

Political Parties

Wisconsin political parties: state organizations and current party platforms

Richland County Courthouse



L. Roger Turner

POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION IN WISCONSIN

What Is a Political Party?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Political Parties in Wisconsin

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

Under Wisconsin law, a "recognized political party" is a political party that qualifies for a separate ballot or column on the ballot, based on its receiving a required number of votes at the previous November election or through acquiring the required number of petition signatures. At the beginning of 2005, Wisconsin had five recognized political parties: Constitution, Democrat, Libertarian, Republican, and Wisconsin Green.

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

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

Statutory and Voluntary Organizations

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

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

The History of Wisconsin's Political Parties

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Of the state's major elected partisan offices in January 2005, the Democrats held the positions of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and attorney general, as well as holding both U.S. Senate seats and four of the eight congressional seats. Republicans filled the position of state treasurer, held four congressional seats, and controlled both the senate and the assembly.

CONSTITUTION PARTY OF WISCONSIN
(Formerly U.S. Taxpayers Party of Wisconsin)
May 2005

Headquarters

State Headquarters: P.O. Box 994, Appleton 54912-0994, (877) 201-2411.

State Internet Address: <http://www.cpow.org>

National Office: 23 N. Lime Street, Lancaster, PA 17602, (800) 2-VETO-IRS.

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

State Committee – Officers

Chairman: RANDY W. HAMBY, Appleton.

1st Vice Chairman: TIMOTHY J. FARNES, Whitewater.

2nd Vice Chairman: JOHN P. CLARK, Westfield.

Secretary: DANIEL M. HOYT, Oshkosh.

Treasurer: WILLIAM HEMENWAY, Pewaukee.

Parliamentarian: vacancy.

National Committee Members

Randy W. Hamby, Appleton

William C. Hemenway, Pewaukee

Timothy J. Farness, Whitewater

Daniel E. Gibson, Janesville

John P. Clark, Westfield

Mark P. Gabriel, Appleton

Daniel M. Hoyt, Oshkosh

National Committee Alternates

Suzanne Hemenway, Pewaukee

José Figueroa, Waldo

Linda Clark, Westfield

State Committee – Congressional District Representatives

1st District

Daniel E. Gibson, Janesville

Glenn Petroski, Kenosha

2nd District

Bob Bellard, Beloit

vacancy

3rd District

vacancy

vacancy

4th District

Joan Tatarsky, Milwaukee

S. Kent Steffke, Milwaukee

5th District

Peter Economou, New Berlin

vacancy

6th District

Todd Brehmer, Potter

José Figueroa, Waldo

7th District

Jim Scholz, Rhinelander

Larry Oftedahl, Barron

8th District

Patrick Risch, Boulder Junction

Mark Gabriel, Appleton

At-Large

James King, Green Bay

Lorraine Decker, La Crosse

3 vacancies

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

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

State Committee. The Constitution Party of Wisconsin is headed by a state committee composed of 27 members: 6 state officers, 2 representatives elected by the members in each of the 8 congressional districts, and up to 5 at-large members. The state officers are the chairman, first vice chairman, second vice chairman, secretary, treasurer, and parliamentarian. The state chairman serves as the party's executive and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the party. The officers are elected in odd-numbered years and serve 2-year terms. The congressional district representatives are elected in caucuses prior to the state convention each year.

National Committee. The Constitution Party of Wisconsin is the officially recognized state affiliate of the Constitution Party whose headquarters are in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Wisconsin party currently has 7 representatives to the Constitution Party National Committee.

CONSTITUTION PARTY OF WISCONSIN PLATFORM

As Modified and Adopted at the State Party Convention, Beloit, October 11, 2003

[Editor's Note: Due to space limitations, only the state planks are included.]

National Party Planks

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

Preamble

The Constitution Party of Wisconsin gratefully acknowledges the blessing of the Lord God as Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe and of this Nation. It recognizes Jesus Christ as transcendent King over all nations and hereby appeals to Him for aid, comfort, guidance and the protection of His Divine Providence as we work to restore and preserve this nation as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Abortion, Euthanasia, and Bio-research

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

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

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

Borrowing Money

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

Census

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

Citizen Initiative Referenda

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

Crime

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

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

Furthermore, we oppose defendants being charged and tried by both state and federal jurisdictions under different laws for the same alleged criminal act, thus violating the constitutionally secured prohibition against double jeopardy.

Education

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

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

Elimination of Elective Offices

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

Eminent Domain

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

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

Family

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

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

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

Federal Government

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

Legal Reform and Individual Rights

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

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

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

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

Light Rail

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

'No-Quota' Constitutional Amendment

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

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

Non-related Legislative Provisions

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

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

Representation

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

Smart Growth

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

Social Security

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

State Sovereignty

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

Taxes

While it is morally correct and necessary that government exists, the CPoW agrees with George Washington that "it is the government which governs least which governs best". Individual freedom is best safeguarded by keeping local

government strong and distant government less powerful. In order to protect that freedom, county and local governments must have greater power with respect to state authority than is presently the case. To reach this end, the system of taxing authority must change.

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

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

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

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

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN

June 2005

Headquarters

State Headquarters: 222 West Washington Avenue, Suite 150, Madison 53703.

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Executive Director: KIM WARKENTIN.

Compliance Director: LARHONDA WELLS.

Membership Director: JOANNA BEILMAN-DULIN.

Political Director: LINDA CHAPPETTO.

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State Administrative Committee

Chair: JOE WINEKE, Verona.

First Vice Chair: LINDA HONOLD, Milwaukee.

Second Vice Chair: JEF HALL, Oshkosh.

Secretary: ANGELA SUTKIEWICZ, Sheboygan.

Treasurer: ROB FYRST, Madison.

National Committee Members: STAN GRUSZYNSKI, Porterfield; JASON RAE, Rice Lake; MELISSA SCHROEDER, Merrill; PAULA ZELLNER, Shawano.

Legislative Representatives: SENATOR JUDY ROBSON, Beloit; REPRESENTATIVE GARY SHERMAN, Port Wing.

College Democrats President: AWAIS KHALEEL, Madison.

County Chairs Association Chair: STEVE MELLENTIN, Porterfield.

Milwaukee County Chair: MARTHA LOVE, Milwaukee.

At-Large Members: GWEN CARR, Madison; LYNN DAVIS, Racine; DIAN PALMER, Brookfield; MARIANA STOUT, Oshkosh.

Congressional District Representatives:

1st District

Ray Rivera, chair, Pleasant Prairie

Marilyn Nemeth, Racine

2nd District

Margaret McEntire, chair, Madison

Tim Sullivan, Verona

3rd District

Karen Dahl, chair, Viroqua

Robert Johnson, La Crosse

4th District

Stephanie Findley, chair, Milwaukee

Mario Aguirre-Villa

5th District

Jim Shinnars, chair, Wauwatosa
Christine Marshall, Thiensville

6th District

Gordon Hintz, chair, Oshkosh
Jan Banicki, Montello

7th District

Marlys Matuszak, chair, Wausau
Eric Peterson, Amery

8th District

Jack Krueger, chair, Green Bay
Dottie LeClair, Appleton

Source: Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

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

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

State Convention. The party holds its annual state convention in June. Each year, the convention considers amendments to the state party constitution and other resolutions and party business. State party officers are elected in odd-numbered years, and state party platforms are adopted in even-numbered years. State convention delegates elect Democratic National Committee members every four years.

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

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

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

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

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

2004 WISCONSIN DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

Adopted at the State Party Convention, Appleton, June 11, 2004

PREAMBLE

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

DEMOCRACY, COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

Government must be responsive to the needs and will of the people while respecting rights of minorities.

Government must respect, protect and support freedom of expression, strict separation of government and religion, individuals' privacy, constitutional rights of criminal suspects and the rehabilitated, all other rights under the Bill of Rights, and equal protection of the law for all.

We are committed to equality of rights and opportunities for individuals regardless of race, color, actual or perceived gender, marital or domestic partner status, age, occupation, national origin, disability, physical appearance, living arrangements, sexual orientation, and political or religious preference.

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

We oppose racial and ethnic profiling.

All governments must respect the sovereignty of and abide by treaties with Native American nations.

We encourage initiatives to involve and empower citizens in civic affairs.

All governments must comply with open meetings and public record laws. Public records should be available through the Internet.

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

Free libraries with access to uncensored information must be adequately supported.

We oppose consolidation of media ownership.

We support free media time for candidate debate. The Fairness Doctrine should be re-instituted.

We call for full public financing of all election campaigns, reform of campaign finance laws to lessen the influence of money on public policy, and programs to enhance election participation by all citizens. We oppose measures that make voting more difficult.

We reject voting systems that do not leave a verifiable hardcopy record of votes.

We support improvements in government efficiency but hold government accountable for outsourcing. We oppose abuse of limited term employment.

We oppose taxes or legislation imposed under the guise of gubernatorial partial veto, and support a state constitutional amendment assuring that the Legislature approves all taxes and laws.

Government must deal effectively with crime, terrorism, and their causes, while protecting constitutional rights.

We oppose the death penalty.

We support adequate funding for law enforcement.

We support efforts to reduce the nation's crime rate. Education and jobs with decent wages are more effective and economical than imprisonment in dealing with crime.

We support equitable sentencing standards, judges' authority to modify sentences, and alternatives to incarceration.

Minor marijuana offenses should be processed as local ordinance violations.

We support the right to hunt.

We support reasonable firearm regulations to protect the safety of citizens and law enforcement officers. These include requiring safety locks on guns and background checks on all gun purchasers. We support Wisconsin's concealed carry ban.

We advocate strengthening consumer protection laws and returning enforcement authority to the Wisconsin Department of Justice.

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

Usurious lending should be prohibited.

State revenue sharing should continue. The state must honor its obligation to fund two thirds of school districts' expenses.

Federal and state governments must fully fund mandated programs.

We support the Social Security system, with inflation indexing, but oppose its privatization, and object to misusing its Trust Fund to hide federal deficits.

We support the arts as essential for the spiritual, intellectual and economic health of our communities.

Our wealth should be measured not only by the GNP, but also by broad measures of well being such as the United Nations' Human Development Index.

HUMAN CONCERNS

Government should ensure that everyone can lead a dignified, healthy, secure, fulfilling and useful life: one without abuse or unjust discrimination; with excellent, affordable health care; safe, sanitary, accessible, and affordable housing; access to quality public education; and opportunities for rewarding work, recreation, and meaningful participation in community affairs.

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

We support family values: love, commitment, mutual support, protection, stability and nurture for all family members, especially children. Marriage by civil ceremony must be permitted for unmarried couples of marriageable age without regard to sex.

We support the right to choose death with dignity with appropriate safeguards.

Family planning services must be readily accessible, confidential, and available without interference by government or others. We support freedom of reproductive choice, and oppose all measures to interfere with or limit it.

We seek an affordable single-payer health care system that provides universal access, promotes preventive health care, and covers prescription drugs, and all physical and mental illnesses.

We support Badger Care, Wisconsin Senior Care, Medicaid and Medicare with prescribed drug and medical device benefits and oppose undercutting Medicare by HMOs and insurance companies.

We favor enhancing programs for the aging and disabled, including subsidized long term in-home or nursing home care.

Health insurance companies should be required to cover physical and mental illnesses equally, cover pregnancy terminations, and include contraceptives in drug coverage.

We support health education and disease prevention programs, especially for young people, concerning smoking, alcohol, other drugs, pregnancy and STDs.

We favor increasing government support for biomedical research, eliminating prohibitions on human embryonic stem cell research, and permitting therapeutic cloning. We oppose reproductive human cloning.

Non-violent alcohol and other drug offenses can and should be dealt with more effectively and at less cost by treatment, education, rehabilitation, and employment, rather than by imprisonment.

Government must adequately support rural health care, public education, and other social services. We support adequate income and living conditions, and access to health insurance for farmers, migrant workers, and their families.

We advocate a welfare system in which able people are gainfully employed whenever jobs are available, with access to adequate affordable childcare, health insurance, transportation and job training.

We call for additional affordable, quality, licensed daycare centers and government support for adequate pay for licensed childcare givers.

EDUCATION

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

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

Governments should increase funding of public education at all levels. Early childhood and preschool programs should be expanded. State government should increase funding and financial aid for the UW and Technical College Systems. Tuition in these systems must not increase faster than inflation.

Public school teachers must be better paid.

The QEO system must be repealed.

We oppose excessive or discriminatory testing.

We support students' right to participate in post-secondary school governance.

THE ENVIRONMENT

We must preserve Earth's environment. This requires clean air and water, uncontaminated land, wilderness, wildlife, and other natural resources.

We must conserve energy, develop and use renewable energy sources and alternative fuels, and improve automobile fuel efficiency.

Biodiversity must be protected.

We must develop sustainable food production systems.

We must be protected from pollution and unnatural radiation.

Mining must be strictly controlled to prevent environmental damage.

Environmentally threatening activities such as mining, quarrying, fossil fuel extraction, logging and grazing by free-roaming cattle should be banned from wilderness areas and parks.

Soil and water conservation should be improved.

We oppose diversion of Great Lakes water and extraction of groundwater for commercial bottling.

We support a balanced transportation system. Walking and bicycling should be encouraged, and public transportation improved and made affordable and available to all. We support passenger rail and ferries.

Laws to halt global warming and acid rain must be strengthened. Power plant emissions must be controlled.

We support land use plans that encourage compact urban development, reduce sprawl and waste, preserve topsoil, green space, and Wisconsin's rural flavor.

Recycling should be required in order to save energy and landfill space and to reduce waste. Composting, use of recycled packaging, and minimal packaging should be encouraged.

Communities and workers have the right to information and control regarding location and transportation of nearby hazardous substances.

We support prompt polluter-paid cleanup of toxic waste sites and banning of residential development on or near them.

A Public Intervenor's Office should be re-established.

An independent Department of Natural Resources should be restored.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Our top priority is meaningful full employment.

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

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

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

Workers are entitled to a living wage with benefits.

We support full equity in pay and benefits.

We support equitable ratios of management to labor pay.

We advocate national industrial policies to ensure thriving basic industries. We favor public investment in research and development of new technologies and worker retraining for nonmilitary domestic jobs.

Management and labor should cooperate for competitive success of U.S.-owned businesses.

We oppose American businesses establishing plants in foreign countries with the express purpose of evading taxes, taking advantage of sub-standard wages and circumventing environmental protection laws.

We support tariffs against nations where unfair conditions impede American exports.

Pension funds must be responsibly managed and strictly safeguarded. Employees and retirees must be informed regularly of anticipated retirement benefits. No employer should have access to pension fund assets.

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

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

Unemployment compensation should include health insurance and, in long recessions, automatic extension of benefits.

THE ECONOMY AND TAXES

We support a tax system that treats work and investment income equally, is based on ability to pay, and has a progressive income tax as its core. We must reduce our dependence on regressive levies such as property and sales taxes. Taxation of land should be according to use. Property taxes should not be the primary source of school funding.

The state must equitably fund local units of government, including school districts, and remove revenue caps.

We oppose welfare for big business and the wealthy in the form of handouts, tax breaks, or tax loopholes. We support tax policies that create long-term economic development, good jobs, and environmentally sound development of affordable housing.

We oppose tax cuts for the wealthy that shift wealth inequitably away from middle- and low-income people and fail to spur economic development or job growth.

Deficits weaken the economy and the ability of governments to implement necessary programs. The federal deficit and the state structural deficit should be eliminated.

Businesses must stop avoiding taxation by nominally locating offshore.

We support fair, indexed estate taxes.

Leases for commercial use, or extraction of resources from, public land should be at fair market value and permitted only for environmentally sound activities.

We proudly support our state's cooperatives, which are community owned and operated businesses.

AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS

We are committed to preserving family farming. We favor policies that allow family farmers and farm-related enterprises in rural communities to succeed.

We support supply policies that enhance family farmers' incomes.

We call for farm subsidies that favor family farms over absentee-owned corporate farms.

We discourage absentee-owned corporate farms.

Foreign ownership of farmland should be discouraged.

Agricultural practices must protect the environment and provide safe, wholesome food supplies. We oppose factory farms.

We call for reducing high levels of processor involvement in agriculture and verifiable price discovery to insure fair prices.

We seek development of fair trade international markets for agricultural products.

Fair and safe electricity delivery to farms must be assured.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WAR AND PEACE

Our nation should seek to befriend others, work with them to secure peace and enhance the lives of all, and address the grievances and problems that foster terrorism. America must work with others on overpopulation, environment, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and unemployment, and encourage development of representative government.

Law and diplomacy must replace force in international decision-making. Our nation must strengthen, participate equitably in adequate funding of, cooperate with, and use international institutions such as the UN, its agencies, and the International Criminal Court. Such institutions should be responsible for eliminating international terrorism.

An efficient military ready to defend our country is essential.

We must use military force only as a last resort. Our government must renounce the illegal, destabilizing policy of preemptive force when there is no imminent threat to our nation.

Our country should work with other nations to eliminate nuclear weapons, weapons in space, land mines, chemical and biological weapons, and other weapons-related threats to people and the environment. Nuclear weapons' development must stop. Existing nuclear weapons should be de-alerted and disposed of in agreed, verifiable stages. Ballistic missile defense plans should be abandoned. The international arms trade should be brought under international control. War industries should receive assistance for converting from military manufacturing to the manufacture of peaceful products.

A Department of Peace should be established to support national policies for a safe and peaceful world.

We can best support our military personnel by not placing them in harm's way unnecessarily. We support fully meeting all material and medical, including psychological, needs of our active military and veterans. For those who have served in the military, the Peace Corps, or similar agencies, we support full, lifelong medical care and generous educational, housing, and employment programs.

We support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and urge U.S. ratification of the treaties that implement it.

Foreign aid should be allocated to meet basic needs and encourage human rights. Our nation must never employ economic sanctions with genocidal effects.

Our country's immigration policies should be fair and applied fairly. We should offer refuge to victims of oppressive regimes without regard to political persuasion.

We support agreements to expand international trade, provided that they do not erode worker compensation, worker safety, environmental standards, or democratic control. We oppose fast-track legislation limiting Congress' trade authority. Our government should block multinational corporations' practices of avoiding U.S. taxes and work for international control of their monopolistic practices.

CONCLUSION

We expect all Democrats to support this Platform as candidates and work to implement it when in office.

WISCONSIN GREEN PARTY May 2005

Headquarters

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Coordinating Council

Co-Chairs: JILL BUSSIERE, Kewaunee; vacancy.

Corresponding Secretary: BOB VEITH, Madison.

Recording Secretary: CINDY STIMMLER, Dresser.

Treasurer: GINNY BORMANN, Bristol.

Diversity Caucus: WINSTON F. SEPHUS, JR., Milwaukee.

Lavender Caucus: MIKE LAFORREST, Lafayette County.

Women's Caucus: JESSA THOMPSON, Chaseburg.

Youth Caucus: PAUL SCHMIDT, LUKE TOMBERLIN, Oshkosh.

Council Members:

1st District

Bill Hensley, Kenosha

Pete Karas, Racine

2nd District

Bill Anderson, Madison

Saul Wolf, Madison

3rd District

Andrew Posselt, Chaseburg

vacancy

4th District

Tommy King, Milwaukee

Ruth Weill, Milwaukee

5th District

Tom Depies, Oconomowoc

Bruce Hinkforth, Oconomowoc

6th District

David Barnhill, Oshkosh

Bob Poeschl, Oshkosh

7th District

Jeff Peterson, Luck

Doug Stingle, Stevens Point

8th District

Chris Burkley, Waupaca

Taku Ronsman, Green Bay

Source: Wisconsin Green Party.

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

Coordinating Council. The Wisconsin Green Party Coordinating Council includes all of the officers plus two members from each of the eight congressional districts in Wisconsin, as well as a representative from each statewide caucus. The officers and members are elected each fall at the membership meeting.

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

2003 WISCONSIN GREEN PLATFORM

Abridged June 2005

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

PREAMBLE

Our vision is of a sustainable society in harmony with the environment, one that meets all people’s needs for security, self-respect, freedom, creativity, and community. We recognize that personal, cultural, social, economic, political, and ecological problems are interconnected. We reject the current simplistic solutions to these problems. New, creative solutions are needed which allow us to live well and happily.

1. ECOLOGY

Wisconsin is primarily an agricultural and forest products state. Stewardship and ecological responsibility are integral parts of land ownership, whether held by individuals, corporations, land trusts, or as a public heritage. The “public trust doctrine,” which holds that public land, water, minerals, forests, and other natural resources are held in trust for the public and used for the common good, must be enforced.

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

Subsidies for a change to organic farming methods are mandatory. New and ecologically sound agricultural products should be encouraged. Regionalization of the food production system should be encouraged.

The state must support universities and technical schools in teaching sustainable farming practices.

Reestablish the family farm as an indispensable part of a diverse and healthy agricultural economy.

A state funded farmer retirement system, funded by real estate transfer taxes, subdivision fees and other methods, should be created. This should be combined with state land banking of prime farmland to prevent diversion to non farm use through first-option state acquisition of the land, annuities to retiring farmers, subsidies to beginning farmers and farm land trusts, and restricted farm resale agreements.

Hybridization and genetic engineering must be reexamined to protect species diversity and impacts on human health and the environment. Growth producing hormones and the preventative use of antibiotics in the production of livestock must be eliminated.

B. Forestry The primary tenet of forestry should be sustainability. The forest and all other ecological communities must be maintained in a manner which allows future generations to benefit.

We advocate for sustainable rural communities. Rural communities in forested regions should include ecosystem-based value-added industries. We demand an elimination of government subsidies for the timber industry.

We support city, county and state zoning which would protect forestland from development and protect forest owners from excessive taxes. We support a general moratorium on Wisconsin road building in public forests and limiting construction of roads in privately owned forests.

C. Energy Major government investments and incentives should encourage renewable energy technology and conservation. Wind, solar and biomass need to be included in Wisconsin’s energy future.

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

Fossil fuels should be phased out. Nonrenewable energy production and consumption should be taxed, and the revenue used to cover the hidden costs of fossil fuels and the development of alternatives.

Nuclear power must be phased out. Workers at closing nuclear plants should be retrained and given top priority for jobs at Wisconsin’s new wind farms.

Regional high level nuclear waste dumps must not be located in Wisconsin.

New vehicles must have higher average miles per gallon requirements and stricter emission control requirements. Wisconsin should impose “gas guzzler” taxes and renewable fuel and “gas sipper” rebates.

Full consideration should be given to alternatives such as mass transit, light rail, high-speed rail, commuter rail, bicycling and walking. Cost benefit analyses must account for the full social and environmental costs of all transportation alternatives and should encourage compact urban and suburban land use patterns to facilitate public transportation.

An elected, citizen oversight board should set highway policy, in place of the Transportation Projects Commission.

State laws and regulations should support local ownership of utilities. Electric power should be decentralized.

D. Mining There must be moratorium on metallic mining in Wisconsin until its impacts are more fully documented. Mining in wetlands and on state lands must be banned.

Mining of ore deposits must ensure the complete protection of the air, surface and ground waters and wildlife, and with respect for sacred sites and medicines of Native Americans.

Mining companies must have no violations of federal, state or local environmental and workplace safety laws to obtain permits to mine in Wisconsin.

Local units of government may ban mining activities within their jurisdictions by local ordinance. Mining companies should be taxed on the net value of their holdings, not on net profits from extracted ore.

Wisconsin’s needs for minerals should be met through recycling.

E. The Natural Environment Commercial practices that pollute or degrade air and water resources must be substituted with nonpolluting alternatives. The use of pollution credits to curb industrial air and water pollution is inadequate.

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

DNR water quality rules must be amended to require absolute non-degradation of existing water bodies. State agencies must inventory the water quality in Wisconsin lakes and rivers and take all measures needed to reduce pollution.

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

There must be statewide standards for landfill siting and construction. The state must provide educational and material assistance to assist in meeting new standards.

We must respect native prairies, forest and wetland flora and fauna, and support the reintroduction of indigenous plant and animal life where it has dwindled. Drainage of wetlands and development of lake and river shorelines should be severely restricted.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

A. Pollution Prevention Greens call for the eventual elimination of discharges of toxic substances. Policy priority should be: (1) new technologies for eliminating the toxic chemicals, (2) recycling of toxics in industrial processes, (3) mitigating or controlling discharges (as a last resort).

The Wisconsin Greens support the goal of zero discharge for the Great Lakes.

An acid rain and heavy metal atmospheric deposition tax on cars, and on all industrial and commercial applications that generate pollutants should be implemented. Use of ozone depleting substances must be banned.

The state must support industries' conversion to clean technologies through tax incentives, loans, grants, and assistance with research and development.

B. Waste The focus of waste handling needs to be changed to resource management.

Reuse and recycling of products to reduce the use of virgin materials should be required whenever possible. Non-recyclable products should be heavily taxed, and the revenue used to pay for waste disposal and waste reduction programs.

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

The state government must build markets for recyclable and reusable products, and buy such products whenever possible.

All products should be rated and labeled as to their total environmental impact. Economic incentives for the production of toxic wastes need to be removed through "full-cost" pricing.

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

Incentives to phase out existing incineration, by substitution of recycling, reuse and source reduction must be implemented. Dilution of toxic incinerator ash must be discontinued. Ash must be classified and disposed of as hazardous waste.

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

C. Pesticides The state should create and maintain a citizen accessible central database of the chemical contents, products used, dosage applied, health effects, and company responsible, for any private or commercial pesticide application.

Pesticides should not be used on or in public property, except as a last resort, after demonstrating the failure of other organic alternatives.

Tax incentives should reward the use of organic pest control methods. Communities in the state should have the right to pass stronger controls on pesticides than those specified in state and federal regulations.

D. Public Right to Protection The public should have an absolute right to know when substances that can harm our health or the health of plants and animals are being handled or transported.

The DNR and State Attorney General must be more vigorous in prosecuting corporate offenses and should hold individuals accountable when appropriate. Corporations that engage in gross violations should be faced with revocation of their corporate charter.

3. POLITICAL REFORM

A. Grassroots Power The Greens support open meetings and open records laws.

The "partial veto" power of governors should be eliminated.

B. Campaign Financing PACs must be eliminated. Limits should be imposed on the money that candidates could spend on campaigns, with the amount determined for each race by the size of constituency of the office being contested. We do not support term limits since they restrict the rights of people to choose their representatives.

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

D. Third Party Rights Laws must be changed to level the playing field for other parties. Subsidies that favor the current major parties must be eliminated.

The current winner-take-all system of voting stifles the voices of many Americans and ensures the perpetuation of a two-party duopoly. We advocate for the immediate adoption of Instant Runoff Voting and the gradual transition to a system of Proportional Representation.

4. ECONOMICS

A. "Growth" vs. Development Current economics is oriented toward perpetual growth. Economic development is different from unlimited growth. Our society must develop into a sustainable economy, where the goal is to improve quality of life for people.

Government economists must be required to develop measurements for quality of life, quality of the environment, and long-term effects of policies.

B. Trade "Free" trade agreements sacrifice the sovereignty of our people, giving a small body of international bureaucrats the ability to override our federal, state and local laws on working conditions, discrimination, health and safety, consumer

protection, and environmental protection. These agreements reduce the living conditions of people to the lowest common denominator. They rob us of our right to use trade sanctions to pressure other countries to be responsible about environmental protection and human rights.

The exportation of pesticides, and other products prohibited for use in the United States must be banned, as well as the importation of food produced with banned products. Tax policies and tariffs should favor products that were produced in a sustainable way and penalize unsustainable products.

C. Responsible Technology Programs of applied research need citizen oversight to assure that technology applications developed with public support are carefully screened based on the public interest, including: quality, need, safety, durability, and the lifecycle toxicity/environmental cost of the products and processes.

D. True Cost Pricing Greens support taxes and other policies to make the price of goods reflect their true cost, thus making environmentally safe products more competitive in the marketplace.

E. Jobs and Quality of Life Economic development must focus on jobs that are based in the community and that will last. The workplace must accommodate people's human needs.

The minimum wage must be raised to a level that comfortably allows support of a family of four. Health and unemployment benefits must cover everyone who does not work. Part-time and temporary workers must make a living wage and have reasonable health coverage.

Health coverage and other "safety nets" must extend to people who are doing unpaid but important work in society.

Policies must be focused on businesses that have a vested interest in the community where their employees live – especially small businesses.

The Wisconsin Greens support family leave legislation, paid vacation time, job sharing, and involving workers in decision-making, management, and scheduling. Workplace safety regulations are necessary.

The Wisconsin Greens support the right of people to form unions, bargain collectively, and strike. We oppose "union-busting" tactics. The State should assist management in working more closely and cooperatively with unions.

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

5. COMMUNITY

A. Community Economics The state should create a development bank that would strengthen community economies through loan guarantees, loan participation, and direct loans to new and small businesses, cooperatives and worker owned firms, organic and beginning farmers, and community land trusts.

B. Rural Communities State tax policies should favor businesses that stay in the community where their employees live. Farmers must receive decent prices for their products, so that they continue to act as an important economic support to small towns.

C. Urban Vision and Revitalization Ecological interdependence and integrity are touchstones of healthy communities – both natural and human. We support the cultural traditions, strong families and initiative and creativity within our cities' many cultural groups that will restore cities to economic, ecological and social health.

What is needed is a coordinated program of public intervention based on ecologically sound reindustrialization programs with worker and management retraining. We support safe neighborhoods. Urban centers in regional watersheds need to become sustainable with clean, renewable energy and safe food produced regionally.

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

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

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

6. VIOLENCE AND CRIME

A. The Nonviolent Ethic One of the key values of the Greens is nonviolence. All types of violence must be addressed.

B. Crime & Punishment Greens emphasize that the solutions to violence, poverty, alienation, anger and political inequality are the key to solving the dilemma of crime and punishment.

Crimes against people and communities must be punished through restitution and/or jail time. Alternative sentencing must be emphasized as much as possible for nonviolent offenders. Ex-offenders need to come out into a healthy community that both supports them and holds them accountable. Prisons must be government-run in a humane manner.

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

Community members must be involved directly in crime control in their own communities through citizen police boards and neighborhood watch programs.

C. Drugs No "war on drugs" can ever be won as long as communities that are overrun with drug abuse and the drug trade have no economic alternatives. Drug abuse of all kinds should be treated as a disease, rather than a criminal offense.

7. TAXATION

A. Fair Taxation Rates Wisconsin Greens support progressive methods of taxation.

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

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

The Greens oppose state caps on property taxes. It is the community's right to decide how to control its own spending.

B. Spending Government decisions should be made as close to the people as possible. When money comes to a community from the state and federal government, the people of the local community must have greater say in how that money is spent. State budgets must be independently audited for unnecessary "pork barrel" spending and that spending eliminated. State agencies must be prepared to defend their budgets, and to submit to external audits of their efficiency and effectiveness.

Special tax breaks should only be granted when there will be a benefit to society to justify the cost.

8. EDUCATION

A. Institutional Policy Educational systems must be decentralized with greater input and control at the local level. After-school programs for the children of single or working parents must be available. Parent education programs should be developed.

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

The state's educational system should teach principles of sustainable development as part of the curriculum in economics, agriculture, engineering and other fields. The Greens call for creating an "Institute for Sustainable Development," based at one or more of the UW system campuses and involving the UW Extension and the Technical Colleges.

B. Educational Techniques Expansion beyond the traditional concept of the classroom and structure of the school day should be encouraged. Opportunities for learning, and the use of "teachers" from the local community must be developed. Educational experiences can involve community service, fieldwork, political activity, and job training.

Students must be helped to learn interpersonal relations, dealing with emotions, conflict resolution, environmental appreciation, and manual skills. Students should be taught the arts of democracy, including how to be involved politically in their communities. The Wisconsin Greens oppose the use of 'high stakes' standardized tests as the primary determinant for grade advancement, graduation or teacher pay.

C. Funding Educational funding should be sufficient to assure true equality of educational opportunity. The state share in public school costs should be increased. School "choice" programs should be limited to public schools. Funding private or religious schools with public tax dollars is unacceptable.

9. HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS

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

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

The government must support nondiscrimination in housing and employment.

C. Native American Rights The Wisconsin Greens support full tribal sovereignty. Members of Indian tribes have rights under treaties with the US government.

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

D. Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Individuals Wisconsin Greens affirm the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender or sexual orientation.

Wisconsin Greens support the right of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people to be treated equally with all other people, in all areas of life, including in housing, employment, civil marriage, benefits, and child custody.

10. HEALTH

A. Health Care System Health care should be a service everyone has access to. When people don't get good health care – especially preventative medicine – all of society pays.

A universal, single-payer system should be funded through state and federal taxes. The system must be designed to minimize bureaucracy and paperwork, and to allow citizens to select health care providers and treatment. The state and federal government should impose cost controls and efficiency requirements to keep costs as low as possible without rationing or denying care.

Regional consumer boards to assure equal access to quality services should be created. Comprehensive health education needs to be offered to all in schools and community centers including information on sex education, AIDS, and substance abuse prevention. People with long-term illness or disabilities must have the right to live at home in their community.

B. Contraception & Abortion Research in contraceptive technologies to make birth control safe, inexpensive and easy to use must be fully supported. Contraceptives need to be made widely available to all people, along with educational programs regarding sexuality and birth control. Safe, legal abortion services must be available.

C. Food and Health Citizens have a right to know what is in the food they eat and to be protected from substances that are toxic. Untested food additives and genetically engineered food should be kept off the market until tested.

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

11. SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The state government should recognize that cultural activities like art, music, and dance are important to all parts of our society, and should support these activities.

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

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN May 2005

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State Executive Committee

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Vice-Chair: JEREMY KEIL, Hales Corners

Secretary: KEITH DESCHLER, Racine.

Treasurer: MARKUS ROSTIG, Fond du Lac.

Past Chair: ED THOMPSON, Tomah.

At-Large Member: JOHN GATEWOOD, Madison.

At-Large Member: JIM MAAS, Rothschild.

Congressional District Representatives:

1st District: Jim Sewell, Racine

5th District: Linda Stanley, Waukesha

2nd District: Stu Seffern, Madison

6th District: Jacob Burns, Oshkosh

3rd District: Thomas Peralta, Richland Center

7th District: Andy Sutton, Rothschild

4th District: Mike McKenna, Milwaukee

8th District: Roy Leyendecker, Green Bay

Source: Libertarian Party of Wisconsin.

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

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

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

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

National Committee. The Libertarian National Committee is composed of the 4 national officers, the immediate past chair, 5 members-at-large, and 9 regional representatives. A state's affiliation with a region is determined by the convention delegates from that state and is often the subject of negotiations before and during the national convention. Members of the Libertarian National Committee are selected at each biennial national convention and serve for 2 years from one national convention to the next. The Libertarian National Committee addresses national issues and serves, but does not control, the state parties.

[**Editor's Note:** The text of the Libertarian Party Platform submitted by party officials is identical to the version printed in the *2003-2004 Wisconsin Blue Book*. Please refer to pp. 875-876 of that edition.]

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN June 2005

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Political Director: JILL LATHAM.

Field Director: TOM MOONEY.

Communications Director: CHRISTINE MANGI.

Controller: LESLIE OEHMEN.

Finance Director: KELLEY WILLET.

Deputy Finance Director: KIM JORNS.

IT Director: BRIAN KIND.

Telemarketing Manager: RICHARD DICKIE.

State Executive Committee

State Chairman: RICHARD GRABER, Shorewood.

Finance Chairman: MICHAEL MARTIN, Antigo.

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

3rd – DON TAYLOR, Waukesha; 4th – vacancy; 5th – KERRI KUESTER, Milwaukee.

Secretary: DAVID ANDERSON, Wausau.

Treasurer: BUCK SCHILLING, Minocqua.

National Committeewoman: MARY BUESTRIN, Mequon.

National Committeeman: TERRY KOHLER, Sheboygan.

Wisconsin African American Council: HATTIE DANIELS-RUSH, Milwaukee.

Wisconsin Heritage Council Chairman: vacancy.

Wisconsin Labor Council Chairman: JOHN RUDIG, Wauwatosa.

Wisconsin Senior Council Chairman: ROD NELSON, Sheboygan.

Immediate Past Chairman: DAVID OPITZ, Port Washington.

Congressional District Chairmen and Vice Chairmen:

1st District

Robert Trapp, Salem

Greg Holding, Racine

2nd District

Kim Babler, Madison

Regina Schaar, Lake Mills

3rd District

Gary Arneson, La Crosse

Jerry Nauman, Norwalk

4th District

Bob Spindell, Milwaukee

Doug Haag, Milwaukee

5th District

Crystal Berg, Hartford

Curt David, Brookfield

6th District

Rod Nelson, Sheboygan

David Vliestra, Sheboygan

7th District

Bill Johnson, Hayward

Sean Duffy, Ashland

8th District

William Ross, Shawano

Mary Ellen Ramstack, Sturgeon Bay

Source: Republican Party of Wisconsin.

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

Congressional District Organization. Each congressional district has an organization that coordinates the activities of the county organizations in the district, with special emphasis on the election of Republican congressional candidates. The district organization is directed by a committee consisting of district members of the state executive committee and, at minimum, an elected chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer. Committee officers are elected in odd-numbered years prior to the state convention.

State Officers and Executive Committee. Party leadership is vested in a 32-member state executive committee, consisting of the 11 party officers (including the chairman of the county chairmen's organization and the chairman of the Young Republicans Professionals, who are designated respectively as the third and fifth vice chairmen of the committee); the immediate past state party chairman; the chairman and vice chairman from each of the state's 8 congressional district organizations; and the Wisconsin Republican African American Council, the Wisconsin Heritage Council, the Wisconsin Senior Citizen Council, and the Wisconsin Labor Council. State committee vacancies are filled by the committee.

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

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

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

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

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

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF WISCONSIN PLATFORM

Adopted at the State Party Convention, La Crosse, May 2004

Preamble

The most important platform of any American political party was adopted 150 years ago when the Republican Party was founded in Ripon, Wisconsin. Our party began its life committing us to the abolition of slavery and advocating the principles of freedom, central to which is the belief that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are the inalienable rights of all people.

In this Presidential election year of 2004, we recommit ourselves to the goals and ideals of the Republican Party.

We believe in the equality of all individuals – equality of justice, opportunity and treatment. We believe in the dignity of all people. We believe in the freedom of each individual to peacefully debate the issues of the day, to speak their minds and to worship as they choose. We believe that each individual has the personal responsibility to become the best person that one can be and that we as a society need to help him or her when necessary. We believe that a strong national government is necessary to protect our freedoms but that all governmental decisions should be made at the level closest to those governed by such decisions. Governments, like people, must act responsibly to protect our values and traditions and to encourage individuals in their pursuit of their personal goals.

America is the land of the free and the home of the brave. America is a shining beacon to the rest of the world. This is our country and this is our belief. We are the Republican Party of Wisconsin and we believe in America.

Individual States' Rights

We believe our citizens and the fifty states must continue to vigorously reclaim all power not expressly given to the federal government as guaranteed through the Ninth and Tenth Amendments to the Constitution. We oppose all efforts of an activist judiciary to usurp these powers.

Family Values

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

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

Republicans support legislative and judicial efforts that would affirm legal protection for all innocent human beings from conception until natural death and affirm our support for the Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We strongly support a ban on human cloning and we oppose all research that relies on the destruction of human life, including the unborn.

Government and the People

Governments are a necessary part of society. They have vital functions in providing us with security and services that would otherwise not be possible. They provide us with the framework for improving our lives and protecting our traditions and freedoms. Governments should exist only to serve the needs of their citizens and must continue to be accountable to them. Our leaders need to be the best people that we have; they need to be scrupulously honest. Governments must limit themselves to only those functions that cannot be fulfilled by other means. They must act with fiscal responsibility to prevent unnecessary taxation, regulation and interference in the lives of our citizens.

Education

Parental involvement is the key to successful education.

Parents must be given the ability to choose where their children go to school, whether public, private or religious, through a comprehensive school choice plan in which funding follows the students. We support expansion of school choice throughout Wisconsin. We also advocate the right of parents to homeschool their children.

Republicans seek policies and programs that will unleash the independence, innovation and creativity of individual teachers, administrators and school boards. We condemn compliance with state and federal mandates as a substitute for local accountability. We will promote local control of public schools while demanding accountability for results and high standards.

We urge Wisconsin's education system to teach the basic skills and traditional family values as defined by the local community, and to use technology to prepare students to compete in the global economy.

Freedom of Religion

We call for an end to governmental discrimination against religion and interference with the free practice of religion.

Growing Wisconsin's Economy

Growing Wisconsin's economy is a high priority for Wisconsin Republicans as we continue to build Wisconsin through economic development and job creation.

Recognizing that Wisconsin taxes are too high, we oppose any net increases in taxes and call for significant tax relief immediately. Because Wisconsin citizens still carry a heavier tax burden than citizens of other states, we call for a State constitutional amendment to limit government growth.

Environment

Republicans believe a balance must be struck between protection of our resources and protection of private property rights. It is the Republican viewpoint that Wisconsin can have a strong economy and protect the environment at the same time. Both private and public interests have a responsibility to preserve the rich heritage that our state has been blessed with, both in its great natural beauty and precious resources.

We support compensation for individuals when their property is taken or its value is reduced by government actions.

Campaign Finance Reform

We support the right of individuals to freely express their political opinions through their financial contributions, with full, prompt disclosure. We insist that neither employers nor unions should force individuals to contribute to political causes against their will. We oppose public financing of all campaigns.

Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms

The Republican Party of Wisconsin is a vigilant supporter of the right of individuals to keep and bear arms embodied in both the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 25, of the Wisconsin Constitution. We fully endorse the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, support its broad interpretation as an individual right and oppose restrictive legislation. We cannot ignore the clear lessons of history regarding the tyranny and suffering which can fall upon a disarmed and vulnerable people.

Equal Treatment for Everyone

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

National Defense

America must remain a strong force in the world through example, education and assistance to other governments. It must encourage the development of democracy, equality and respect for humanity throughout the world and, when necessary, it must protect itself and its allies from the forces of evil through military means. To that end we support the continued maintenance of a strong national defense with the most modern of weapons and the best training that can be provided for our troops. We support the continued development of homeland security against attack by all reasonable means that do not infringe upon our constitutional freedoms. We wholeheartedly support our troops abroad and our military and political leaders who direct their efforts.

Republican Leadership

We are fortunate today to have numerous, dedicated Republican political leaders to set the example for us. We are proud of President Bush and our Republican congressional members at the national level and their principled positions on topics of national concern. Our state and local elected Republican leaders continue their example as we pursue Republican principles elsewhere in government.

As we look ahead to the next 150 years of supporting the principles of freedom and democracy in America and the world, we also proudly acknowledge the efforts of Republican volunteers in politics and society. We encourage all like-minded Americans to join us in our quest to defend and improve our country now and in the future.

This platform is dedicated to the memory of all Wisconsin Republicans who have committed themselves to the principles of our party over the last 150 years.
