

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF BRAZOS COUNTY PLATFORM 2016

FEDERAL

1. Role of Government - We hold that the only just and proper role of government is in the protection of man's God-given rights, which are Life, Liberty, and Property.

2. Universal Truths - We believe in the existence of universal truths and absolute morality and reject the illogical fallacy of moral relativism pervasive in our society today.

3. Public Acknowledgment of God - We affirm that the public acknowledgment of God is undeniable in our history and vital to our prosperity and strength as a nation. We affirm the constitutionality of public symbols of faith such as "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, and "In God We Trust," our national motto, and public displays of the Ten Commandments.

4. Sovereignty of the Church - We support and acknowledge that the Church is a God-ordained institution with a sphere of authority separate from that of civil government, and thus the Church is not to be regulated, controlled, or taxed by any level of civil government.

5. Religious Liberty - We oppose any criminal penalties or civil liabilities being brought against those persons, businesses, or organizations who act out of sincere faith, conviction, or belief in traditional values at the federal, state, or local level.

6. Abolish Federal Departments - We encourage abolishment of any and all federal agencies not based on an enumerated power granted by the U.S. Constitution such as: Education, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Interior (specifically, the Bureau of Land Management).

7. Abolish the Federal Reserve - We support the abolition of the Federal Reserve System. As long as it exists, we support full, comprehensive, and regular audits of the Federal Reserve System.

8. Baseline Budgeting - We support an elimination of baseline budgeting and adoption of zero-based budgeting for all federal departments and agencies.

9. Balanced Budget - We support a balanced federal budget, except during wartime, defined as a period following a congressional declaration of war. We further support the State of Texas leading the effort to utilize the Constitutional Amendment process, pursuant to Article V of the U.S. Constitution, to require a balanced federal budget.

10. Debt Ceiling Increases - We oppose raising the debt ceiling any further.

11. Entitlement Reform - We support reform to entitlement programs that allows young people to opt out while preserving the benefits promised to retired Americans.

12. Government Surveillance - We oppose all forms of warrantless government surveillance of United States citizens and businesses.

13. Executive Orders - We oppose the unconstitutional abuse of executive orders and support repeal of all executive orders that violate the U.S. Constitution and the separation of powers.

14. Second Amendment - We believe that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is an individual right, and we oppose any efforts to limit that right for any citizen.

15. Tenth Amendment - We oppose federal involvement in issues that should be left to the states. We believe that non-enumerated governmental authority is to be left to the states or to the people, as required by the Tenth Amendment.

16. Tax Code Reform - We support abolishing the Internal Revenue Service and the 16th Amendment, as well as overhauling our current tax system.

17. Repeal 17th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution - We support the repeal of the 17th Amendment, which took the power to select U.S. Senators from our state legislators.

18. Restoring State Sovereignty - We support amending the U.S. Constitution to enable the States to regain the balance of powers reserved to them by the U.S. Constitution.

19. Habeas Corpus - We oppose any bill or provision that would suspend habeas corpus for American citizens, except as addressed by the U.S. Constitution.

20. End Birthright Citizenship - We support amending the 14th Amendment to end birthright citizenship, and require that at least one parent be a citizen of the United States.

21. Refugee Resettlement - We support the right of states to refuse the resettlement of refugees by the federal government.

22. Immigration -

- a) We support legal immigration and streamlining the legal immigration process.
- b) We oppose illegal immigration. We also support efforts to increase and enhance border security and strengthen interior enforcement measures.
- c) We also believe all United States residents should be subject to tax law regardless of their status; however, we do not believe that illegal immigrants should receive government assistance.
- d) We support legislation to ban, and withhold state and federal funding for, sanctuary cities.
- e) We oppose any and all calls for blanket or incremental amnesty and demand the enforcement of existing state and federal laws regarding border security, national security, immigration, and employment.

23. Sharia Law - We oppose any efforts to implement or recognize Sharia Law as valid in the United States. We oppose allowing separate Sharia courts.

24. Judicial Restraint - Judges are to judiciously interpret and apply the law according to the U.S. Constitution, not make law.

25. Presidential Appointment of "Czars" - We oppose the President appointing "czars." These officials must be approved by the U.S. Senate.

26. Eliminate Congressional Superiority - Congress shall pass no law affecting Americans that does not equally apply to themselves and all other federal employees. All existing laws and precedents that do not meet this criterion shall be declared null and void.

27. Term-Limits for Federal Offices - We call for term-limits for all federal elected and appointed officials, including judges.

28. Drug Testing - Elected officials, government workers, and welfare recipients should be subjected to random drug testing for illegal drugs.

29. Welfare Programs - We support the abolition of all federal welfare programs, as they are not an appropriate role of the federal government.

30. Unfunded Mandates - We oppose all unfunded mandates to state and local governments.

31. Government Bailouts - We oppose all bailouts. In a free market economy, no entity is "too big to fail."

32. Environmental Regulations - We oppose regulations serving the political agenda of climate change.

33. Domestic Drilling - We support drastically reducing or eliminating restrictions on domestic drilling.

34. Internet Freedom - We oppose all efforts to further regulate the Internet in the United States or internationally, or to impose taxation upon internet goods and services. We oppose Net Neutrality.

35. Public Employee Unions - We oppose public employee unions and associations endorsing or supporting candidates for office. We oppose mandatory union membership and card check.

STATE

36. No New Taxes - We oppose any new statewide taxes, including a personal income tax, property tax, or any further tax increases. We support a repeal of the Margin Tax (Franchise Tax).

37. Legislative Accountability - All votes cast in the Texas Legislature should be recorded votes.

38. Tax and Expenditure Limit - We support a tax and expenditure limit on the State budget so that any budgetary increases shall be no more than the percentage growth of population plus inflation.

39. Constitutional Carry - We support the right of law-abiding citizens to carry firearms without a license, either concealed or openly, known as "Constitutional Carry."

40. Campus Carry - We support strengthening the concealed carry on campus law (SB 11), so that unelected administrators and bureaucrats cannot subvert the true intent of the law by banning licensed concealed carry in any public university facility or in the facilities of any university receiving public funds.

41. Speaker of the House - The Speaker of the Texas House should be elected by popular vote. Committee Chairs must be chosen by that Committee's members rather than by the Speaker of the Texas House.

42. Tolls on Freeways - We oppose the conversion of freeway lanes into toll lanes, and oppose gas tax revenues from being used to build, subsidize, or maintain toll roads.

43. Term Limits - We support term limits for the House of Representatives, Senate, statewide elected officials, district court judges, and all appellate judges.

44. Judicial Reform - We oppose any effort to diminish the right of trial by jury. We believe the appellate judiciary should endeavor to give substantial deference to jury decisions.

45. Radical Islamic Organizations - We call on governmental agencies to avoid and suspend all activities with all radical Islamic organizations, such as the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR).

46. Legislator Retirement Pay - We believe that legislators should not have the authority to increase their own retirement plan. Any increase approved by legislators shall not take effect until the successor of that legislator takes office.

LOCAL

47. Local Debt - Local government debt is out of control. We support defined limitations on debt at the local level.

48. Taxes - We oppose tax increases by local governments and support tax rates being as low as possible.

49. Corporate Welfare - We oppose local government handouts to businesses and other private entities in the name of economic development.

50. Bond Transparency - Costs and details of bond proposals should be clear in the ballot language of bond elections.

51. Annexation - Residents and landowners, in an area proposed for annexation, should have the right to vote to approve or reject the annexation.

52. Development Regulations - We oppose unnecessary development regulations that are burdensome to small businesses, including excessive enforcement of building codes, costly permitting, bureaucratic processes, and unreasonably restrictive zoning. We oppose municipal regulations outside the municipal boundaries.

53. Electricity Deregulation - We support deregulation of municipally owned electric utilities. We believe that citizens should be able to purchase electricity on the open market.

54. Special Taxing Districts - We support restricting the authority of special taxing districts, such as Municipal Utility Districts and Municipal Management Districts, so that they are accountable to the people they serve and may not incur bond debt without a vote of their residents.

FAMILY

55. Right to Life - We believe in the sanctity of human life, and that all life from conception to natural death is a natural, inherent right granted by God that cannot be infringed upon by government. We believe that abortion, genocide, euthanasia and assisted suicide are infringements upon the right to life as stated in the preamble to the U.S. Constitution.

56. Pro-Life Legislation - We urge the Texas Legislature to repeal section 19.06 of the Texas Penal Code, which sanctions the murder of unborn children, and to repeal section 166.046 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, which enables the withdrawal or withholding of life-sustaining treatment without the patient's or patient's family's consent.

57. Taxpayer Funding for Abortion - We oppose all taxpayer funding for abortion and abortion providers.

58. Judicial Bypass - We oppose judicial permission for minors to receive abortions without parental consent.

59. The Sanctity of Marriage - Despite recent judicial activism and overreach on the highest level, we believe that marriage is between one natural man and one natural woman. We support the right of the States to define marriage.

HEALTHCARE

60. Repeal Obamacare - We support the immediate repeal of Obamacare and oppose replacing it with any new government-run healthcare system.

61. Medicaid - We support block granting federal Medicaid funds to the States, requiring a nominal co-pay for Medicaid patients, and oppose Medicaid expansion in Texas.

62. Reduce Healthcare Costs - We support free market reductions in healthcare costs by increasing healthcare competition, reducing government regulations, and the ability to purchase insurance across State lines.

FOREIGN POLICY

63. Strong National Defense - We support building and maintaining a national defense during times of war and peace that is powerful enough to defend our national interests and safety against any enemy on multiple fronts.

64. Declaring War - We believe that a declaration of war is necessary for the United States to enter into war with another nation and urge Congress to return this Constitutional principle to practice in the future.

65. Foreign Aid - We oppose all foreign aid, except in cases where national defense or disaster may require it.

66. United Nations - We support the withdrawal of the United States from the U.N. and the removal of U.N. headquarters from U.S. soil. No foreign agency or country should have authority over the United States, its citizens or armed forces.

67. Support of Israel - We call on the Republican Party to support mutual defense with the nation of Israel, considering Israel's position as a strong ally of the United States. We believe that per the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, "Jerusalem should be recognized as the capital of the State of Israel and the United States Embassy in Israel should be established in Jerusalem."

68. International Organizations - We support United States' withdrawal from the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the World Bank.

69. Free Trade - We support free and responsible trade as a necessary component of American capitalism and of the United States' influence in the world.

70. Mexico and Central America - We support policies which help the regions of Mexico and Central America strengthen their Constitutions. We support aggressive military and law enforcement cooperation to address the corruption, drug cartels, and human trafficking causing illegal immigration.

EDUCATION

71. Local Control - We support returning the control of public schools to the local level from state and federal bureaucrats.

72. School Choice - We support giving parents the freedom to choose their children's education according to their own values, and believe that tax dollars should follow the child.

73. CSCOPE - We urge the Texas Legislature to ban CSCOPE or "Common Core" from being taught in Texas schools.

74. Higher Education Reform - We support merit-based admissions, ending tuition deregulation, and post-tenure review.

75. School Prayer - We support the rights of students to pray in school, and urge school personnel to inform students of their First Amendment rights to engage in religious speech, individually or in groups, on school property.

76. School Finance - The school finance system in Texas is in need of serious reform and should prioritize classroom instruction. We support a simple, fair, and efficient method for financing our public school system.

77. Parental Rights in Education - We support parental rights in education via private, parochial, and homeschools, free from government control, including extracurricular activities.

78. American Identity, Patriotism, and Loyalty - We favor strengthening our common American identity and loyalty, which includes the contribution and assimilation of different racial and ethnic groups. Students should pledge allegiance to the US and Texas flags daily to instill patriotism.

79. Equal Access to State Grants - We believe that all Texas students, whether graduating from public, private or home schools, should have equal access to all State supported grants, scholarships, and loans.

80. Vocational Education - Recognizing that not every student will choose to go to college, we support increasing technical and vocational education in public high schools.

81. Radical Islamic Charter Schools - We oppose the public funding of charter schools with ties to radical Islamic groups, both foreign and domestic.

PARTY IMPROVEMENT

82. Platform Enforcement - The Republican Party of Brazos County shall require that all candidates filing in the Republican Primary indicate their positions on each plank of the platform of the Republican Party of Brazos County when filing in the Republican Primary. The positions of candidates shall be made publicly available.

83. Code of Fair Campaign Practices - We encourage all candidates involved in Brazos County to sign and adhere to Brazos County's Code of Fair Campaign Practices.

84. Closed Primaries - We call on the Republican Party of Texas (RPT) to support closed primaries.

85. Review of Candidates - We call on the RPT to review the qualifications of candidates for all elected positions, including so-called non-partisan offices.

86. Rule 40 - We call on the Republican National Committee to return to the pre-2012 party rules.

87. Support the Nominee - We call on the Republican Party to unify behind and vote for the eventual nominee for President. In the event of a contested convention, we oppose the introduction of any candidate who did not run in the primaries, or who previously suspended their campaign. If a candidate receives a majority of delegates going into the Republican National Convention, we call on the Republican National Committee to support that candidate.