



## *2017 Party Platform*

*From May 20, 1775 through today, North Carolina has been a beacon for independence and freedom. Independence finds its foundation in limited government and individual responsibility. We believe that individuals are best suited to make their own decisions about their welfare.*

*We believe that government can best help people realize their full potential by governing within the principled foundations set by the North Carolina State Constitution and the US Constitution. We know government governs best that governs least and allows individuals to follow their own paths to prosperity. The North Carolina Republican Party applauds the efforts of our Republican elected officials in turning back the encroaching powers of government and freeing the people of North Carolina to work toward a bright future.*

### **Article I. Family**

1. Our nation's strength lies with the family. It is the first school of discipline, responsibility and good citizenship. We embrace the principle that all Americans should be treated with respect and dignity.
2. The institution of marriage is the foundation of civil society. Its success as an institution will determine our success as a nation. It has been proven by both experience and endless social science studies that traditional marriage is best for children. Children raised in intact, married families are more likely to attend college, are physically and emotionally healthier, are less likely to use drugs or alcohol, engage in crime, or get pregnant outside of marriage. The success of marriage directly impacts the economic wellbeing of individuals. Furthermore, the future of marriage affects freedom. The lack of family formation not only leads to more government costs, but also to more government control over the lives of its citizens. We recognize and honor the courageous efforts of those who bear the many burdens of parenting alone, even as we believe that marriage, as the union of one man and one woman must be upheld as the national standard.
3. We support the marriage amendment as part of the North Carolina Constitution and encourage all efforts to defend it.

4. We affirm the authority of parental rights over their children's welfare from conception to emancipation. We support laws that require written, notarized consent for medical treatments such as mental health treatments of minor children, drug and alcohol treatment, and counseling and services related to contraceptives, pregnancy and abortion. Government, however, should protect children from abuse and neglect, balancing parental rights with the protection of a child's health and safety.

5. We affirm that the State of North Carolina is prohibited from taking discriminatory action against a person on the basis that such person believes or acts in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that: (1) marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman, or (2) sexual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage.

## Article II. The Economy

1. Recognizing that wealth creation is the product of human enterprise, the free enterprise system is the most effective and just economic system in the world. It creates opportunity, rewards self-reliance and hard work, and unleashes productivity that other societies can only imagine. It is an engine of charity, making America the most philanthropic nation on earth. Government should encourage honest, productive work through elimination of both gratuitous regulations and excessive taxation.

2. Economic freedom is essential to human liberty and dignity. It preserves the inherent right to liberty and ownership of private property. To protect this inherent right, government must provide an environment for individual initiative and enterprise. We support encouraging economic growth through reduced regulation and taxation, and we oppose corporate welfare.

3. Government should tax only to raise money for its constitutional functions. We support a thorough review of expenditures each year, and we support a taxpayer's bill of rights. We support the continuation of reforming the tax code to encourage economic growth that moves toward a system that taxes the broadest possible base of economic activity at the lowest possible rates.

4. Because growth in employment requires expanding capital formation, we oppose the taxation of capital gains as ordinary income.

## Article III. Individual Liberty

1. Liberty is founded upon a belief in the inherent dignity of the human person and recognition that individuals possess God-given inherent rights including, but not limited to, the right to life, liberty and property, and the pursuit of happiness. The fundamental role of government is to protect those inherent rights as recognized in our Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, including its Bill of Rights, and the North Carolina Constitution, including its Declaration of Rights.

2. We believe that America's constitutional form of government is the best system of ensuring freedom. Consistent with that belief, our government must enact, interpret and enforce laws consistent with a strict construction of our Constitutions.

3. We support the free exercise of religion by all Americans. We oppose any restriction on the free exercise of religion such as removing prayer from governmental activities or the removal of "Almighty God" from our public documents and institutions. We oppose any attempt of government to establish a

state religion, or to foster one religion over another. We oppose any governmental coercive action aimed at limiting the free exercise of religion. We support the right of individuals and corporations to uphold their free exercise rights consistent with the 1st amendment to the US Constitution. We support the right of all institutions, including hospitals and schools, to refuse to provide contraceptive, abortion, or other services of procedures inconsistent with their religious tenets.

4. Government should treat all citizens impartially and equally under the law. Invidious discrimination is detrimental to freedom for all individuals and we oppose it in any form.

5. The Second Amendment guarantees the right of the individual to keep and bear arms. We support the constitutional ownership, sale, purchase and carry of firearms by law-abiding citizens. Further, we support reducing the number of “gun-free zones”. Gun owners have a right to confidentiality. Personal information acquired by government agencies for gun purchases and permitting should be available to law enforcement for investigative purposes only and not for public record.

6. Private property should not be taken by eminent domain except for a direct public use and upon prompt payment of just compensation.

## Article IV. Sanctity of Life

1. We believe in the sanctity of all human life. Unborn children have constitutional rights to life and liberty and, as such, the government must respect and protect all innocent human life from conception to natural death.

2. We oppose infanticide and urge the enactment of laws to require medical care for babies who survive abortions.

3. We oppose efforts to mandate the provision of abortion or to fund with taxpayer dollars organizations that provide or promote abortion services. We oppose public school-based health clinics that provide referrals, counseling and related services for abortion and contraception.

4. We support requiring mandatory counseling before an abortion to ensure the pregnant woman knows all of the options and resources available to her and her baby.

5. We support the right of medical professionals to refuse to participate in abortions. We support the right of pharmacists to refuse to dispense abortion inducing drugs. We believe that state funded institutions should not provide abortion training.

6. We oppose euthanasia, as it is the ultimate form of discrimination against persons with disabilities, including newborns, the elderly and infirm. We believe these individuals should be treated with love and respect, not as a burden. We urge the General Assembly to enact legislation criminalizing assisted suicide.

7. We support developments in biomedical research that enhance and protect human life. We oppose human cloning and the destruction of human embryos, and we strongly support adult stem cell research. 8. We support criminal penalties for harming or killing an unborn child when the mother is

killed or injured in a criminal act. 9. We urge the General Assembly to enact a law which would require written, notarized parental consent for an abortion and/or contraceptives for their minor children.

## Article V. State Government

1. We believe that in a free society, power should rest in the hands of the people. We believe in a limited government which serves the people, rather than one that enslaves them.
2. We believe that government at all levels should not spend money it does not have and avoid passing on debts to future generations.
3. Government retirement and pension plans should be privately owned and portable.
4. We oppose gambling.
5. We oppose unfunded state mandates for counties and municipalities, and excessive regulation on commerce and industry. All regulations should sunset and explicitly require re-authorization by the elected government.
6. No State funds should be spent without an explicit appropriation. We oppose “slush funds” as rewards for political support. Raiding of dedicated funds should not be allowed except in an emergency as determined by law. Every bill heard in committee should receive a recorded vote. The budget bill should be made public at least two legislative days before the final vote in each house.
7. We support the issuance of a driver’s license or state identification card only to those who are lawfully present
8. The mental health system needs to be reformed. The needs of patients must be the first priority. This requires diagnosis, comprehensive care, follow-up, and stiff penalties for those who abuse or exploit patients.
9. We support efforts to ensure that habitual drug users are not on public assistance rolls. We believe that drug tests are appropriate if there is reasonable suspicion of illegal drug use.

## Article VI. Elections

1. A free society demands an honest and accurate election process. Our laws and our policies at every level of government should insure both. We support one vote from every eligible citizen and we encourage all to register and to vote.
2. We support legislation requiring election judges at all election sites, including early voting sites.
3. We support enforced state-wide procedures for updating voter rolls to ensure accuracy.
4. We reaffirm our support of voter ID and the repeal of straight ticket voting.
5. We support compact contiguous single member districts that do not split counties, except as required by federal law or the state constitution.

6. We recognize the independence of the judiciary and oppose the appointment of state judges to full terms. To hold our trial courts accountable through direct elections is a valuable right.
7. Voters should have timely information on candidates' campaign finances. We oppose funding election campaigns with public or foreign funds.
8. We support partisan elections for all offices.
9. We encourage state and federal prosecutors to promptly investigate and prosecute voter fraud.

## Article VII. Education

1. All children should have access to an education that empowers them to reach their highest, God-given potential, allowing them to contribute to the betterment of our society. A North Carolina high school diploma should fully prepare students to enter college, technical school, or the workforce.
2. Education policies and budget decisions are best made by local and state governments to ensure that North Carolina students graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in today's global economy. The people of North Carolina support the highest, most rigorous educational standards that are developed through legislation by the NC General Assembly. All standards and reforms should aim to improve student achievement. We oppose nationally imposed standards such as "Common Core", and recognize these as an attempt by unelected and unaccountable private interests, supported by the Federal Government, to control our state education system.
3. We support English as the official language of the United States. Therefore, we support the expedited use of English as a Second Language in the classroom as an assimilation tool.
4. Parents have the right to expect excellent public education. Parents also have the right and responsibility to direct their children's education, while students have the obligation to learn. Allowing choice and competition in education drives all schools towards quality outcomes. We applaud the expansion of vocational curricula and school choice in North Carolina.
5. We urge the NC General Assembly to enact legislation guaranteeing parental rights over sex and health education in NC. Parents must have access to all curricula and data about their children, including content that is stored electronically. Schools should not ask children to answer offensive or intrusive personal questionnaires without parental consent. We oppose sex education in public schools without parental consent. Public schools should not be used to teach children about homosexual behavior. No birth control devices or drugs should be distributed in public schools. We support teaching abstinence until marriage as the expected norm for sexual behavior.
6. Teachers should be promoted based on the quality of their work, and not exclusively on longevity. Teachers should be well-trained in the subject matter they teach. Highly qualified teachers at low-performing schools should be paid more if their students show greater academic progress.
7. Support of civil liberties and patriotism is an important part of learning to become a good citizen. We support regular recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, displays of the American and North Carolina State

flag, and use of our national motto “In God We Trust”. Schools should teach students about the historical foundation and documents of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence and federal and state constitutions. Curricula must include civics so that students will be prepared to vote as informed citizens.

8. We support the right of students and faculty to pray in school and at public occasions without censorship. Schools should revitalize the Judeo-Christian values of Western civilization. Article VIII. Justice 1. One of the main

## Article VIII. Justice

1. One of the main duties of government is to maintain law and order, while securing for its citizens the freedom to pursue the blessings of liberty and the fruits of their labor.

2. We support the death penalty for first degree murder. We should drastically reduce the time between death sentence and execution in order to have an effective deterrent.

3. We call for mandatory sentencing for all violent crimes, especially crimes committed against those who are charged with protecting us.

4. Suppliers and consumers of illegal drugs should be dealt with to the fullest extent of the law. Those who drive while impaired must face stiff punishment.

5. We condemn gratuitous violence and pornography in literature and music. We oppose internet pornography. We support mandatory labeling of these products. Laws should control obscene or sadistic materials. Child pornography is a hideous form of child abuse. Those who produce it—and those who traffic in it – must be punished to the maximum extent of the law.

6. We want stiff penalties enforced for abducting, exploiting or abusing children, including unborn children. We abhor domestic violence and human trafficking.

7. Prisons should focus on security, education and labor. Inmates should be required to work.

## Article X. Federal Policy

1. National security being one of the first and most important roles of government we support a foreign policy of peace through strength. That strength can only be accomplished with a strong military supported both when abroad and at home with the full gratitude and resources of the United States. Strength only exists when our borders are secure and our enemies deterred.

2. A republican form of government is the foundation of freedom. Our foreign policy must promote and support democratic governments worldwide and oppose tyranny in all its forms.

3. Persistent efforts are underway at county, state and national levels to undermine the legitimacy and security of our democratic ally Israel. We support Republican leaders affirming our shared values with

Israel and our unequivocal commitment to Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state with secure, defensible borders, with Jerusalem as Israel's eternal, undivided capital.

4. Opposition to slavery is the foundation for the GOP. We oppose slavery, including human trafficking, in any form both foreign and domestic.

5. The sovereignty of the United States should never be weakened through fruitless allegiance or membership in international treaties and organizations that dilute our sovereign right to govern ourselves. We oppose attempts by foreign governments or international organizations to infringe on our sovereignty.

6. Economic strength is the foundation of the United States' greatness. We support free markets, free trade, and capitalist principles at home and around the world. Threats to our economic strength should be met with sound market-based policies designed to enhance individual rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

7. Understanding that individuals and households are the basis for our economic system, we support free market solutions to societal problems. Market based solutions offer the most efficient use of scarce resources to solve public goods problems. We support individual's ability to choose private market based solutions to retirement, health insurance, worker's rights, or any other public goods or infrastructure issues.

8. We support the principle of a "sound money" policy to sustain a stable US currency. The Comptroller General of the General Office of

Accounting must perform an annual accounting of the Federal Reserve to ensure its transparency and accountability.

9. We call on Congress, the President and the courts to abide by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution and the Ninth and Tenth Amendments. We oppose encroachment upon all powers that the Constitution has reserved to the states or to the people.

10. We support policies protecting all innocent human life, and therefore we oppose government efforts promoting abortion. We support actions that prohibit the distribution of federal funds to any organization that promotes or provides abortions.

11. The US Constitution is the enumeration of the foundational principles of this great country. As such, we oppose any usurpation of the foundational principles or articles in the Constitution by activists in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

12. We oppose granting permanent resident status for those who, by intentionally violating the immigration law, disadvantage those who have obeyed it. Granting amnesty only rewards and encourages more law breaking. Employers should only hire those legally allowed to work in the United States.

Respectfully, The 2017 Platform Committee

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