

SKAGIT COUNTY PLATFORM

Presented March 31st, 2012

PREAMBLE

The Republican Party is composed of and represents people of every age, race, religion, and station in life who share a passion for liberty.

We believe freedom from oppressive government was the reason our nation was founded, and to provide this freedom our Constitution was created.

We believe freedom is maintained by the strict application of this Constitution, recognizing that the basic governmental entities are the states, and believing that federal government should exercise only those powers granted by that Constitution.

Our basic freedom, that makes this country unique in the world, is rooted in the ideals of free enterprise and the basic right to private property. Excessive governmental regulation and oppressive taxation threaten our freedoms. To restore these freedoms already lost and to preserve them permanently, we put forward the following goals and objectives as the platform of our Party.

FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONSHIP

A. IN GENERAL:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Recognition of the state government as the primary and preeminent unit of government.
2. Strict adherence to the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

WE OPPOSE:

1. The exercise of federal power in matters properly within the police power of the state.
2. The use of federal funding of state activities for the purpose of imposing federal control on activities that is properly of state concern including Washington State public schools.

B. FOREIGN POLICY:

National Defense is the primary responsibility of the United States government. Multiple terrorist attacks against U.S. interest, culminating in the September 11, 2001 attacks, and the continued world terrorism threat has placed us on a wartime mobilization. Therefore:

WE SUPPORT:

1. A continued strengthening of our military to maintain an effective and efficient readiness with the ability for rapid deployment and the flexibility to adapt to the ever-changing worldwide threats.
2. A continued strengthening of intelligence capabilities, both human and technological, by providing the necessary financial resources.
3. Providing the appropriate increases in salaries and benefits for our military personnel to encourage retention of trained troops and to promote new enlistment.
4. The deployment of our troops under the command of United States Officers only.
5. The defining of our military operations in terms of their primary mission, and not to advance social agendas such as diversity or gender-neutral concerns.
6. A continued pressure on Iran and other nations to stop the design, building and proliferation of nuclear weapons technology.

7. The re-examination of our foreign aid policy in order to deny aid to hostile governments who use that aid against us.
8. International trade agreements that are formulated to benefit the interests of the United States and its citizens.
9. Non U.S. Terrorists being tried in a military tribunal and not a civil court.

C. IMMIGRATION:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Allowing immigration of law abiding, productive persons who wish to come here to become Americans regardless of race, gender, religion, or national origin.
2. Streamlining this process to allow legal immigrants to obtain employment upon arrival.
3. An open honest debate on the level of legal immigration allowed, including the possibility of raising or lowering the number of legal immigrants allowed each year.
4. Congress making the decision on the number of legal immigrants based on the economic and security needs of the Nation.
5. Securing the border first before consideration of any guest worker program.
6. A guest worker program that honors those who abide by the law and requires that applicants apply with either a current valid visa or from their home country.
7. Severe punishment of any person, corporation, or other business that employs illegal immigrants.
8. The mandatory use of E-verify.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Amnesty in any form, including a guest worker program that allows people already in the country illegally to apply.
2. The issuing of drivers' licenses to illegal immigrants or the use of Matricula Consular cards as legal identification inside the United States.
3. The ability of people to register to vote when getting a drivers' license as it allows for illegal voter registration by non-citizens.
4. Any state or local law in contradiction to federal law on the issue of immigration (such as sanctuary cities) or allowing the distribution of government benefits to illegal immigrants (such as welfare or in-state tuition).

D. FEDERAL TAXATION:

WE SUPPORT:

1. A balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.
2. Permanently repealing the Estate/Inheritance Tax (death tax).
3. Making the '01/'03 Bush tax cuts permanent.
4. Repealing the present income tax structure and the adoption of either a flat tax or a consumption tax.
5. The proposal to address the future failure of Social Security by, at a minimum, allowing partially privatized funding.
6. Medical savings accounts funded with pre-tax income.
7. Permitting full deduction of health insurance premiums for the self-employed from federal income tax.
8. The abolishment of the Federal Income Tax imposed upon the Social Security Income of our senior citizens.

WE OPPOSE:

1. All forms of double taxation including, but not limited to the Corporate Income Tax and the Capital Gains Tax.

E. FEDERAL GUN CONTROL:

WE SUPPORT:

1. The immediate implementation of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) for all firearms purchases.
2. Strict application of the Second Amendment and its clear declaration that the right to keep and bear arms is an individual right of all citizens.
3. Increased enforcement of existing laws against criminals, not more gun control laws aimed at law-abiding citizens.
4. Legislation to streamline reciprocity agreements among the 'right-to-carry' states.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Any legislation that attempts, in any fashion, a national gun registry program.
2. Any legislation that attempts to restrict, shut down, or burden with unnecessary bureaucracy, the administration of gun shows.

F. FEDERAL AGENCIES:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Limiting the Transportation Security Administration's authority to what is required to maintain the security of public transportation hubs or stations.
2. Severe limitation on the rule making power of all federal agencies.
3. Eliminating or restructuring the Department of Education for greater efficiency and better accountability.
4. Eliminating or reducing the role of the federal government in the control of public education.
5. Action by the Department of Interior to guarantee a representative form of government, as mandated by the Constitution, to those citizens who are non-tribal members, residing on reservation land.
6. The United States honoring, in a timely fashion, its health care commitments to all veterans with service related disabilities.
7. Performance audits of all federal jobs to see if they are actual jobs that are needed and then eliminating all jobs that are not necessary.

G. HEALTH CARE

WE SUPPORT:

1. The repeal of the Affordable Health Care Act (Obamacare)
2. Medical savings accounts.
3. A requirement that our health care system remain free-market.
4. Tort reform to reduce the extraordinary costs related to medical malpractice lawsuits.
5. Interstate competition among insurance companies
6. The right of a parent to make all the medical decisions for their minor children up to the age of 18 years old.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Any government run or socialized health care system.
2. The individual mandate requiring all citizens to purchase health insurance by 2014 or be penalized in the form of a tax.

H. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Limiting the jurisdiction of the EPA to federal lands and interstate waterways.

2. The application of cost effectiveness and risk analysis tests to any action under the Endangered Species Act.
3. Real environmental protection policy and conservation that is supported by sound, peer-reviewed scientific methods for the responsible stewardship of our country's natural resources.

WE OPPOSE:

1. The use of 'global warming' scare tactics and fear mongering that is being utilized to advance social engineering.
2. Any 'climate change' or 'global warming' legislation including carbon taxes or cap and trade schemes, derived from the premise that "mankind" is the culprit for temperature increases.

I. ENERGY POLICY:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Exploration and drilling for all fossil fuels on American public and private lands and waters that leads us expeditiously towards self-sufficiency and independence from foreign oil.
2. A policy and energy plan that incorporates incentive plans and/or tax breaks to the entrepreneurs and innovators of new science and technologies that lead to future energy solutions.
3. Full development of crude oil and natural resources in the United States including ANWAR.
4. Immediate development and construction of new nuclear power energy.
5. Building of new modern refineries.

WE OPPOSE:

1. The development of Ethanol from corn at the expense of engendering our food supplies both at home and for export.

J. FEDERAL JUDICIARY:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Limiting the jurisdiction of the Interior Federal Courts, i.e. Circuit and District Courts, to prevent their intervention in any matter that has been or could have been handled by the State Courts.
2. Interpreting the Constitution according to the original intent of the framers.
3. The appointment of judges that adhere to the philosophy of strict construction of the Constitution.

WE OPPOSE:

1. The belief that the Constitution is a living and breathing document.

K. SOCIAL ORDER

WE SUPPORT:

1. Continuing reform of the welfare system in order to promote self-sufficiency and to reduce debilitating reliance on government.
2. Defining marriage as being limited to one man and one woman through a Constitutional Amendment.
3. Honoring the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment by allowing religious expressions and displays in the public forum.
4. Recent legislation banning partial birth abortion and recognizing as a federal crime the assault of the unborn.
5. The establishment of a guest worker program to allow for control, secured admission of alien workers, who have been cleared, to enter the United States of America to take employment that the American Citizens do not want and allow their placement and their location to be tracked.
6. English as the official language of the United States.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Any government funding of pornography.
2. Any government funding of abortion.
3. Government funded research involving human cloning and/or the use of human fetuses for stem cell research.

L. UNIONS:

WE SUPPORT:

1. The rights of Unions to establish dialogue with management at all levels in the private sector, to provide opportunities to work together for a plan that makes sense for all involved.

STATE GOVERNMENT

1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS:

A. TAXATION:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Balancing tax cuts with state spending while protecting necessary state services.
2. Restructuring of Washington State's tax system to provide that only sales tax revenue be placed in the state General Fund.
3. Devoting revenue from all other special taxes on selected activities or groups to services uniquely benefiting the activity or group taxed.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Any state income, gift, or inheritance tax.
2. Any vehicle tax based upon engine displacement.
3. Any portion of the real property tax being paid to the state government.
4. Excessive taxation of oil refineries in efforts to balance the state budget.

B. PROPERTY RIGHTS

WE SUPPORT:

1. Repeal of the Growth Management Act.
2. Protecting the constitutional right against the government taking private property without just compensation.
3. The proposition that any land use regulation, including but not limited to, down-zoning which diminishes the value of the property constitutes a "Taking" for which compensation must be paid.
4. The Property Fairness Initiative filed by Washington State Farm Bureau.
5. Water rights remaining with landowners and other users, not being transferred to the state.
6. Any regulations adopted for public lands not being imposed on private lands.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Any use of eminent domain to force or create any transfer of property between private parties where the legal property owner is unwilling, including for projects claimed to be for economic development.
2. The proposed ban on burning of all firewood for non-essential heating.

C. ELECTIONS:

WE SUPPORT:

1. The closed primary election for nominating party candidates for partisan office.
2. Maintaining the requirement of a super majority vote on bond issues.

3. The requirement of proof of identity and citizenship when registering to vote.
4. The requirement of proof of identification at time of voting.

D. SOCIAL ORDER:

WE SUPPORT:

1. The proposition that one of the fundamental roles of government is to protect the lives of its citizens.
2. The proposition that the duty to protect life applies to both the born and the unborn.
3. The right of the state to enact laws protecting human life.
4. Immediate action by the state to restrict third trimester abortions.
5. The definition of marriage being the union of one man and one woman.

E. EDUCATION:

WE SUPPORT:

1. A state prescribed standard for graduation while leaving curriculum design to the local school board.
2. Giving teachers the authority and responsibility for classroom discipline.
3. Substance abuse screening of all school employees.
4. A system which gives parents their choice to select the desired education for their children through the use of vouchers, charter schools, or home schooling.
5. Performance audits to cut back on bloated school administration and returning the money to the classrooms.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Outcome Based Education along with the attendant Whole Language, WASL, Certificate of Mastery, etc.
2. School districts teaching 'alternative lifestyle' sex education without parental consent.

F. HEALTH CARE:

WE SUPPORT:

1. State funded healthcare for people with disabilities, the elderly, and for those who are truly needy whenever private assistance is unavailable.
2. The protection of health care workers from infectious diseases such as AIDS by requiring disclosure of the patient's illness.

WE OPPOSE:

1. The state's insurance regulatory policies during recent years that have resulted in more than doubling insurance premiums and causing most insurance companies to cease doing business in the state.

G. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE UNIONS:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Collective bargaining by public employees only to the extent that it carries no resort to coercive practices, i.e. strikes, sickouts, or other similar activities.
2. Individual members' rights to determine use of membership dues concerning political contributions.

H. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Washington State encouraging and supporting private businesses and non-profit organizations.
2. Reduction in taxation and regulation on businesses to include the elimination of the B&O and inventory tax.

3. Creating a State Business Climate Index that monitors the competitiveness of our state as compared to the states in our region, as well as the country as a whole, taking into account taxes, regulation, and the available infrastructure.
4. Economic impact statements (projections) required by state agencies when they make changes in regulations that will affect the cost to do business in the state.
5. A comprehensive statewide traffic plan.

2. JUDICIAL SYSTEM

A. GENERAL MATTERS:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Abolishing the Commission on Judicial Performance.
2. Repealing the Preemptory Challenge to a Judge.

B. CRIMINAL LAW:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Retention of the Death Penalty.
2. Retention of the Three Strikes Law.

C. CIVIL LAW:

WE SUPPORT:

1. Sweeping reform of the Tort Law including, but not limited to, severe limitations on class action lawsuits, lawyer contingent fee contracts and award caps on punitive judgments (not to limit actual damages).
2. Putting measures in place to allow industries reasonable time to correct problems with services, products, and regulatory compliance before a lawsuit can be filed for grievances.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WE SUPPORT:

1. A flood control plan that involves comprehensive streambed maintenance and management.
2. Efforts undertaken encouraging FEMA to consider and use Skagit County's hydrology work in determining new flood mapping.
3. Preserving Skagit County's present Critical Area Ordinance of no harm, no foul.
4. Suspending all "Rails to Trails" projects and facilities until railroad easements are honored by willing seller(s) and willing buyer(s).
5. Agriculture being allotted an adequate water source including water from the Skagit and Samish River.

WE OPPOSE:

1. Allowing any person or organization that does not own property directly affected by such regulation to stand or challenge such land use regulations.

*March 8, 2012 - The Platform Committee respectfully submits the above platform in honor of the late **Buck Compton** who had significant input into the outline of this platform for many years.*

*Dennis Gwin, Chairman
Joy Caldwell
Mark Hulst*

*Pat Macken
Howard Meinzer
Connie Munsey*

*Bill Orsborn
Ryan Smith
Larry Steffy*

