

**Report of Platform Committee
North Carolina Republican Party Platform
2008**

Adopted at Convention on June 6, 2008
Greensboro, NC

Article I: Family

1. Our nation's strength lies with the family where each new generation gains its moral anchor. It is the first school of good citizenship, the engine of economic progress, and a haven of security and understanding.
2. The ideal environment for raising children is a two-parent family where a husband and wife live in harmony in one home. We praise the courageous efforts of single parents who work hard to provide stable homes. We recognize that single parents often succeed and that two-parent families sometimes fail.
3. Government cannot legislate love or compassion. It should not preempt parental responsibility for children; however, government can protect children from abuse and neglect. We support laws that balance parental rights with the protection of a child's life, safety and wellbeing. We support tax credits for the adoption of children into permanent, safe and nurturing homes. We support religious and private initiatives that promote healthy, nurturing families and provide services to dysfunctional families.
4. Homosexual behavior is not normal and should not be taught as acceptable. Public schools should not be used to teach children that homosexual behavior is normal. Taxpayers should not fund benefit plans for unmarried partners. We support federal and state constitutional amendments to ensure that marriage is limited to the union of one man and one woman. We oppose the adoption or foster parenting of children by same sex couples.

Article II: The Economy

1. The free enterprise system is the most effective and just economic system. Economic freedom is essential to human liberty. Denying economic freedom diminishes individual human dignity.
2. Government ought to provide an unencumbered environment for individual initiative and enterprise. Regulation and taxation reduce and redistribute income; they do not create it.
3. Growth in employment and personal income requires expanding capital formation. We oppose the taxation of capital gains as ordinary income.
4. We urge Congress to make permanent the tax changes of 2001 and 2003. We urge elimination of the death tax.

5. We pay more taxes than necessary with the highest tax rates in the southeast. Government spending should not increase more than population growth and inflation combined. We support zero-based budgeting and a taxpayer's bill of rights incorporating these principles.
6. It is unfair to recruit or retain businesses with tax incentives when other businesses must bear the full burden of taxation. The best way to promote economic growth is to reduce our overall tax burden. Raising tax rates on many of us to provide preferential treatment for a few is unfair.

Article III: Individual Liberty

1. We embrace the vision for America established by our nation's founders — the authors of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, and the North Carolina Constitution, including its Declaration of Rights.
2. The state must not interfere with freedom of religion. We oppose efforts to remove the recognition of Almighty God from our schools and courts and from our Pledge of Allegiance. State schools should not discriminate for or against any religion nor should they deny equal access to school facilities.
3. Government should treat all citizens fairly and impartially and should assure equal opportunity without regard to wealth, race, religion, sex, or national origin. We oppose all forms of invidious discrimination. We oppose efforts to include sexual orientation as a category under civil rights laws.
4. We support the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guarantees the right of free citizens to keep and bear arms. We oppose further restriction on the ownership, sale, purchase and "lawful carry" of firearms by law-abiding citizens. Since criminals do not obey laws, we support eliminating North Carolina's capricious statewide "no carry" zones that disarm law abiding and duly licensed concealed carry permit holders.
5. Private property should not be taken by condemnation except for a legitimate public use, and upon prompt payment of just compensation. A state constitutional amendment should be submitted promptly to the people.
6. Annexation laws should be reformed to strengthen the hand of those being involuntarily annexed.

Article IV: Sanctity of Life

1. We believe in the sanctity of all human life.
2. Unborn children have constitutional rights to life and liberty. We urge the Supreme Court to overturn Roe vs. Wade. We support a human life amendment. We oppose efforts to mandate abortion or to fund organizations that provide or promote abortion services. Abortion is never an acceptable method of birth control.
3. We oppose partial-birth abortion. We urge the General Assembly to prohibit this procedure which would complement the federal law.

4. We encourage adoption. Adoption should be encouraged through significant tax credits, insurance reforms and legal reforms.
5. We oppose the erosion of parental rights and responsibilities with respect to their unmarried children. Informed consent and parental consent should be prerequisite to any minor receiving family-planning services.
6. We support all developments in biomedical research that enhance and protect human life. But we oppose any new development that does not treat all human life as a precious gift of God, or that does not treat every individual human life as a locus of unique and irreplaceable dignity, no matter how weak, immature, or dependent.
7. We oppose all procedures that intentionally destroy innocent human life. We oppose human cloning and the destruction of human embryos. We support adult stem cell research.
8. We support treating the infirm and elderly with love and respect, not as a burden. We oppose euthanasia.
9. We urge the recruitment and support of candidates who will work hard to protect all innocent human life.

Article V: State Government

1. We expect legislators to be efficient, effective, ethical, and responsive.
2. Legislative session limits must be accompanied by measures to ensure that policy decisions are made by elected legislators and are not made by unelected state employees or legislative staff.
3. Government should encourage honest, productive work. Therefore, we oppose any expansion of legal gambling, including the state lottery. The state lottery monopoly turns government into a bookie, operates only by false advertising, capitalizes on broken dreams and personal irresponsibility, and places the burden of taxation most heavily on those who are least able to afford it.
4. We oppose unfunded mandates. Each level of government should fund the programs it requires of other levels of government.
5. Elected officials should not appear in "public service ads" unless that official has announced retirement from all public office.
6. No State funds should be spent without an explicit appropriation. We oppose reductions in the jurisdiction and resources of the State Auditor. We oppose "slush funds" that are rewards for political support. Raiding of dedicated funds should not be allowed except in an emergency as determined by law.
7. Every bill should receive a recorded vote in committee. The budget bill must be made public no less than two days before the final vote.
8. We support the issuance of a driver's license only to those who are legally here. We should end all subsidies to illegal aliens, except in life threatening emergencies. Taxpayers should not pay for higher education for illegal aliens.

9. Gov. Mike Easley has thoroughly mismanaged reform of the State mental health system. The needs of patients must be the first priority. This requires diagnosis, a comprehensive care plan and regular follow-up. Accountability at every level is required. We endorse stiff penalties for those who abuse or exploit patients with mental illness.
10. We encourage easy disclosure and access to all state and local government budgets, including the compensation of employees.

Article VI: Elections

1. Free Elections protect us from tyrannical abuse of power. The Democratic Party has a long history of using insidious practices that deny the majority honest representation. Unable to win elections fairly, the Democratic Party has relied upon gerrymandering and manipulation of election laws. The Democratic Party should apologize to all African Americans and to all Republicans for the role of the Democratic Party in the white supremacy campaign of 1898 including the riots which overthrew the biracial Republican government of the City of Wilmington.
2. Photo identification will deter voter fraud. Registration forms for naturalized citizens should include the naturalization certificate number or a passport number. We welcome naturalized citizens to our Party.
3. We support compact contiguous single-member districts that do not split counties or precincts. An independent redistricting commission is the best remedy. When the legislature does not follow redistricting law legal action should be pursued.
4. We recognize the independence of the judiciary and oppose the appointment of state judges. To hold to account our trial courts through regular, direct elections is a valuable right.
5. Voters should have full and timely information on candidates' campaign finances. We oppose funding any politician's election campaign with public funds.
6. The public is ill served by nonpartisan judicial elections. The party affiliation of judicial candidates should appear on the ballot.
7. We are aware that the Campaign Finance Reform Act is the law of the land. But we can read the Constitution for ourselves. The Act obviously abridges our freedom to speak on core political subjects. We urge Congress to repeal it and to reject other assaults on freedom of speech.

Article VII: Education

1. We believe in an excellent system of public education. This is impossible unless parents, not the state, have control of their children's education.

2. Choice and competition have served the state well in higher education. Choice and competition should be used to improve education at primary and secondary levels as well. We support tax credits for parents who relieve the burden on our public schools by lawfully educating their children in private or home schools. There should be no additional restrictions on parents' option to educate their children at home.
3. We support charter schools. The cap on the number of charter schools should be removed. Parents are the best judges of what kind of schooling is best for their children.
4. Our schools should be independent of the federal government. We support keeping education dollars in North Carolina without going to bureaucrats at the national level.
5. Real education reform requires local control of curriculum, budget, textbook selection, and personnel in the public schools. Parents must have complete access to all curricula and to materials used for teacher development.
6. Reform requires nationally normed tests, cutting administrative waste, and facilitating alternative teacher certification. Our students must have the best possible teachers in the classroom, whether physically present or by use of technology. Teachers and principals should be paid, retained, and promoted based on the quality of their work, not on the length of their service. All teachers, especially of high school math and science, should be trained in the subject matter they are actually teaching. Highly qualified teachers and principals in low performing schools should receive additional pay if their students show academic progress.
7. Children should be able to read and write at grade level. High school graduates should be proficient at the twelfth grade level so that they are prepared for additional education. Social promotion should be eliminated.
8. Schools should encourage patriotism and the traditional values of Western civilization and should teach the true facts of the history of the United States. Schools should require a course on economics and Government so that students will be prepared to vote as informed citizens.
9. We support daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in our schools. Every classroom should display an American flag and our national motto — "In God We Trust."
10. We oppose mandatory sex education in public schools. Sex education should not be included in any public school program without provision for prior approval from parents. No birth control devices or drugs should be distributed in or by state schools. We support teaching abstinence until marriage as the expected norm for sexual behavior and the most effective way to prevent teenage pregnancies, abortion, and sexually transmitted diseases and to create healthy relationships and self-esteem.
11. We oppose those social services, including school-based clinics and mental health programs, which bypass parents.
12. We support the right of students to pray in school and the right of others to pray at public occasions.

13. We oppose the restriction of free speech and free assembly by public educational institutions on ideological or religious grounds.

Article VIII: Justice

1. The first duty of government is maintaining law and order, allowing citizens freedom to pursue the blessings of life and liberty.
2. We support the Unborn Victims of Violence Act.
3. The death penalty deters murder. Premeditated and deliberate murder calls for the death penalty, which is directly proportional to the wrong perpetrated against its victim and against the moral order. We should drastically reduce the time between death sentence and execution.
4. We support effective educational and treatment programs for drug and alcohol abuse. Stiff punishment for those who drive while impaired by drugs or alcohol is appropriate. We oppose legalizing drugs. Drug dealers must face stiff punishment.
5. We are repulsed by the rise of gratuitous violence and pornography in literature, music and the electronic media. We support mandatory labeling of these products. We oppose using tax dollars to buy them. Laws should control obscene and sadistic materials that degrade women and children.
6. We want enforced stiff penalties for abducting, exploiting or abusing children. We abhor domestic violence and spousal abuse. We support organizations that provide efficient and effective solutions for domestic violence and abuse.
7. Prisons should pay less attention to inmate comfort and more to security, education and labor. Inmates should be required to work and pay for their incarceration.
8. "Dead-beat" parents should be forced to meet their obligations.
9. We support tort reform, including a cap on awards for pain and suffering, reform in the collateral source rule, allowing more of the award for the victim, and structured payments of awards.
10. Records of violent juvenile crime should be available to the courts.

Article IX: The Environment

1. We affirm that we are stewards of our God-given natural heritage. We have a duty to protect the air and water, productive forests, and abundant wildlife.
2. If regulation is needed to protect the environment the government should not proceed without first demonstrating by evidence that the benefits warrant the cost.
3. When government takes the economic value of property by regulatory action, it should compensate landowners for their loss. Local governments are adversely affected when land is removed from the local tax base by environmental "set-asides" for conservation.

Article X: National Policy

1. We support our President in the war against terrorism, including preventing rogue nations from obtaining weapons of mass destruction. We support our troops. Denying reinforcements to our troops should never be considered as “supporting the troops.” Americans owe our continued freedom and security to these brave men and women.
2. The most important responsibility of the federal government is “to provide a common defense” for the states and the nation. Our borders must be made secure. The federal government should actively enforce its immigration laws. Opposing “profiling” is neither wise nor moral if imposed at the expense of national security.
3. English must be made the official language of the United States of America.
4. America's defense must be second to none. The ban against known homosexuals should be retained. The armed forces should be maintained at full combat readiness.
5. We oppose any foreign effort to influence our elections.
6. American participation in any international body must never sacrifice the sovereignty of the United States. We oppose relinquishing our freedom to any organization claiming authority to propose, legislate, or to enforce global regulations. The United States has the absolute right to defend itself. It does not need permission from the United Nations or any other international body.
7. We recognize the need for legally binding treaties. We support efforts to revise or withdraw from any treaty that compromises our sovereignty or undermines national defense. Foreign court decisions are not relevant to interpretation of the U.S. Constitution except when construing terms known at the time of ratification.
8. We support a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. We support spending cuts as the right means to balance the federal budget and tax rate reductions as the right way to stimulate the economy.
9. Individuals should work in return for public assistance. Our nation needs to change from a welfare state to an opportunity society.
10. Social Security must be placed on a sound basis. The federal budget should be balanced without using Social Security reserves. These reserves should be dedicated toward meeting future obligations. We support offering workers more choice and control over their own retirement security, but in

ways that do not harm anyone already on Social Security or within a few years of retirement.

11. Early intervention and wise health choices are best made by individuals and doctors who are guided by sound medical opinion. We reject universal national healthcare. Choice for patients, with better information about health care, will allow a reduction in health care costs. We support medical savings accounts which combine personal responsibility with access to affordable healthcare.
13. We call on Congress, the President, the courts, and the states to abide by the Ninth and Tenth Amendments. We oppose governmental encroachments upon all powers and rights which the Constitution of the United States has reserved to the states, or to the people.
14. We encourage the United States Senate to modify its rules to prevent the filibuster of judicial candidates.
15. The Republican Party was born out of the abolition movement of the 1850's. Slavery has been abolished in the United States. However, millions of people around the world continue to live in bondage. Our foreign policy should encourage freedom from slavery for all peoples.

Respectfully submitted the 29th day of March, 2008.

2008 Platform Committee:

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