

2018 LPNC Platform Committee Report to the 2018 LPNC State Convention

Introduction

Members: Tom Bailey, Steven J. Difore II, Nicholos Hales, Susan Hogarth, Tom Howe, Phil Jacobson (committee chair), Kenneth Penkowski, Tim Smario, Ryan Teeter

The LPNC Platform Committee (PC) was appointed and convened by State Chair Susan Hogarth in January of 2018. The Platform as adopted by the 2016 LPNC State Convention was reviewed by individual Members, some of whom proposed motions to modify the Platform.

The proceedings of the PC were held in a Facebook group created by Ms. Hogarth for the purpose. There were enough problems presented by the Facebook group environment that *this year's PC recommends that Facebook groups not be used by future incarnations of the PC.*

A single face to face meeting of the committee's Members was held as well, at which time all previous motions were reviewed and some additional motions were made and voted upon. Vote totals listed below are the final ones at the end of the face to face meeting.

Do Pass Recommendations: These were approved by a majority of committee Members who participated in the voting for each proposal.

new plank:

Votes: 5 yes, 0 no

Title: "Equal Access to Justice" following the current "Jury Nullification" plank.

Reads: "The LPNC endorses the idea that the law should apply to all people equally. We seek means to keep the overall expenses of courts low and we especially object to the law allowing legal expenses to be a tool for the rich to oppress those of modest means. Well funded litigants can "SLAPP" others with huge legal costs even for a trivial or vacuous accusation. As most states have "anti-slapp" laws to curtail such expensive wrongs and North Carolina does not, our legislature should address this lack without delay."

Rationale: Equal access to justice is a core value for most voters, regardless of party. Neither of the state supported parties (in NC) addresses the issue of SLAPP or of the broader need for equal justice for those of lessor means. So, this can be a wedge issue.

Okay, most folks don't think they, themselves, will be sued and they don't know what SLAPP means. But all people want "fair". When a candidate can begin "let me tell you about fairness..." and follow up with "and my opponents' parties don't care", people will listen.

Libertarians have an undeserved, but wide spread, reputation for favoring the rich and/or corporate interests. This plank stands in stark contrast to that stereotype and will help our candidates represent themselves and libertarianism as the "kinder, gentler" aspect of politics that we know it is.

**** new plank:

Votes: 6 yes, 2 no

Titled "Civil Disobedience" at the end of the section on "The Role of Government".

Reads: "Civility is an attribute that Libertarians admire. When police are called to action against people who are being civil, the LPNC looks first at the law that requires that action. Whenever people are engaged in civil disobedience, the LPNC urges the police (and onlookers), prosecutors, and --especially-- juries, to examine closely the uncivil law to see if they, too, want to take a stand against unfair and arbitrary laws."

Rationale: This plank does not call for any specific legislative action. A Libertarian candidate cannot point to it and say "I promise to ... THAT". Instead, it leads the prospective Libertarian voter to notice an important political point: there are laws you can be in defiance of while being CIVIL. This is a point that no other political party can make. Our potential recruits, anyone who is open to possibilities, will be struck by this difference. He/she will think... and that's what we want.

Replace current plank: "Fair Elections" with new plank,

votes: 3 for majority version, 2 for minority version

Majority version:

Title: Unbiased Ballot

Reads: "The ballots used in all North Carolina elections should be free of bias or preference for any candidate. The official record should note every vote for a constitutionally eligible person."

Rationale: This wording clarifies our position on the state's policy of ignoring votes for unapproved candidates. Also, we call out the discriminatory practice of advertising a subset of the candidates by placing their names and party labels directly on the ballot -- an advertisement that would be worth millions if a candidate had to pay for it. The election process should be neutral, contrary to current statute law.

Minority version of above:

Title: Open Ballet Access.

Reads: "The LPNC supports an open ballot, for which each elected position will be placed on the ballot as a write in. Any citizen constitutionally eligible to fill the position will be considered a valid candidate, and all votes will be recorded."

Rationale: Given that write in votes are not counted in North Caroline, this will allow any constitutionally eligible person to be allowed to run for, or be elected to any office, given that they have the support. Further this will eliminate the fee to run for a position, opening up ballot access to those outside the system, as well as increasing the political awareness of the populace by demanding that they know the candidates, not just the parties, running.

Motion: Reordering of planks as follows (if proposed added planks are accepted by the convention, they would follow the old planks, as indicated in the respective “add” proposals):

vote: 5 yes, 0 no

Personal Freedom

1. War on Drugs
2. Immigration
3. Self-Defense
4. Marriage and Domestic Partnerships
5. Privacy
6. Cryptography
7. Death Penalty
8. Free Association

Economic Freedom

1. Education
2. Transportation
3. Healthcare
4. Occupational Licensing
5. Environment and Pollution
6. The ABC and the State Lottery
7. Corporate Welfare
8. Welfare
9. Zoning and Property Use
10. Local Government Monopolies

Role of Government

1. Taxation
2. Bonds
3. Federal Grants
4. Redistricting
5. Ballot Access
6. Fair Elections
7. Electoral Administration
8. Criminal Law
9. Jury Nullification
10. The Police

11. Government Immunity
12. Takings
13. Legislation
14. State of Government Lands and Assets

Miscellaneous

1. National Libertarian Party Platform
2. Omissions

Rationale: The platform is a party document that supports campaigns and candidates. It should reflect the most relevant issues in our state—issues that our candidates should be focused on. The proposed order reflects the sentiment (from statewide polling) of North Carolina voters. This order can always be modified in future conventions to reflect changing priorities.

Additional Minority Reports: (with no majority alternative)

new plank:

votes: yes 2, no 5

Titled: Tax Reform Proposal

Reads: “The LPNC endorses the proposal to amend the 16th amendment to read: The federal government may only tax states. Thus repealing all other federal taxes.”

Rationale: The federal govt is the biggest single tax collector in the US. The tax system has become so pervasive as to be difficult to track. The state governments have no incentive to limit federal taxation since it allows them to shift the blame for the burden and allows them to collect largess from the feds with which to buy votes. The rules of the IRS demand an invasion of the privacy guaranteed by the fourth amendment and a demand that a person offer up evidence against themselves in violation of the fifth. The system fosters corruption allowing the federal govt to bribe or coerse state lawmakers with the very money it took from the people of those states. Resulting in the federal govt not the state setting our speed limits, drinking ages, and school curriculums.

This amendment would result in: An elimination of myriad federal bureaucracies beginning with the IRS all the way down to those guys that tax your phone service. Eliminate the invasion of privacy of millions.

New plank: after "Taxation"

vote: yes, 2 no 2

title: Honest Budgeting Reform

Reads: "The LPNC supports a 'live within your means' budget. We believe that it is a poor foreign, domestic, and economic policy to bring the state and country further into debt. As such, we propose that the state be required to form a budget within the estimated income for the year."

Rationale: Our current, baseline budgeting is wasting resources, taken from the citizens, or borrowed from another source, placing us further into debt. Just as every citizen must live within their means or face the personal consequences, so, eventually, must the government. To prevent this, we propose a "live within you means" budget.