaining, such as compulsory arbitration or imposing an obligation to bargain.

2.8 Education

Education, like any other service, is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality and efficiency with more diversity of choice.

2.9 Health Care

We favor restoring and reviving a free market health care system. We recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health insurance they want, the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they will use and all other aspects of their medical care.

2.10 Retirement and Income Security

Retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. We favor replacing the current government-sponsored Social Security system with a private voluntary system. The proper source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals.

3.0 Securing Liberty

The protection of individual rights is the only proper purpose of government. Government is constitutionally limited so as to prevent the infringement of individual rights by the government itself. The principle of non-initiation of force should guide the relationships between governments.

3.1 National Defense

We support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression. The United States should both abandon its attempts to act as policeman for the world and avoid entangling alliances. We oppose any form of compulsory national service.

3.2 Internal Security and Individual Rights

The defense of the country requires that we have adequate intelligence to detect and to counter threats to domestic security. This requirement must not take priority over maintaining the civil liberties of our citizens. The Bill of Rights provides no exceptions for a time of war. Intelligence agencies that legitimately seek to preserve the security of the nation must be subject to oversight and transparency. We oppose the government's use of secret classifications to keep from the public information that it should have, especially that which shows that the government has violated the law.

3.3 International Affairs

American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world and its defense against attack from abroad. We would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid. We recognize the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights. We condemn the use of force, and especially the use of terrorism, against the innocent, regardless of whether such acts are committed by governments or by political or revolutionary groups.

3.4 Free Trade and Migration

We support the removal of governmental impediments to free trade. Political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. Economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national borders. However, we support control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a threat to security, health or property.

3.5 Rights and Discrimination

We condemn bigotry as irrational and repugnant. Government should not deny or abridge any individual's rights based on sex, wealth, race, color, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference or sexual orientation. Parents, or other guardians, have the right to raise their children according to their own standards and beliefs.

3.6 Representative Government

We support electoral systems that are more representative of the electorate at the federal, state and local levels. As private voluntary groups, political parties should be allowed to establish their own rules for nomination procedures, primaries and conventions. We call for an end to any tax-financed subsidies to candidates or parties and the repeal of all laws which restrict voluntary financing of election campaigns. We oppose laws that effectively exclude alternative candidates and parties, deny ballot access, gerrymander districts, or deny the voters their right to consider all legitimate alternatives.

3.7 Self-Determination

We support the right of political entities to renounce their affiliation with any government, and to be exempt from the obligations imposed by that government, while in turn accepting no support from that government. Exercise of this right, like the exercise of all other rights, does not remove legal and moral obligations not to violate the rights of others.

4.0. Omissions

Our silence about any other particular government law, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, or machination should not be construed to imply approval.

2008 Libertarian Party Platform Questionnaire Results

Appendix B

by Alicia Mattson
Chair, 2008 LP Platform Committee

Question Number	Question/Answer Text	% All Responses	% Likely Delegates
1	Platforms serve both internal and external purposes. Which of the following more closely represents your opinion about what should be the principal purpose of our party platform?		
	a) Our platform should be more of an externally-focused document to market our party to voters. b) Our platform should be more of an internally-focused document to guide our candidates.	81 19	72 28
2	Our platform will be read by those who are familiar with our ideas and those who are not. Who do you believe should be our principal target?		
	a) We should target individuals unfamiliar with (or even opposed to) our ideas so we can educate them on the merits of libertarianism. b) We should target individuals already sympathetic with our ideas to convince them to vote for our candidates.	78 22	70 30
3	Shorter documents are more likely to be read, while longer documents are more likely to be comprehensive. If you had to select only one, which one of the following more closely represents your opinion about the optimal length of our platform?		
	a) A short platform covering fewer issues b) A long platform covering more issues	73 27	71 29
4	Our platform uses a combination of negative and positive phrasing, i.e. what we oppose and what we champion. Which of the following more closely represents your opinion as to the language phrasing that should be used mostly in our platform?		
	a) We should emphasize what we oppose in government and the harm it causes. b) We should emphasize what we favor in a free society and the benefits this brings.	17 83	13 87
5	We know that libertarianism is both morally right and improves the lives of the greatest number of people. Which of the following more closely represents your opinion as to the language phrasing that should be used mostly in our platform?		
	a) We should emphasize the moral justification for our views. b) We should emphasize the utilitarian benefits of our positions to the reader.	29 71	32 68
6	Some people believe our existing platform language can be repaired through a series of amendments. Others believe that we need to delete the old language and start anew. Which of the following more closely represents your opinion about how to better fix our platform?		
	a) We should amend the existing language. b) We should delete the old planks and start from a clean slate.	39 61	41 59

2008 Libertarian Party Platform Questionnaire Results

Appendix B

by Alicia Mattson
Chair, 2008 LP Platform Committee

Question Number	Question/Answer Text	% All Responses	% Likely Delegates
7	Which of the following more closely represents your opinion about how we should address controversial issues where there is not the bylaws-required 2/3 support among our delegates to state one position or another in our platform?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The platform should be silent on such issues, only emphasizing areas of internal party agreement. b) To generate 2/3 support and avoid being silent on such issues, compromise language for the platform should be crafted that acknowledges there is more than one acceptable position. 	37	51
8	Which of the following more closely represents your opinion about how much implementation detail should be included in our platform planks?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We should include very little to no implementation detail. State only the general principles and leave it to our candidates to address how to implement them. b) We should provide comprehensive details on how to implement each plank. 	68	77
9	Some topics are included in a platform because they satisfy an internal party constituency. Some topics are included in a platform because they will appeal to voters. Which of the following more closely represents your opinion about the types of topics that should be emphasized in the platform?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We should emphasize topics that are appealing to voters. b) We should emphasize topics that appeal to internal party constituencies. 	87	83
10	Which of the following more closely represents your opinion as to how far-reaching plank language should be?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We should be destination oriented, describing how we want society to ultimately appear. b) We should be directionally oriented, emphasizing what Libertarian officeholders can reasonably achieve over the next few years. 	34	38
11	Which of the following more closely represents your opinion as to how we should handle subjects for which mainstream Libertarian thought is at odds with what most voters want?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We should be silent on those issues. b) We should state our positions on those issues. 	18	24
		82	76

The above questionnaire was mailed to the 982 individuals who attended the LP national conventions in Atlanta (2004) or Portland (2006) as delegates. It was also emailed out to approximately 80,000 individuals on the national party's e-mail list. The 5047 responses to the questionnaire are summarized in two ways above: % of all respondents, and % of respondents who indicated they are likely to be delegates to the 2008 convention in Denver.