

**ELBERT COUNTY  
REPUBLICANS  
2019  
PARTY PLATFORM**



**ELBERT COUNTY  
REPUBLICANS**

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**We dedicate this platform with admiration and gratitude**

- To the good people of Elbert County -

The farmers and ranchers who feed our nation,  
to those that serve their community and support  
their neighbors

and

To all who stand strong in the face of danger

So that the American people may be protected against it —

The men and women of our military who protect our nation,  
of our law enforcement, and the first responders

of our county —

And to their families.

**IN GOD WE TRUST**

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## The Credo of an Elbert County Republican

I am an Elbert County Republican.

This means....

*... I believe in the supreme importance of Faith, Family & Freedom.*

*... I believe that our rights are a gift from God.*

*... I believe the primary purpose of Government is to protect these rights.*

*... I believe in constitutionally-limited governance and the rule of law.*

*... I believe that the government that governs least, governs best.*

*... I believe that a free economy, unfettered exercise of property rights, and minimal taxation bring prosperity to all.*

*... I believe that personal responsibility, the freedom to fail and the freedom to succeed should be encouraged and protected.*

I support all who truly believe these things. I will strive to bring more to this way of thinking. I will work to elect those that will serve according to these principles.



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# 2019 Elbert County Republican Platform

## Preamble

*The United States of America was founded upon the principles of Limited Government, Personal Liberty and Individual Responsibility under God. As Republicans, we believe that the role of government is to defend these principles and secure the rights of its citizens. We agree with the founders of Colorado who ordained and established this great state "with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, in order to form a more independent and perfect government; establish justice; insure tranquility; provide for the common defense; promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity". We affirm that there are God-given rights, which, as protected by guarantees in the U.S. Constitution, form the foundation of our rights as citizens. We reject the notion that government can, or should attempt to, limit individual achievement or impose equal social outcomes. We believe that from freedom comes opportunity; from opportunity comes growth; and from growth comes progress and prosperity.*

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## **I. Citizens' Rights & Responsibilities**

Government has no power or authority of its own except for that which is delegated by the people. All power and authority not explicitly delegated to government is retained by the people. We are guaranteed and will defend the freedoms of speech, religion, peaceful assembly, individual possession of firearms, unbridged property rights, and recognize and protect the authorities retained by the people under Colorado's Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR). We expect our elected officials, at all levels of government- local, state, and federal – to protect our rights. It is our responsibility as citizens to monitor the activities of our elected officials and hold them accountable for their actions.

## **II. Government**

Our three-branch form of government with its system of checks and balances, as established by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Colorado is the best in the world. We believe any interpretation of these two Constitutions should be strictly based on the original intent of those that drafted and approved each document and the amendments to each. Both are extraordinary documents designed to protect us from those who seek power and control over us. Just as the temptation of man to control his neighbor survives the ages, so must the Constitutions' checks and balances.

We must be wary of those who seek to weaken the Constitution by declaring it obsolete or contorting its plain meaning. Inasmuch as Article VI of the Constitution declares it to be the Supreme Law of the Land, courts should not use any international law, Canon law or Islamic law to decide cases. Cases should be decided using U.S. and Colorado law only.

Governments at all levels relentlessly encroach into all spheres of public and private life. We are not against government — we are for a smaller, more accountable and more effective government. Our federal government was created by the states with powers limited to those in Article I, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution and those limits are emphasized in the Bill of Rights.

The states and the people bear the responsibility to enforce those limits upon the central government. We believe that government exists to serve the people, and not the other way around. But above all, we believe the people should have the ultimate choice in how they live their lives, use their property, and spend their own money.

We support:

- The Federal government protecting our Constitution by providing for the national defense, defending our borders, preserving our sovereignty and protecting the private property rights of citizens;
- An end to bailouts and crony capitalism that place the taxpayer at risk while the profits go to others;
- Full and honest Congressional audits of the Federal Reserve's management of the money and credit system of the United States;
- Regular and public independent performance and fiscal audits of government agencies and offices at all levels;
- Enforcement of criminal laws with stringent sentences coupled with strict parole supervision;
- That all elected officials be term-limited and held accountable for violations of local, state and federal laws;

- The prohibition of ‘earmarks’ – federal under-the-table funding of pet projects attached to unrelated bills with the hope that nobody will notice. If a project needs funding, it should be voted on as a normal part of the budgeting process; and
- An Article V Convention of the States for proposing amendments to the United States Constitution that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, and that impose limits to the jurisdiction of the federal government, and limits terms in office for its officials and for members of Congress.

We recognize and support the wisdom of the federal form of our national government, a government that must recognize the sovereignty of the many states of the union. As such, we oppose any measures that weaken or eliminate the electoral college as the body that determines the outcome of presidential elections, and support Colorado’s supremacy in matters where powers have not been specifically granted to the federal government.

We oppose delegation of legislative powers to state and federal level bureaucracies. “Rule making” has supplanted “law making”. In this environment, the presumption of innocence is lost. Over-regulation requires citizens to continuously prove they are doing right versus placing the onus on government to prove wrongdoing if it does occur.

We recognize that our county is a political subdivision of the state and has no vested sovereignty of its own. However, we expect our county officials to recognize and defend against infringement of our citizens’ inalienable rights and to support increased local control of issues that affect our county.

### **III. Economy & Jobs**

We believe that free enterprise is the foundation of our country’s economic system. The wealth of our state and nation rises as labor and capital are put to productive use. Jobs are created when profitable concepts are matched with capital and invested in a new economic activity. Government attempts to stimulate employment but it cannot create any ‘job growth’ because it has no capital of its own. It can only tax and borrow. Federal government’s spending and borrowing policy is redirecting investment capital toward government, by monopolizing credit. Real growth based on rising productivity is sustainable. “Growth” based on our ever-expanding level of public debt is not.

Savings at all levels of society, personal and business, is the fuel for an expanding economy. Regulations, mandates, and capital gains taxes all act as a drag on entrepreneurship. Government at all levels should foster the creation of jobs through cutting taxes, spending, and regulations.

The United States’ comparative advantage in foreign trade places it at the head of the global supply chain. Our focus needs to be on global innovation, inputs, and customers, instead of lobbying for domestic protection to achieve prosperity. We support bilateral trade agreements that open markets for our goods and services and establish and enforce fair ground rules.

### **IV. Debt, Deficits and Entitlement Reform**

Our nation faces the most severe and predictable debt and fiscal crisis in its history. Interest payments on the national debt and the growth of entitlement spending will consume the entire national budget within decades. Our federal entitlements have trillions in unfunded liabilities and are unsustainable in their current form. Promises to current retirees and those nearing retirement must be kept — but without fundamental reform, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid will not be there for future

generations. We recognize "Obamacare" is an unaffordable entitlement that must be repealed and replaced with market-driven solutions.

The Treasury's and Federal Reserve's focus on suppressing interest rates, and hence borrowing costs, disguises the magnitude of the debt threat and stores up trouble for future taxpayers. The federal administration must be motivated to reduce the deficit. Current, artificially low annual borrowing costs give the illusion of an unlimited time for remedy. This is not a sustainable reality. Interest rate increases back to the norm will create fiscal panic and pressure for huge tax increases or worse, default. Near zero interest rates given by the Federal Reserve to those privileged to receive such loans encourage leverage and risk, rather than investment in manufacturing plants and equipment which would produce job growth.

We believe that additional revenue should come from economic growth and from continued reform of the national and state tax codes. Tax reform must be based on the principle of producing a flatter and fairer tax code with the broadest possible base of participants. The current tax system remains too complex — riddled with government subsidies and exemptions for privileged groups, and half the country paying no Federal income tax at all. Everyone should have something at stake when tax rates are determined. The purpose of taxation should be to raise sufficient revenue, not to redistribute income and favor certain social outcomes. The nation requires continued action on entitlement and tax reform.

We support a balanced budget amendment to control spending at the federal-level, strict interpretation of the TABOR protections at the state-level and hold that increased economic activity and the encouragement of reasonable commercial development will provide sufficient future revenues, if managed wisely, at the county level.

## **V. National Security**

We believe in a strong and free America, a nation that leads the world in demonstrating the values of peace, freedom, and human rights. We must control our borders, prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and continue to combat terrorism. We believe in working with all nations to promote freedom, but under no circumstances should the sovereignty of the United States of America be subordinated to any foreign or international body.

We believe:

- Our strategic interests throughout the world must be protected and maintained. Therefore, we absolutely oppose any degradation of our military, and we support maintaining our nuclear deterrent based on realistic assessments of current and emerging threats. Peace through strength should remain our national policy;
- Continuing to honor all past and current obligations to our troops and veterans is our duty, including audits of military hospitals to ensure high quality care;
- Our intelligence agencies must be strengthened and empowered to work together and to cooperate with immigration authorities and local law enforcement;
- Our national security must take precedence over international commerce, including securing our key infrastructure, ports and utilities; and
- Israel has a right, as do all sovereign states, to defend itself against foreign enemies and state-sponsored terrorism.

## **VI. Border Security & Immigration**

The United States has the world's most vibrant economy, and a system of laws and government that ensures freedom. Our country is a beacon of hope for peoples around the world, many of whom live in countries with oppressive regimes and limited economic opportunities. We cherish America's heritage as an immigrant nation while understanding that our nation has the right and need to secure its borders, and to determine temporary visa, residency and citizenship requirements.

Legal immigration can bring people with needed skills to help build stronger businesses, a more vibrant economy, and increase the wealth and quality of life for all Americans. Highly skilled workers in high-demand fields contribute to our whole economy. A program for guest workers (e.g. in agriculture) with proper documentation is necessary and proper. Employers need improved tools and incentives and obligations to verify employment status.

Welcoming visitors and legal immigrants is an American tradition. However, those entering on visas must be properly monitored, and regulations must be enforced by both federal and local agencies.

We strongly oppose any steps at state or local levels to provide sanctuary for illegal immigrants and support strong cooperation with federal authorities in immigration matters.

## **VII. Property Rights**

The right to own and control property is one of the key foundations of personal liberty. Increasingly onerous and unjustified land use regulations are eroding this basic freedom and our ability to maintain a growing economy. Such policies reduce choice and raise housing prices for owners and renters at all economic levels. We support:

- Strong public input in all county planning efforts and state-level initiatives that increase publically held lands or rights of way;
- Minimizing any use of eminent domain and restricting its application only to genuine public works projects (those that are publically funded and publically owned upon completion);
- Preserving the requirements that adequate notice of any proposed condemnation or change in land use be published in print media and be presented directly to affected property owners;
- At least full market compensation and appropriate tax reassessment for property taking or reduction of usage;
- Preservation of the Gallagher Amendment which protects residential property owners from unreasonable ad valorem taxes; and
- Preservation of an owner's freedom to exercise water and mineral rights.

## **VIII. Environment**

The Republican Party has a long tradition of promoting responsible stewardship of our environment, such as the landmark Republican legislation that created our National Parks system and established the Environmental Protection Agency.

Environmental policies should be based on sound, well-established science subject to all the rigorous debate and constant reexamination that is expected of scientific study and not based on political

ideology. We all need clean air, water and land. We believe it is possible to have these without seriously damaging our economy or compromising our standard of living.

Environmental policies should not be used for wealth redistribution.

We support:

- Our rural ranchers and farmers, as stewards of the land from which they draw their livelihood, they are best positioned to determine how to best preserve and conserve its viability;
- Commonsense practices in forest, wetlands, fisheries, and wildlife management, promoting multiple uses of natural resources in most circumstances;
- Maintaining and adequately funding national, state and local parks so that they can be enjoyed for decades to come;
- Improved and affordable access for citizens to enjoy the public lands;
- Private property rights, which are the foundation of liberty and which deserve consideration in all environmental policy decisions;
- The concept that the science involved in climate change is not settled. Scientists around the world now question whether sufficient attention has been paid to the proven historical influence of natural solar cycles, and many other aspects of climate science; and
- Elimination of or wholesale restructuring of the Environmental Protection Agency which has strayed far from its original mandate to protect our environment and is now being used to cripple economic productivity and restrict property rights across our Nation.

## **IX. Energy**

Energy is critical for our productive livelihood and economy. Harnessed energy is an input in all we produce. The U.S. is an energy rich country with the largest combined fossil fuel supply on the earth, and it should remain a national priority to secure reliable and diverse sources of energy.

Responsible development of our own resources will produce American jobs, tax revenue and energy supply independence. More energy production and a clean environment can coexist. Experience has shown that the private sector has an excellent track record of innovation to produce new supply, beyond existing low cost reserves.

High world energy prices have spurred continued energy usage efficiencies, and the development of alternate non-carbon technology. Real innovation must be measured against the actual energy gains produced compared with the energy and capital invested. Politically directed investment does not make an efficient allocation of capital and often leads to mal-investment.

Current government policies regarding permitting new and existing power plants and the opening of Federal lands for leases hinder future prosperity. North American partnerships, including the proposed Keystone pipeline, will provide additional energy supply and security. Our economic, security and environmental future is bright if we follow realistic policies.

We oppose any state regulation that reduces the value of owned or leased mineral rights and negatively impacts critical revenues from energy production that help fund our roads and schools and employ our citizens.

We support the safe and effective gas and oil production within our county.

## **X. Transportation**

An effective transportation system is critical to our economy and quality of life. Roads, rail, and air transportation all play important roles in moving people and products within Colorado. Government transportation policies should be responsive to the needs of the people, not an attempt to artificially control transportation choices and should not be a tool for social engineering. Gas taxes must be used exclusively on roads. Toll funds must be used only toward the same tolling project.

Transit – bus and light rail – have their place in a comprehensive transportation system, but must be self-sustaining and not pull funding from other more needed projects.

## **XI. Education**

It is a paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, economic status, or sex.

Families bear primary responsibility for making their best educational choices. They need options including: appropriately funded public schools, charter schools, home-based activities and tax exemptions for private choices. Local school districts must be given the freedom from bureaucracy to provide education as directed by the local community and elected school boards. Public schools must meet basic standards outlined by the state with an emphasis on reading, writing, history, U.S. history, the Constitution, mathematics and the sciences. Schools need to require all children learn the English language.

Control of curriculum must be maintained by local elected school boards. We oppose top down attempts to control curriculum through implementation of Common Core State Standards and onerous standardized testing regimens.

Government must appropriately fund public schools and hold them accountable through performance audits. Basic state standards must not be accompanied by onerous directives and unfunded mandates.

We oppose the granting of "In State" tuition benefits to any student not a citizen of this nation, regardless of residence or elementary and secondary schools attended.

## **XII. Criminal Justice**

Those that leave their family and the safety of their homes each day in order to protect our homes and families are deserving of the highest respect and honor. We support our federal, state and local law enforcement personnel. We support the continued availability of the death penalty as a deterrent to heinous crime, a just punishment for those who commit heinous crime, and as a tool for prosecutors to ensure justice for victims of serious crime. We oppose any attempts to allow establishing retail or wholesale marijuana businesses within the county. We oppose attempts to reduce cooperation between local, state and federal law enforcement in combating illicit drug trade and illegal immigration.

### **XIII. Family**

The traditional family is the cornerstone of a free society. Strong caring families with both a father and mother provide the ideal environment for raising and preparing children to become positive, contributing members of their community. We recognize that not all families have both parents in the home. We commend the many single parents, grandparents, extended family members, adoptive parents, and others who accept the responsibility of preserving families. It is the right and responsibility of parents to provide for and direct all matters concerning the health, welfare, education and moral training of their minor children.

In custody disputes, the government must not limit a child or children to one parent when both are equally capable and desire to take an active part in their children's upbringing; except when there is proven criminal wrongdoing, abuse or neglect. Our laws must strengthen and sustain family rights and the traditional family structure. We support protecting the institution of marriage and its benefits to society by defining marriage as between one man and one woman.

### **XIV. Life**

We believe human life is precious and must be respected in our culture and our laws. We stand with the Founders in declaring that each individual has a fundamental, unalienable right to life. We support protection of innocent human life, pre-born or born, through all stages of life, illness and disability. We approve of stem cell research which does not rely on human embryonic tissue, and legislative prohibitions on human cloning, infanticide, euthanasia, partial-birth abortion and assisted suicide.

### **XV. The Individual Right to Bear Arms**

We believe in the inalienable right of self-defense as enshrined in the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and reinforced by Article II, Section 13 of our Colorado Constitution. We recognize that this right provides the ultimate protection against a tyrannical government. The Bill of Rights refers to human individuals, not groups under the control of the government. Therefore, the Second Amendment affirmatively protects an individual right to keep and bear arms and is not a collective right. As such, we support the continued designation of Elbert County as a "Second Amendment Sanctuary".

We support:

- All efforts to eliminate or reduce current state and federal restrictions on our right to bear arms including passage of legislation to implement reciprocal recognition of other states' concealed carry permits and "Constitutional Carry" (permitless carry).
- The extension of the "Castle Doctrine" (right to defend your home) to cover business owners in their places of business.
- The discretion of local boards of education to determine appropriate measures to ensure school safety and including providing for the voluntary arming of appropriately trained teachers and staff.
- Eliminating "Gun Free Zones" as they are, in essence, self-defense free zones that increase the risk to citizens.

We oppose:

- Sharing of any information regarding individuals who have been granted concealed carry permits by our local Sheriff to any external law enforcement agency.
- Any proposed ban on ill-defined "assault weapons" and "high-capacity" magazine restrictions as they have shown to have no impact on public safety yet are clear restrictions on the individual right to bear arms.
- Any attempt to limit sales of ammunition through extraordinary taxation or licensure requirements as an improper usurpation of constitutionally protected rights.
- Colorado's "Red Flag" law and support any and all local government measures taken to limit its implementation in Elbert County. The law violates due process guarantees in an attempt to seize firearms from citizens who should enjoy a presumption of innocence.

The right to keep and bear arms is a vital element of the Republic our Founders handed down to us. They understood that those who hold political power will almost always strive to reduce the freedom of those they rule and that many of the ruled will always be tempted to trade their liberty for empty promises of security. The causes of these political phenomena are sown in the nature of man and, therefore, the right of individuals to bear arms is a protection that cannot be allowed to erode.

## **XVI. Health Care**

We are a free people. When government controls medical care and insurance it limits freedom. We believe it is the right of people to choose their own physician, medical care and health insurance in the marketplace. We oppose socialized medicine at any level of government; single-payer plans and government takeover of private health insurance foster a debilitating spirit that demeans a self-governing people.

Managing personal health lies with the individual and is what you can do for yourself through responsible living. However, in a compassionate society, it is appropriate to assist those in need who cannot provide for themselves.

The cost of medical care is a serious issue that demands responsible and sound solutions as it is one of the fastest rising costs facing business and citizens. At present, health insurance is one of the most heavily regulated sectors in our economy. Increasing state regulation plays a major role in driving up the cost and reducing the accessibility of medical care coverage. We must orient our health care system to one centered on the doctor-patient relationship and cost control through individual choice and decisions.

Innovative solutions built on free market principles are the best way of increasing access, affordability and quality within our health care system. We oppose single-payer plans and government takeover of private health insurance. Government regulations and mandates reduce choice and freedom. Neither the federal government nor the states have the authority to force citizens to purchase a product or service.

We support:

- Repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), which violates the Constitution, the people's freedom, and the rights of conscience and of contract. It does little to control costs and will destroy the private insurance market as

business and individuals drop coverage. Inevitably, it will lead only to rationing of care and a single-payer government plan;

- Immediate repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board, 15 unelected bureaucrats with no medical expertise;
- Revision of Medicare to eliminate price controls and give Americans a choice among competing plans without government mandates;
- The inviolability of the vital doctor-patient relationship;
- That churches and religious institutions such as schools or hospitals have the right to the free exercise of conscience;
- That the use of contraception and family planning for competent adults are deeply private and personal decisions, into which governments should not intrude. These costs should not be mandated for third parties nor born by the state;
- The consumer's right to buy health insurance across state lines;
- Private insurance, without government mandates, which allows individual choice of both in-state and cross-state providers, policies and coverage through Consumer-Directed Health Plans such as Health Savings Accounts, and allowing interstate competition in health insurance;
- Insurance pools for small businesses and associations to acquire coverage that has the tax-advantages given to large businesses and unions;
- Portability for policies so individuals can keep their coverage between jobs and during unemployment;
- Restoration of variable-benefit plans, from basic to comprehensive, according to personal preference, with the option of lower premiums, higher deductibles and co-pays which will reduce unnecessary utilization;
- Guaranteed Access pools for high risk individuals (e.g. chronic diseases and pre-existing conditions);
- Revision of the outdated tax code, giving persons in need a tax credit or voucher toward purchase of health insurance;
- Deductibility of medical insurance cost for all citizens and groups;
- Meaningful malpractice liability reform (Tort reform);
- The right of any medical professional to refuse to provide a service which would violate his or her conscience or professional judgment; and
- Parents' right to health care information concerning their minor children, and prior parental consent for all medical procedures, treatments and pharmaceuticals.

## **XVII. Social Security**

We recognize that Social Security has become the sole or primary source of retirement income for millions of Americans. However, the increase in American life expectancy, the imminent demographic wave of retirees and the expansion of benefits has made the system unsustainable. From its origin as a supplemental retirement system it has been transformed into an intergenerational transfer of wealth

with today's contributions diverted to current retirees. Reform is necessary but must recognize that promises made to current beneficiaries and those nearing retirement must be kept.

### **XVIII. Election Integrity**

Fair and open elections are the cornerstone of republican government. It is the duty of government to ensure that only legally registered living U.S. citizens vote, every voter has the ability to cast their ballot in absolute secrecy, all legally-cast ballots are properly and impartially counted, and all voters and elections officials adhere to the letter of the law. Citizens have the right to actively monitor all aspects of the elections process and challenge irregularities. Election law must ensure the ballots of overseas and military voters are received and counted and any credible cases of voter registration and election fraud be prosecuted.

We support repeal of the Colorado same-day voter registration laws, emplacing a requirement for photo identification when registering and voting.

### **XIX. Expanding our Republican Party**

Since its founding in 1860, the Republican Party has stood firmly for the protection of individual freedoms and exercise of individual rights and has opposed encroachment of government authorities.

We believe our values are completely consistent with those of our Founders and our Creator and will work to expand our party. We welcome all who believe and support our principles and, though we may at times disagree regarding the specific path taken toward "a more perfect union", we will respect Ronald Reagan's Eleventh Commandment and endeavor never to speak ill of a fellow Republican. Ours is the party of ideas and ideals - not a party of personality nor political expedients.

Negative campaigning, though it often provides a short-term political gain, results in tremendously corrosive effects on our party as a whole. It creates distrust and animosity that harms the community and provides avenues for rival political parties to capitalize on. Primary candidates must avoid the negative and focus on providing voters reasons to support them and the party they represent.

We strive to build a party of independent individuals who:

- Believe in the supreme importance of Faith, Family & Freedom.
- Believe their rights are a gift from God.
- Believe the primary purpose of Government is to protect these rights.
- Believe in constitutionally-limited governance and the rule of law.
- Believe that the government that governs least, governs best.
- Believe that a free economy, unfettered exercise of property rights, and minimal taxation bring prosperity to all.
- Believe that personal responsibility, the freedom to fail and the freedom to succeed should be encouraged and protected.
- Support all who truly believe these things, will strive to bring more to this way of thinking, and will work to elect those that will serve according to these principles.

### **XX. Refining and Updating this Platform**

We support the State and National Republican Party Platforms. Where differences may occur, we view any variation, not a deviation from strongly shared principles but, simply as differences in local

priorities. This platform will be reviewed and updated after each county assembly to adopt or integrate any resolutions passed by that body and upon publication of new state or national party platform.

Elbert County Platform Committee:

Vice Chairman, Bob Lewis (Committee Chairman)

District 1 Captain, Dan Guthrie

District 2 Captain, Denise Reeves

District 3, Captain, Doug Bankert

Adopted this 7th day of August, 2019

Tom Peterson (Original Signed)

Chairman, Tom Peterson

Attest: Carol Hinds (Original Signed)

Secretary, Carol Hinds



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2019**