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2008 STATE REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM

PLATFORM COMMITTEE

	Kirk Overbey, Chairman	SD 8	Candace Noble	SD 16	Elizabeth Case	SD 24	Johnnie B. Rogers
SD 1	Pat Smith	SD 9	Elaine Cook	SD 17	Rick Miller	SD 25	Mark Dorazio
SD 2	Pam Derr	SD 10	Kyleen Wright	SD 18	Richard J. Whitmore II	SD 26	Grace Fernandez
SD 3	Donald Baum	SD 11	Kathy Rogers	SD 19	Art Martinez de Vara	SD 27	Patricia Garza
SD 4	Tony Sims	SD 12	Paul Stockard	SD 20	Richard Moore	SD 28	Mallory Miller
SD 5	Malcolm Green	SD 13	Matthew Cowan	SD 21	Gale Sayers	SD 29	Malcolm McGregor
SD 6	Brian Bishop	SD 14	Larry Garner	SD 22	Jeb Leutwyler	SD 30	Deon Starnes
SD 7	Fran Jolly, Secretary	SD 15	Nelda Eppes	SD 23	Ed Hickson	SD 31	Skip Huskey

PREAMBLE

Throughout the world people dare to dream of freedom, of opportunity, of a beautiful country in which to grow, to raise their family, to worship God in their own way without fear. The embodiment of the Conservative Dream in America is Texas. Our Texas. It is we who strive to protect our culture from destruction, our children from predators, and our dear country from those who would waste it. It is we who preserve the embattled conservative traditions that have made our nation the greatest in history. It is we who have upheld human dignity and opposed buying or selling of human life in slavery or in test tubes. We know that free people and free markets can solve the challenges that plague or threaten all Americans. We are the party of ideas, of innovation, the party of the Information Age. We are the bottom-to-top party of the people, not the top-to-bottom party of the state. We are the Republican Party of Texas. We offer specific, concrete, creative yet prudent change. God bless Texas and God bless America.

We respectfully submit that the grass roots of this Party have properly written its platform, with ideas and planks drawn from neighborhood precincts across our State. This platform is indeed the heart and soul of our Party. We encourage all Republican candidates and officeholders to champion these critical issues clearly and forthrightly before the people of Texas and America.

We thank our officeholders for already putting into law the following former plans: Jessica's Law; Seat Belts for School Buses; the Defense of Marriage Act; the banning of most government funding of human embryo stem cell harvesting; and giving school districts the ability to pool insurance.

PRINCIPLES

1. We respect and cherish the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and our Founders' intent to restrict the power of the federal government over the states and the people. We believe self-government, based on personal integrity of a proper moral foundation, is the best government. This is best balanced with limited civil government, coupled with public trust, to provide collectively for the people those services not efficiently achieved individually.
2. We believe that human life is sacred, created in the image of God. Life begins at the moment of fertilization and ends at the point of natural death. All innocent human life must be protected.
3. We believe that good government is based on the individual, and each person's ability, dignity, freedom, and responsibility must be honored and recognized. We believe equal opportunity is a right and a privilege but equal outcome is not. We insist that no one's rights are negotiable and that individual freedom demands personal responsibility.
4. We believe that government spending is out of control and needs to be reduced. We support fundamental, immediate tax reform that is simple, fair, and fully disclosed.
5. We believe that traditional marriage is a legal and moral commitment between a natural man and a natural woman. We recognize that the family is the foundational unit of a healthy society and consists of those related by blood, marriage, or adoption. The family is responsible for its own welfare, education, moral training, conduct, and property,
6. We believe that a well-educated population is fundamental to the continued success of our Republic; and that parents have the right, as well as the duty, to direct their children's education. This right should include choices among public, private, home and religious schools. Competition improves education.
7. We believe that the future of our country depends upon a strong and vibrant private sector unencumbered by excessive government regulation.
8. We believe that a strong America ensures a free America. While we recognize that our nation is the primary leader in the global community, we must also vigorously protect the sovereignty of the United States.
9. We believe in peace through strength. We take a principled stand to preemptively defend the citizens of the United States against all foes, foreign or domestic, whose goal is to destroy our American way of life. Freedom is never free, and we honor all those who have served our nation to protect our liberty, especially our men and women in uniform, who unselfishly and courageously defend our country.
10. We believe all Americans have the right to be safe in their homes, on their streets, and in their communities. We support enforcement of the laws through the Courts imposing swift and sure justice with stiff penalties, truth in sentencing, and respecting the rights of law-abiding citizens, while opposing judicial activism.

LOCAL AND STATE PRIORITIES

Over the next two years, the Republican Party of Texas encourages its officeholders and grassroots to work towards enacting the following:

- Promote adult stem cell research with public funds, and prohibit public funds for research that destroys human embryos.
- No Mandates Without Funding – reduce the indigent healthcare burden for counties and local government.
- Truth in Sentencing – fully inform juries as to the actual length of the sentence.
- Judicial Sentencing – empower our judges to assign punishment in felony cases.
- Law enforcement should make Child and Sex Abuse and Methamphetamine Drug Manufacturing their top priority. Stricter sentencing for Methamphetamine traffickers is needed.
- Protect the authority of the State Board of Education to manage the Permanent School Fund and control textbook content; expand the cap on charter schools; and remove funding for bilingual education.
- Abolish the School Property tax – we can fully fund public schools using surplus revenue, existing budget resources, consumption taxes, and funds released by cutting unnecessary expenditures.

PRESERVING AMERICAN FREEDOM

LIMITING THE EXPANSE OF GOVERNMENT POWER

Limited Federal Powers – We support state sovereignty reserved under the Tenth Amendment and oppose mandates beyond the scope of federal authority. We further support abolition of federal agencies involved in activities not originally delegated to the federal government under a strict interpretation of the Constitution.

Constitutional Citations on Legislation – We urge that all bills presented in Congress include citations to the authorizing constitutional provision, cost to implement, and impact on the family.

Law Enforcement – We:

- Support limitation of criminal jurisdiction of federal law-enforcement agencies in accordance with Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
- Understand most crime is local, and the states, reserve law enforcement authority under the Tenth Amendment.
- Oppose expansion of federal law-enforcement authority and use of military against citizens.

Preserving National Security – We believe terrorism is the greatest threat to international peace and to our safety. We urge our national leadership to protect our Constitutional rights and swiftly wage successful war on terrorists; to eliminate aid to any nation threatening us or aiding terrorists or hostile nations; to spell out consequences for terrorist activities and to publicly support other nations fighting terrorists; to reasonably use profiling to protect us; to prosecute national security breaches; and to revise laws or executive orders that erode our essential liberties.

Patriot Act - We urge review and revision of those portions of the USA Patriot Act, and related executive and military orders and directives that erode constitutional rights and essential liberties of citizens.

Continuity of Government – We oppose appointing members of Congress to fill large vacancies, depriving our right to elect our own representatives.

Emergency War Powers – We charge the President to cancel the state of national emergency and charge Congress to repeal the War Powers Act and end our declared state of emergency.

Elimination of Executive Orders – We demand elimination of presidential authority to issue executive orders and other mandates lacking congressional approval, as well as repeal of all previous executive orders and mandates.

Inter-jurisdictional Agreements – We oppose inter-jurisdictional agreements with any state that prevent the Governor from controlling the military, police, other emergency management personnel, and State of Texas resources. We call for repeal of all such measures.

Puerto Rico – We urge Congress to call for a vote in Puerto Rico to decide between statehood and independence.

Washington D.C. - We strongly oppose making the District of Columbia a state.

Census – We oppose the Census Bureau’s obtaining data beyond the number of citizens residing in a dwelling, and we oppose statistical sampling adjustments in the “mid-decade” census. We urge that U.S. citizens who, because of religion or conscience, are compelled to withhold their full response to any census question, be held guiltless.

Preservation of Republican Form of Government – We support our republican form of government in Texas and oppose Initiative and Referendum.

Germane Contents Requirement - All language in any bill must be germane to the title of the act.

Constitutional Convention – We oppose any constitutional convention to rewrite the United States Constitution. We demand the Legislature rescind its 1977 call for such a convention. We call upon other states to rescind their votes for such a convention.

Affirmative Action – Inasmuch as the Civil Rights Movement argued against using race as a factor in American life, affirmative action reintroduces race as a powerful force in American life. The Republican Party of Texas believes in equal opportunity for all American citizens without regard to race or gender. To that end, we oppose affirmative action because:

1. We believe it is simply racism disguised as a social virtue.
2. We believe that policies that lower standards on the basis of race or gender create a disincentive to excellence and thereby encourage mediocrity.
3. We believe that rights belong to people – not groups; therefore, we reject the notion of group-rights and policies that grant preferences based on race or gender. Policies of this type apply a blanket remedy before specific acts of discrimination are proven; thus, such policies compound one injustice with another.
4. Affirmative action falsely casts those who advocate merit as racist.
5. Affirmative action casts doubt on minority achievement making such achievement as seemingly unearned. We believe that true minority advancement will come from a demand for personal responsibility, accountability and competitive excellence.

Reparations - We oppose any form of reparation based on discriminatory criteria.

Annexation – All parties in annexation proceedings should be guaranteed these referenda: Residents of an area to be annexed may vote on annexation, and voters of the jurisdiction proposing annexation must authorize the proposal.

Property Forfeiture – We support strengthening present restrictions on use of civil forfeiture laws and assessing penalties to reimburse injured parties for costs accrued if property is returned to its original owner.

Eminent Domain – We support limiting the definition of eminent domain to exclude seizing private property for public or private economic development or for increased tax revenues. Taking of property should result in immediate compensation to the owner.

Homestead Protection - We support continuance of Texas’ homestead protection.

Environment, Property Ownership, and Natural Resources – We reaffirm our belief in the constitutional concept of the right to own property without governmental interference. We believe that property ownership is the source of the nation’s wealth; free enterprise forms the foundation of our collective wealth; local stewardship of our natural resources is best; sound science trumps politically correct science; groundwater is a vested ownership right; the state should not abridge or deny our inalienable property and mineral rights; in state control of state resources; in opposing nationalization of lands and watersheds; in opposing conservation easements on our natural resources administered by organizations unaccountable to voters; in opposing vast acquisition of Texas land by government agencies to protect endangered species; in allowing states to consider costs when comparing emission control techniques; in election of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality chairman; and in eliminating the Endangered Species Act.

Livestock and Pet Locations - We oppose a mandatory national animal identification system requiring registration of all animals, of animal owners and their properties, including GPS coordinates. We urge repeal of HB 1361.

Free Speech for the Clergy – We urge change of the Internal Revenue Code to allow a religious organization to address issues without fear losing its tax-exempt status. We call for repeal of requirements that religious organizations send government any personal information about their contributors.

Government Regulation of Religious Institutions – The state should have no power over licensing or training of clergy. The State should withdraw all imposed regulations.

Restore Constitutional Integrity in the Legislative Process – We call upon the U.S. congress to pass legislation to restore Constitutional integrity in the legislative process demanding Single Issue Legislation that prohibits the current practice of inserting into otherwise unrelated legitimate legislation funding for or federal regulations for special interest issues into virtually every piece of legislation.

REFORMING THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Direct Election of State Judges – We support our right to select our judges by direct vote.

Visiting Judges – We support legislation prohibiting judges defeated by the electorate from serving as visiting judges, or acting as judges in any capacity, until such time they are reinstated by the electorate through a subsequent election.

Jury Reform – We support the right to privacy and security of prospective jurors during jury selection. Courts must show relevance of questions asked of jurors and perform a balancing test between the prospective juror's right to privacy and lawyers' need to know. Either party in a criminal trial should have a right to inform jurors of their right to determine facts and render a verdict.

Qualified Juror Service – Jury service should be limited to registered voters.

Administrative Justice – Citizens have a right to full participation in administrative law processes.

Judicial Restraint – We urge Congress to adopt the Constitutional Restoration Act and support the principle of judicial restraint, which requires judges to interpret and apply rather than make the law. We support judges who strictly interpret the law based on its original intent. We oppose judges who assume for themselves legislative powers.

Remedies to Activist Judiciary – We call Congress and the President to use their constitutional powers to restrain activist judges. We urge Congress to adopt the Judicial Conduct Act of 2005 and remove judges who abuse their authority. Further, we urge Congress to withhold Supreme Court jurisdiction in cases involving abortion, religious freedom, and the Bill of Rights.

Judicial Nominees – We urge Republican Senate leadership to ensure that a record vote is taken on every judicial nominee.

State Bar Requirements -- Attorneys who obtain their law degree through learning by electronic means or U.S. mail, from an accredited school of law, should be allowed to take the Texas Bar Exam.

Statutory Authority for Regulation – Defendants charged with violating a governmental regulation should have the right to see the enabling law.

RESTORING INTEGRITY TO OUR ELECTIONS

Protecting Union Member's Dues – We support legislation requiring labor unions to obtain consent of the union member before that member's dues can be used for political purposes.

Candidate Eligibility – A candidate running for office should be required to reside within the geographical boundaries of the office sought.

Voter Registration – We support restoring integrity to the voter registration rolls and to reducing voter fraud. We support repeal of all Motor Voter laws; re-registering voters every four years; requiring photo ID of first time registrants; proof of residency and citizenship, along with voter registration application; retention of the 30-day registration deadline.

Electoral College – We support the Electoral College.

Voting Rights – We support equal suffrage for all citizens of voting age who are not felons. We oppose any identification of citizens by race, origin, or creed and oppose use of any such identification for purposes of creating voting districts.

Felon Voting – We affirm the Constitutional authority of state legislatures to regulate voting, including disenfranchisement of convicted felons.

Protecting Active Military Personnel's Right to Vote – We urge the Texas Secretary of State and the U.S. Attorney General to ensure that voting rights of our Armed Forces will neither be denied nor obstructed.

Filing Date for Primary Election – We urge changing the Election Code date of filing for the March primary from January 2 to the second Monday in January.

Fair Election Procedures – We support modifications and strengthening of election laws to assure ballot integrity and fair elections. Specifically, we support a federal or state government-issued photo ID at in-person voting; increased scrutiny and security in balloting by mail; prohibition of internet voting and any electronic voting lacking a verifiable paper trail; prohibition of mobile voting; prosecution for election fraud with jail sentences; repeal

of the unconstitutional "Help America Vote Act"; and assurance that each polling place has a distinctly marked and if possible separate location for Republican and Democratic primary voting.

Residency Requirements - We support legislation that determines residence in accordance with common-law rules, as recognized by the courts, except as otherwise provided by the Texas Election Code.

Water Districts – We urge the Legislature to allow voters the ability to recall elected officials of an irrigation district, fresh water supply district, municipal utility district, or any other special purpose district.

Campaign Finance Reform – We urge immediate repeal of the McCain-Feingold Act.

Enforcing the Platform – The Republican State Chairman and county chairs are responsible for implementing this platform by requiring party candidates to indicate their positions on platform planks before their acceptance on the ticket and to make such information available on the Party website. The SREC should seriously consider candidates' positions on the Party platform before granting support.

Platform/Legislation - We urge the Legislature to permit a political party to require each of its candidates to indicate their position on each platform plank before their acceptance on the primary ballot. Publication and distribution of candidate responses should be permitted.

Conflicts of Interest – We support all legislation prohibiting influencing or voting of any elected official or appointee where a conflict of interest exists. No such official should represent paying clients before a state agency.

Lobbying Limitation – We support legislation to prohibit former officials and government employees from lobbying for a foreign government and/or any business for five years after leaving public service. We support legislation to prevent lobbying by any organization receiving federal grants except that relating to its tax status.

Legislative Accountability – We support rules requiring that all votes on bills cast in the Texas House and Senate be record votes freely available to the electorate.

AWOL Legislators – We urge the Texas House and Senate to compel attendance of absent members and penalize those who attempt to bust the quorum by leaving the state or hiding within it.

Governor's Veto – We urge a Constitutional amendment permitting the Legislature to return for a three-day session in response to the governor's veto.

Public Integrity Unit – We urge the Legislature to secure the impartiality and probity of the Travis County Public Integrity Unit, by transferring its powers and funding to an impartial statewide elected judicial entity.

Term Limits – We urge Congress, the Legislature, and the Republican Party to establish reasonable term limits.

Filibuster - We support return to the traditional Filibuster in the U.S. Senate.

Rosebush-Blocker Rule - We oppose the Rosebush-Blocker rule in the Texas Senate.

November Election – All public elections, except for primary elections, should be held in November.

HONORING THE SYMBOLS OF OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE

Ten Commandments – We oppose any governmental action to restrict, prohibit, or remove public display of the Decalogue or other religious symbols.

Pledge of Allegiance – We support adoption of the Pledge Protection Act. We also demand that the National Motto "In God We Trust" and National Anthem be protected from legislative and judicial attack.

American English – We support adoption of American English as the official language of Texas and of the United States.

Flag Desecration – Any form of desecration of the American Flag is an act of disregard for our nation and its people and penalties should be established for such.

Symbols of American Heritage – We call upon governmental entities to protect all symbols of our American heritage from being altered in any way.

Confederate Widows Plaque - We call for restoration of plaques honoring the Confederate Widow's Pension Fund contribution that were removed from state buildings.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, PROTECTING LIFE AND PROMOTING HEALTH

CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

Family and Defense of Marriage - We support the definition of marriage as a God-ordained, legal and moral commitment only between a natural man and a natural woman, which is the foundational unit of a healthy society, and we oppose the assault on marriage by judicial activists. We call on the President and Congress to take immediate action to defend the sanctity of marriage. We are resolute that Congress exercise authority under the United States Constitution, and pass legislation withholding jurisdiction from the Federal Courts in cases involving family law, especially any changes in the definition of marriage. We further call on Congress to pass and the state legislatures to ratify a marriage amendment declaring that marriage in the United States shall consist of and be recognized only as the union of a natural man and a natural woman. Neither the United States nor any state shall recognize or grant to any unmarried person the legal rights or status of a spouse. We oppose the recognition of and granting of benefits to people who represent themselves as domestic partners without being legally married. We advocate the repeal of laws that place an unfair tax burden on families. We call upon Congress to completely remove the marriage penalty in the tax code, whereby a married couple receives a smaller standard deduction than their unmarried counterparts living together. The primary family unit consists of those related by blood, heterosexual marriage, or adoption. The family is responsible for its own welfare, education, moral training, conduct, and property.

Marriage and Divorce - We believe in the sanctity of marriage and that the integrity of this institution should be protected at all levels of government. We urge the Legislature to rescind no-fault divorce laws. We support Covenant Marriage.

Marriage Licenses - We support legislation that would make it a felony to issue a marriage license to a same-sex couple and for any civil official to perform a marriage ceremony for such.

Homosexuality - We believe that the practice of homosexuality tears at the fabric of society, contributes to the breakdown of the family unit, and leads to the spread of dangerous, communicable diseases. Homosexual behavior is contrary to the fundamental, unchanging truths that have been ordained by God, recognized by our country's founders, and shared by the majority of Texans. Homosexuality must not be presented as an acceptable "alternative" lifestyle in our public education and policy, nor should "family" be redefined to include homosexual "couples." We are opposed to any granting of special legal entitlements, refuse to recognize, or grant special privileges including, but not limited to: marriage between persons of the same sex (regardless of state of origin), custody of children by homosexuals, homosexual partner insurance or retirement benefits. We oppose any criminal or civil penalties against those who oppose homosexuality out of faith, conviction, or belief in traditional values

Texas Sodomy Statutes - We oppose the legalization of sodomy. We demand that Congress exercise its authority granted by the U.S. Constitution to withhold jurisdiction from the federal courts from cases involving sodomy.

Pornography - We urge our governmental bodies to enforce laws regarding all forms of pornography. We urge more stringent legislation to prohibit all pornography including virtual pornography and operation of sexually-oriented businesses.

Ethics in Broadcasting - We call upon the Federal Communications Commission to revoke broadcast licenses of stations that air programs and advertisements in violation of existing laws and FCC guidelines.

PROTECTING INNOCENT HUMAN LIFE

Party Candidates and the Platform on Protecting Innocent Human Life - We implore our Party to support, financially or with in-kind contributions, only those candidates who support protecting innocent human life. Further, we strongly encourage the State Republican Executive Committee to hear and recognize the longstanding and overwhelmingly consistent voice of the grass roots and revise its by-laws to make this action binding on our Party.

Partial Birth Abortion - We oppose partial birth abortion. We recommend that Congress eliminate from all federal court jurisdictions all cases involving challenges to banning Partial Birth Abortion.

Right To Life - All innocent human life must be respected and safeguarded from fertilization to natural death; therefore, the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We affirm our support for a Human Life Amendment to the Constitution and to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protection applies to unborn children. We support the Life at Conception Act. We oppose the use of public revenues and/or facilities for abortion or abortion-related services. We support the elimination of public funding for organizations that advocate or

support abortion. We are resolute regarding the reversal of Roe v. Wade. We affirm our support for the appointment and election of judges at all levels of the judiciary who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We insist that the U.S. Department of Justice needs to prosecute hospitals or abortion clinics for committing induced labor (live birth) abortion. We are opposed to genocide, euthanasia, and assisted suicide. We oppose legislation allowing the withholding of nutrition and hydration to the terminally ill or handicapped.

Until our final goal of total Constitutional rights for the unborn child is achieved, we beseech the Texas Legislature in consideration of our state's rights, to enact laws that restrict and regulate abortion including:

1. parental and informed consent;
2. prohibition of abortion for gender selection;
3. prohibition of abortion due to the results of genetic diagnosis
4. licensing, liability, and malpractice insurance for abortionists and abortion facilities;
5. prohibition of financial kickbacks for abortion referrals;
6. prohibition of partial birth and late term abortions; and
7. enactment of any other laws which will advance the right to life for unborn children.

Choose Life - We ask the Legislature to provide Texans opportunity to purchase "Choose Life" license plates.

Parental Consent - We call on the Legislature to require parental consent for any form of medical care to minors. We urge electoral defeat of judges who through judicial activism seek to nullify the Parental Consent Law by granting bypasses to minor girls seeking abortions. We support the addition of a legislative requirement for the reporting of judicial bypasses to parental consent on an annual basis to the Department of State Health Services and such reports shall be made available to the public. Further, we encourage the Congress to remove confidentiality mandates for minors from family planning service programs operating under Title X of the Public Health Services Act and Medicaid.

Protection of Women's Health - Because of the personal and social pain caused by abortions, we call for the protection of both women and their unborn children from pressure for unwanted abortions. We commend the Texas Legislature for the passage of the Woman's Right to Know Act, a law requiring abortion providers, prior to an abortion, to provide women full knowledge of the physical and psychological risks of abortion, the characteristics of the unborn child, and abortion alternatives. We urge the state government and the Department of State Health Services to ensure that all abortion providers are in compliance with this informed consent law and to ensure that all pregnancy centers and other entities assisting women in crisis pregnancies have equal access to the informational brochures created by the Department of State Health Services.

Alternatives to Abortion -- We urge the Department of State Health Services to provide adequate quantities of The Woman's Right to Know Resource Directory to anyone that works with pregnant women.

RU 486 - We urge the FDA to rescind approval of the physically dangerous RU-486 and oppose limiting the manufacturers' and distributors' liability.

Morning After Pill -- We oppose sale and use of the dangerous "Morning After Pill."

Gestational Contracts - We believe rental of a woman's womb makes child bearing a mere commodity to the highest bidder and petition the Legislature to rescind House Bill 724 of the 78th Legislature. We support the adoption of human embryos and the banning of human embryo trafficking.

Unborn Child Pain Protection - We support legislation that requires doctors, at first opportunity, to provide to a woman who is pregnant, information about the nervous system development of her unborn child and to provide pain relief for her unborn if she orders an abortion.

Unborn Victims of Violence Legislation -- We urge the State to ensure that the Prenatal Protection Law is interpreted accurately and consider the unborn child as an equal victim in any crime, including domestic violence

Abortion Clinics - We propose legislation that holds abortion clinics to the same health regulations as other medical facilities and that subjects clinics to the same malpractice liabilities. We oppose any public funding for Planned Parenthood or other organizations/facilities that provide, advocate or promote abortions.

Abortion Requirements for Hospitals - We propose legislation that entitles hospitals to refuse to perform abortions because government has no moral authority to require such an abortion.

Conscience Clause -- We believe that doctors, nurses, pharmacists, any employees of hospitals and insurance companies, health care organizations, medical and scientific research students, and any employee should be protected by Texas law if they conscientiously object to participate in practices that conflict with their moral or religious beliefs, including but not limited to abortion, the prescription for and dispensing of drugs with abortifacient potential, human cloning, embryonic stem cell research, eugenic screenings, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and the withdrawal of nutrition and hydration. We call on the Texas Legislature to pass legislation to strengthen and clarify the current conscience clause in the Occupational Code to include the above-mentioned persons and practices.

Fetal Tissue Harvesting - We support legislation prohibiting experimentation with human fetal tissue and prohibiting the use of human fetal tissue or organs for experimentation or commercial sale. Until such time that fetal tissue harvesting is illegal, any product containing fetal tissue shall be so labeled.

Stem Cell Research - We oppose any legislation that would allow for the creation and/or killing of human embryos for medical research. We encourage stem cell research using cells from umbilical cords, from adults, and from any other means which does not kill human embryos. We oppose any state funding of research that destroys/kills human embryos. We encourage the adoption of existing embryos. We call for legislation to withhold state and/or federal funding from institutions that engage in scientific research involving the killing of human embryos or human cloning.

Human Cloning - Each human life, whether created naturally or through an artificial process, deserves protection. We confirm that somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) is the process by which a human being is cloned, and that SCNT creates a unique human being with the same properties of a human embryo created through the union of sperm and egg. We seek a ban on human cloning for reproductive purposes (where a cloned human embryo, created through SCNT, is implanted in a womb and the human clone is birthed). We also seek a ban on research cloning (where a cloned human embryo, created through SCNT, is created, grown in the laboratory, and then destroyed when its stem cells are extracted for research purposes). Furthermore, criminal penalties should be created and experimenters prosecuted who participate in the cloning of human beings. No government or state funding should be provided for any human cloning.

Patient Protection – We support patients' rights by calling on the state legislature to amend the Advance Directive Act to establish due process of law and ensure that a physician's decision to deny life saving treatment against the patient's will or advance directive is not due to economic or racial discrimination or discrimination based on disability. We also support the passage of legislation to amend the Advance Directive Act by requiring hospitals intending or threatening to withdraw life-sustaining treatment against the patient's wishes or their advance directive to continue all treatment and care for such patients pending transfer to another facility.

Gene Manufacturing – We support a ban on research that alters human DNA in living human beings at any stage of life, including the altering of artificial, manufactured, and natural genes and chromosomes.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

Parental Rights and Responsibilities - We believe that parental rights and responsibilities are inherent and protected by the United States Constitution. Local, state, or federal laws, regulations, or policies shall not be enacted that limit parental rights in the rearing of both biological and adopted children. The Party supports the Texas Parental Rights Restoration Act to amend this statute and restore the fundamental right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children. We unequivocally oppose the United States Senate ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would transfer jurisdiction over parental rights and responsibilities to international bureaucracies.

Support of Parental Authority - We support parental authority and the teaching of moral values in the home. We oppose school-based clinics and/or youth impact centers located at, sponsored by, or funded by any state agency or public school district, whether or not they dispense condoms and contraceptives or refer, aid, or advise minors to have abortions.

Age of Consent - We support raising the age of consent for consensual sex to 18 years.

Child Care - We oppose any government regulations that will adversely affect the availability, affordability, or the right of parents to choose childcare.

Child Support and Visitation - We support equity between responsible parents in child support, custody, and visitation rights and costs, as well as the strengthening of laws designed to protect children from abuse. No parent/grandparent should be denied court ordered visitation, because of jurisdictional disputes between states. We also believe that no homosexual or any individual convicted of child abuse or molestation should have the right to custody or adoption of a minor child, and that visitation with minor children by such persons should be prohibited but if ordered by the court limited to supervised periods.

Adoption – We support reducing the time, bureaucratic interference and cost of adoption. The law should assure mothers of a choice in selecting a traditional home for their children at the time of terminating their rights for adoption. We oppose mandatory open adoption and adoption by homosexuals.

Foster Care - We support eliminating bureaucratic prohibitions on corporal discipline and home schooling in foster homes to help alleviate the shortage of foster parents.

ASSISTING FAMILIES TO SELF SUFFICIENCY

Welfare Reform - Texas should continue to reduce the number of welfare recipients by enacting tough welfare reforms; denying benefits to illegal aliens, and encouraging partnerships with faith based institutions, community and business organizations to assist individuals in need. The current system encourages dependency on government and robs individuals and generations of healthy motivation and self respect. Welfare reforms should require recipients to work, learn, train, and remain substance abuse free in exchange for benefits not exceeding two years. Welfare cards should be confined to food and vital essentials, not cigarettes, lottery purchases, or alcohol or drugs of any kind. Prisoners should be removed from welfare rolls.

DFPS Accountability - We support the appointment of local elected officials to review charges of abuse of discretion by the Department of Family and Protective Services with respect to intervention into the family unit. It is imperative that this local board have the authority to recommend appropriate corrective and disciplinary action as needed. We believe that only law enforcement officers may remove a child from his or her home or school when there is an immediate danger to the child's physical health or safety. All other removals of a child shall be pursuant to a court order. No child may be interviewed by the state without video or audio recording of the interview, and the recording shall become evidence. DFPS/CPS will require the tipster to identify themselves by name and contact information to the agency. This information will be kept confidential, and the tipster will be notified by the agency that false information will be prosecuted and that false tips will be subject to a fine. A family shall have the right to learn of their accuser with a judicial order. Only findings determined in open court and by trial may be retained by the State.

Social Security - We support an immediate and orderly transition to a system of private pensions based on the concept of individual retirement accounts, and gradually phasing out the Social Security tax. We insist that Social Security benefits be non-taxable. To protect the Social Security System, its funds should not be co-mingled or spent with general revenues or invested in private or public corporate stock. We support Americans being allowed to purchase directly, and hold directly as part of their tax-deferred retirement and educational savings plans, United States Treasury obligations, personally managed investment accounts, and tax-free equities. Individuals, who qualify for Social Security benefits, including school teachers, should receive all of the benefits for which they are entitled without penalty, for any reason including earned, passive or portfolio income. To protect freedom and privacy, government and private institutions should not require Social Security numbers as ID. Application for Social Security numbers should not be required before the age of consent.

Government-Sponsored Gambling - We continue to oppose government-sponsored gambling as a means of financing state government. Government-sponsored gambling has had a devastating impact on many Texas families. Moreover, we oppose any further legalization, government facilitation, or financial guarantees relating to any type of gambling including casino, riverboat, video lottery terminals (VLTs), slot machine, video keno, eight-liners, multi-state lotteries, and other games of chance including on Indian reservations. We support the repeal of the state lottery, and enforcement of existing laws and regulations related to gambling.

Caring for Our Mentally Disabled Citizens - We urge the Legislature to continue funding and operating all state schools for the mentally disabled, increase training standards of state school employees, and ensure efficient funding and quality of service.

EMPOWERING FAMILIES TO DIRECT THEIR HEALTH CARE

Health Care Choice – We support market-based, private sector initiatives to improve the portability, quality and affordability of healthcare. We support consumer choice of providers. We encourage immediate expansion of medical savings accounts. We recommend that the State of Texas make available to all citizens through the Internet, the exact price paid for specific health care items covered by Medicaid and paid for by the Texas taxpayer.

Competition in Healthcare - Free market principles and competition shall be encouraged in health care, especially allowing each trained health care professional to practice to the extent of their education.

Health Care and Nutritional Supplements - We deplore any efforts to mandate that vitamins and other natural supplements be on a prescription-only basis, and we oppose any efforts to remove vitamins and other nutritional supplements from public sale. We support the rights of all adults to their choice of nutritional products. We strongly favor legislation recognizing legitimate alternative health care choices.

Texas Medical Board – We call upon the Legislature to transform the TMB and enforce rules that: reaffirm the sacredness of the patient-doctor relationship, eliminate anonymous complaints, eliminate anonymous witnesses, mandate due process in all proceedings, and shall consider members to be in a conflict-of-interest if working for pharmaceutical companies and/or hospitals while serving on the TMB board.

AIDS / HIV - We recognize that the preventable diseases of AIDS and HIV infection represent a threat to human health. We view with compassion all people infected with HIV. We call for appropriate levels of research to find a cure for the disease and ask that the government give full disclosure of the causes. However, because AIDS represents such a severe threat to both the health and economic well-being of our citizens, we insist that the epidemic be de-politicized and that as a society, we take all appropriate steps to protect our citizens from this epidemic. All people, no matter what disease they may contract, are worthy of deep respect as humans; however, behavior has personal and social consequences. We call upon the

United States Public Health Service and all states to declare HIV a “dangerous, yet preventable, infectious, communicable disease.” It should be legally reported in the same manner as any communicable disease. We oppose the needle exchange and bleach kit programs. We urge the return to the requirement of blood testing in order to obtain a marriage license with the previous reporting responsibilities to prevent the spread of dangerous, infectious, and communicable diseases.

Americans with Disabilities Act - We support amendment of the Americans with Disabilities Act to exclude from its definition those persons with infectious diseases, substance addiction, learning disabilities, behavior disorders, homosexual practices and mental stress, thereby reducing abuse of the Act.

Immunizations - All adult citizens should have the legal right to conscientiously choose which vaccines are administered to themselves or their minor children without penalty for refusing a vaccine. We oppose any effort by any authority to mandate such vaccines or any medical database that would contain personal records of citizens without their consent.

EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN

Parental Rights in Education – The right of parents to raise and educate their children is fundamental. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any special or bilingual education program. We urge the Legislature to enact penalties for violation of parental rights.

Local Control – We support choice in public education and believe that quality education is best achieved by encouraging parental involvement, protecting parental rights, and maximizing local control. District superintendents and their employees should be made solely accountable to their locally elected boards. We support sensible consolidation of local school districts.

State Board of Education – We support an elected State Board of Education (SBOE) with authority over the Texas Education Agency, selection and termination of the Commissioner of Education, and textbook adoption. The SBOE must retain constitutional authority over the Permanent School Fund. The state should offer subject-area teacher certification without additional educational requirements for individuals who hold a baccalaureate in their field or professionals who have equivalent life experience in a field. We urge that the Legislature repeal Education Code 28.008 and 28.009; and that the legislature instead work within the established framework of the Texas Education code and the authority of the State Board of Education.

Textbooks and Curricula – The SBOE must have sole authority over textbook content and state adoption, and this process must include public hearings. We urge the Legislature to give the State Board of Education authority to establish textbook adoption standards. We oppose the replacement of textbooks by laptops. We support competitive pricing as part of the textbook selection process by independent school districts and oppose standard maximum pricing schemes.

Parental School Choice – We encourage the Governor and the Texas Legislature to enact child-centered school funding options – which fund the student, not schools or districts – to allow maximum freedom of choice in public, private or parochial education for all children. As a prerequisite, we urge passage of a constitutional amendment prohibiting imposition of state regulations on private and parochial schools.

Funding of Education - Educating Texans is a priority to Texas taxpayers. In order to prioritize education spending, it is necessary to maximize the percentage of school funds that are directed toward instructional purposes. We urge the Legislature to direct expenditures to academics first (books, desks, and teachers), then to non-academic activities; to provide funding for state mandates on local districts; and to not increase state taxes.

Transparency - We support legislation requiring all school districts to post their check registers online or made readily available to the public.

U.S. Department of Education – The Federal Government has no constitutional jurisdiction over education. We call for abolition of the U. S. Department of Education and prohibition of transfer of any of its functions to any other agency.

No Child Left Behind - The No Child Left Behind Act has been a massive failure and should be abolished.

Private Education – Parents have the fundamental right and responsibility for educating their children, and the state should not have power to force any parent or guardian to send their children to public school. Parents or guardians may choose to educate their children in private school without government interference of any kind. Home education is legally recognized as private education. We urge the Legislature to require cities and counties to exempt private school students from daytime curfew ordinances. We urge the Legislature to require University Interscholastic League (UIL) to open participation to private schools.

Juvenile Daytime Curfew - We oppose Juvenile Daytime Curfew which puts undue stress on students who have a legitimate reason to be out of school and their parents.

Government Regulation of Religious Institutions – The state should have no power over the licensing of clergy or religious institutions for training clergy. The curriculum, faculty, and boards of religious institutions should be determined only by the institution. We call on the State to withdraw all imposed regulations.

Sex Education – We recognize parental responsibility and authority regarding sex education. We support policies that mandate parental notification and consent before any sex education program is presented to their child. Parents must be given an opportunity to review the material prior to giving their consent. We oppose any sex education other than abstinence until heterosexual marriage.

Early Childhood Development – We believe that parents are best suited to train their children in their early development and oppose mandatory pre-school and Kindergarten. We urge Congress to repeal government-sponsored programs that deal with early childhood development.

Children with Special Needs – We advocate equal educational opportunity for all students and the requirement that children with special needs be educated commensurate with their abilities.

Classroom Discipline – We recommend that local school boards and classroom teachers be given more authority to deal with disciplinary problems. We urge the Legislature, Governor, Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education to remind administrators and school boards that corporal punishment is effective and legal in Texas.

Support for Classroom Teachers – We recognize the need to attract competent teachers; to get teachers involved in educational planning and program development; to minimize reports and paperwork; to support teacher incentives through monetary and recognition rewards; and to empower teachers to remove disruptive students.

Traditional Principles in Education – We support school subjects with emphasis on Judeo-Christian principles upon which America was founded and which form the basis of America's legal, political and economic systems.

Multiculturalism – We support teaching the principles articulated by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., that we be judged not by the color of our skin but by the content of our character and we celebrate positive contributions to our society by members of all cultural groups without emphasizing their differences. We favor strengthening our common American identity and loyalty instead of multiculturalism that emphasizes differences among racial and ethnic groups.

Basic Standards – We favor improvements on the quality of education and a return to the traditional basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic with sufficient discipline to ensure learning. We support standardized testing to ensure minimal standards are met. We advocate the elimination of the TAKS test.

Social Promotion – Students should master basic, minimum skills before advancing.

Knowledge-Based Education – The primary purpose of public schools is to teach critical thinking skills, reading, writing, arithmetic, phonics, history, science, and character as well as knowledge-based education, not job training. We support knowledge-based curriculum standards and tests. We support successful career and technology programs, but oppose mandatory career training. We oppose Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and similar programs. Further, because of an aging U.S. population and global competition, and because much of today's education teaches children to be employees or perhaps at best managers for employers, we encourage the teaching of entrepreneurial skills and investment skills.

School Surveys and Testing – Public schools should be required to obtain written parental consent for student participation in any test or questionnaire that surveys beliefs, feelings, or opinions in the areas of sexual activity, drug and alcohol use, religion, political persuasion, or other areas of morality.

Bilingual Education – We demand abolition of bilingual education. The best method is an "English Immersion Program." All students must pass recognized standard tests that verify each student's English ability for their grade level before advancing.

Educational Entitlement – We encourage legislation that prohibits enrollment in free public schools of non-citizens unlawfully present in the United States, whether or not such illegals pay or offer to pay tuition for such education.

Religious Freedom in Public Schools – We urge school administrators and officials to inform Texas school students specifically of their First Amendment rights to pray and engage in religious speech, individually or in groups, on school property without government interference. We support and strongly urge Congress to pass a Religious Freedom Amendment, which provides: "Neither the United States nor any State shall prohibit student-sponsored prayer in public schools, nor compose any official student prayer or compel joining therein." We urge the Legislature to end censorship of discussion of religion in our founding documents, and encourage discussing those documents.

Theories of Origin – We support objective teaching and equal treatment of strengths and weaknesses of scientific theories, including Intelligent Design. We believe theories of life origins and environmental theories should be taught as scientific theory, not scientific law. Teachers and students should be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these theories openly and without fear of retribution or discrimination of any kind.

Pledge of Allegiance in Public Schools – Students should be taught flag etiquette and should be led daily in the Pledge of Allegiance, the Texas Pledge, the National Anthem, and other patriotic songs to ensure that the loyal and patriotic spirit of Texan and American heritage is preserved.

Higher Education – We reaffirm support of public and private institutions of higher learning. We advocate an equal standard for public college admission based on merit and ability. We urge the legislature to ensure equal access to grants and scholarships to all Texas high school graduates, including privately educated students. All Texas students should be given acceptance priority over out-of-state or foreign students. We oppose the 10% automatic admissions rule.

College Tuition – We recommend three levels of college tuition: In state requiring proof of Texas legal citizenship, Out of State requiring proof of US citizenship, and, nonresident legal alien. Non-US citizens should not be eligible for state or federal grants.

Public Higher Education Accountability - We support a system of accountability in Texas Public universities. We support binding audits by the State Comptroller of all public universities and a complete review of the tuition deregulation law for the purpose of validating whether it is accomplishing its stated goal.

Gambling and Education – We strongly oppose any gambling to fund public education.

School Health Care – We urge legislators to prohibit reproductive health care services, including counseling, referrals, and distribution of condoms and contraception through public schools. We support the parents' right to choose, without penalty, which medications are administered to their minor children. We oppose medical clinics on school property except higher education and health care for students without parental consent.

School District Lawsuits - We support legislation authorizing Independent School Districts threatened with lawsuits by organizations, such as the ACLU, or sued to certify the lawsuit to the Attorney General of Texas to represent the Independent School District in the suit where the issue is of significant statewide import, and the Attorney General of Texas agrees to take the case.

PROMOTING INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND PERSONAL SAFETY

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

Right To Keep and Bear Arms – We urge the Legislature and Congress to repeal all laws that infringe on the right to bear arms, and to reject any monitoring of gun ownership, and all excessive taxation or regulation of guns and ammunition. We support a ten-year minimum mandatory sentence without parole for felonies committed with firearms. Stiff penalties should be enacted for frivolous lawsuits against legitimate firearms manufacturers. All gun owners are responsible for safely storing and operating firearms. We believe the Legislature should enact legislation: allowing: Concealed Handgun License holders to carry concealed weapons on publicly owned institutions of learning; and, preventing employers from prohibiting Concealed Handgun License holders from storing their concealed handgun in their vehicle while on a company parking area, and removing civil liability from property owners who do not prevent Concealed Handgun License holders from carrying on their premises. We believe that FFL holders should be free from harassment, and license revocations and denials against firearm dealers based on violations consisting of largely inconsequential recordkeeping errors and encourages the ATF to consider lesser gradation of sanctions for such errors.

Freedom of Access Act – We urge repeal of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Law. Those who assault peaceful protesters acting under the Constitution should be vigorously prosecuted. Picketing and literature distribution do not fall under the RICO Act.

Judeo-Christian Nation – As America is a nation under God founded on Judeo-Christian principles, we affirm the constitutional right of all individuals to worship in the religion of their choice.

Safeguarding Our Religious Liberties – We affirm that the public acknowledgment of God is undeniable in our history and is vital to our freedom, prosperity and strength. We pledge our influence toward a return to the original intent of the First Amendment and toward dispelling the myth of separation of church and state.

Religious Institutions – We urge Congress to sanction any foreign government that persecutes its citizens for their religion.

Faith-Based Opportunities – We urge the Legislature to increase ability of faith-based institutions and other organizations to assist the needy, and to reduce regulation of such organizations.

Electronic Privacy – We believe all law-abiding citizens should be free from government surveillance of their electronic communications except in cases directly involving national security. Except for non-citizens, we further oppose any national ID program, including the Real ID Act and the use of Radio Frequency Identification Chips (RFID) on humans.

Personal Confidentiality – Necessary dissemination of personal information among government entities must be safeguarded with the threat of criminal penalties. Legislation should provide redress to anyone denied service for refusing to provide such information.

Equality of All Citizens – We deplore all discrimination. We also deplore forced sensitivity training and urge repeal of any mandate requiring it. We urge immediate repeal of the Hate Crimes Law.

Boy Scouts of America – We support the Boy Scouts of America and reject any attempt to undermine or fundamentally change the ideals of the organization.

PROTECTING CITIZENS FROM CRIME

Prison Reform – We believe our prison systems should emphasize protection of society and punishment of offenders, ever mindful of their human rights. The state should assist offenders who desire reform. Prisoners should be required to perform meaningful work. Prisoners should not have access to private information of any citizen. We support alternative methods of prison administration. We support prohibiting prisoners from initiating frivolous lawsuits. No extraordinary medical care, including organ transplants or body part replacement, should be performed on prisoners at taxpayer expense.

Sentencing Reform – We urge parole boards to administer punishment according to the intent of the sentencing courts. We also call for disclosure to juries of their rights and powers; of prior convictions of the defendant; and of the actual time likely to be served before parole. We believe punishment should be assessed in proportion to the crime and should be a deterrent. We support imprisonment for life without parole for habitual felons. Convicted criminals should make restitution to their victims. A minimum education level should be established by law for all parolees. No inmate with a history of drug abuse should be eligible for parole before completing treatment.

Crime Shouldn't Pay – No convicted criminal should be allowed to profit from sale of rights to their story for books, movies, etc., while incarcerated, on parole, or on probation.

Capital Punishment – Properly applied capital punishment is legitimate, is an effective deterrent, and should be swift and unencumbered.

Juvenile Justice – Juvenile justice reforms should continue, including private programs, “boot camps,” and trying juveniles as adults when appropriate. We condemn incarcerating juveniles and adults in the same facility.

Child Abuse – We recognize the family as a sovereign authority over which the state has no right to intervene, unless a parent or legal guardian has committed criminal abuse. Child abusers should be severely prosecuted. However, we oppose actions of social agencies to classify traditional methods of discipline as child abuse. We support enactment of a homicide-by-abuse statute that provides punishment for abusing a child to death without intent of killing. We support requiring compliance by publicly funded private agencies with laws requiring reporting of instances of any kind of abuse as a condition of receiving such funding.

Unborn Victims of Violence – We believe a person who injures or kills an unborn child should be subject to criminal and civil litigation, whether the child dies in the womb or is born alive.

Sexual Assault – Punishment options for rape should include death. Adults convicted of sexual molestation of a minor should receive mandatory prison sentences without probation or parole. We support increasing the penalty for failure to report child sexual assault cases, and we urge vigorous prosecution of such failure. We urge the Legislature to eliminate from the child sexual assault law the “affirmative defense” when there is less than 36 months of age difference.

Addictive Behaviors – We encourage state and federal governments to severely prosecute illegal dealers and manufacturers of addictive substances and pornography. We urge Congress to discourage export of such substances into our country. Faith based rehabilitation programs should be emphasized. We oppose legalization of illegal drugs. We support an effective abstinence-based educational program for children. We oppose any “needle exchange” program. We urge vigorous enforcement of our DUI laws.

Property Seizure Without Due Process – We oppose seizure of private property without due process. Neither law enforcement agencies nor their parent organizations should be allowed to benefit from such seizures.

Speed Limits – We support highway speed limits based only on safety standards.

STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Fiscal Responsibility – We urge state and federal legislators to reduce spending. We urge a commission composed of citizens and business owners to identify cost savings and reductions in state government. We also support a “cap” on government spending at all levels, with adjustments based only on average family income and population change.

Unfunded Mandates – We oppose all unfunded mandates by the federal and state governments including unreasonable requirements on voluntary emergency response personnel. State mandates without full funding should be included in the government body's annual increase spending limits.

Downsizing the Federal Government – We support downsizing of the federal government in order to re-establish states' rights. We further support abolishing agencies whose activities are not delegated to them under original intent of the Constitution. Any congressional act establishing a new program should contain a provision that eliminates one or more programs of equal or greater cost. We support a sunset provision law at the federal level.

Balanced Budget – We support full disclosure of all “on” and “off” budget spending. We demand that Congress vote only for balanced budgets, and that Social Security funds never be used to balance the budget. A budget surplus should never be used to increase spending. We support zero-based budgeting.

Government Services – We support privatization of government services when beneficial to the taxpayer.

Waste and Fraud in Government Contracts – We urge the Attorney General of the United States to investigate fraud and misuse of funds in government contracts, prosecuting those found responsible. All government contracts should be awarded by competitive bids. We support repeal of the Davis Bacon Act. We call upon the Legislature to allow that the award of construction contracts, that are bid with performance and payment bonds, be awarded to the lowest bidder.

Congressional Retirement System – We recommend that the Congressional retirement system be abolished.

Congressional Pay Raises – We support elimination of the independent pay raise committee and recommend that all pay raises be passed just as all other bills. We support separation of congressional pay raises from pay raises of all other government officials so they may be voted as separate bills with recorded votes.

Faith-Based Charities – We oppose any restrictions by the IRS or any other government rules on taxpayer contributions to faith-based charities. We support new incentives to encourage more faith-based charitable contributions from all taxpayers.

Repeal of Fee Award Act – We support repeal of the Civil Rights Attorneys' Fee Awards Act, which pays attorneys fees to sue the government and to suppress freedom of religion.

Corporate Welfare/Business Subsidies – We oppose all corporate welfare that supports continued inefficient businesses. We encourage our government to allow a free market economy to prevail both domestically and internationally.

Sunset Laws – We support the Texas Sunset Law.

Government Lobbying – We oppose paying lobbyists with tax dollars.

Budget And Appropriations Process – We demand that Congress institute reforms that eliminate unethical politicization of appropriations. We oppose trading of votes based on pork sharing, and promises of financial and other help during reelection campaigns. We oppose state funding of programs without legislative approval.

Earmarks – We call upon all Senators and Representatives to take appropriate action to block any bill containing earmarks, to produce bills with wording that will not allow any earmarks to be added after a final vote is taken, and, to shepherd through the two houses of Congress changes in their procedures that will delete the practice of earmarking and any similar technique that allows spending without a consensus approval.

Rural and Volunteer Fire Departments - We urge Congress to overturn the rules of the U. S. Department of Labor restricting volunteerism by paid firefighters and emergency medical technician personnel.

TAX BURDEN

Federal Tax Reform – Federal tax reform is required and any reform should support free enterprise, economic growth, be simple and fair and support job retention in the United States. The Internal Revenue Service is unacceptable to U. S. taxpayers! We urge that the IRS be abolished and the Sixteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution be repealed. We further urge that the personal income tax, alternative minimum tax, inheritance (death) tax, gift tax, capital gains, corporate income tax, and payroll tax be eliminated. We recommend the implementation of a national retail sales tax, with the provision that a two-thirds majority of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate is required to raise the rate. Such reforms will encourage investment and economic growth. Such a sales tax plan must ensure that no one in America pays taxes of any kind on the necessities of life, ensuring opportunity and quality of life for low- and fixed-income Americans. We believe every tax at every level should be a separate and clearly visible billing to the taxpayer, regardless of type of tax, and of calculation method, so we support tax visibility in all forms.

Tax Deduction for Private and Home school – We support a federal tax deduction for expenses incurred for all private and home schooling.

Maintain Home Mortgage Deduction – We support unlimited deduction of home mortgage interest for income taxes.

Permanent Tax Cuts – We urge the recent income tax reductions be permanent.

Telecommunications – We support removal of regulatory roadblocks to greater investment in telecommunications infrastructure.

State Tax Reform – We believe strongly and urge the Legislature not to create any new tax or to increase any current taxes or fees. We strongly oppose creation of a state income tax or state property tax. We support a constitutional amendment providing a two-thirds super majority of both houses to increase any taxes or fees.

Revised Franchise Tax – The Party calls upon the Texas Legislature to repeal the revised franchise tax. If revenues are required to replace this tax and wasteful spending has been addressed, the Legislature should look to a broad-based, consumption tax first.

Sales Tax and Tax Visibility – Every tax at every level should be a separate and clearly visible billing to the taxpayer. A sales tax is the simplest and most visible, stable, and equitable.

Property Taxes – We favor abolishing property taxes. Until ad valorem taxes are abolished, we recommend that property valuations be fixed for not less than three years following each revaluation. Appraisal Boards should be elected. We urge four board members be elected by commissioners court precinct, and one member elected county-wide.

Exemption of Inventories from Property Taxes – Because of the regressive nature and impossibility for fairness, we urge outright repeal of property taxes on inventory for resale which would spur economic growth sufficient to offset the revenue loss from such tax exemptions through increased sales taxes and other revenues from the resulting increased business activity.

Appraisal Cap – We support capping the annual increase in real property appraisals at 3% and strongly support a reduction in the margin of error in the property value study to 90% in place of the current 95%. We call upon the Texas Leg to eliminate the property value study

Internet Taxation – We oppose any taxation of the Internet.

Tolls on Existing Roads - We support the legitimate construction of toll roads in Texas, but we oppose converting existing state and federal roads to American owned toll roads without voter approval.

Global Warming – We oppose taxes levied and regulations imposed based on the alleged threat of global warming.

UNITED STATES ENERGY STRATEGY

United States Energy Strategy – The foundation of our United States Energy Strategy must be to eliminate dependence on foreign sources for energy. Regulation and rulemaking must be cooperative, preserving the economy while promoting environmental preservation. We encourage Congress to: not support windfall profit tax; repeal oil and gas severance and production taxes; stop promulgation of unnecessary environmental regulation; and promote all energy production including ANWR, offshore California, and the East Coast, while minimizing environmental impact.

Alternative Energy Sources – We strongly support creation of new technologies and markets wherein the U.S.A. can pursue real energy independence, but we oppose subsidizing alternative fuel production.

Clean Energy - We support cooperative regulation and rulemaking that preserve jobs and the economy, while promoting responsible conservation. We support cleaning the air and water with smarter and affordable pollution control.

BUSINESS AND THE ECONOMY

Frivolous Lawsuits - We support further reform to discourage frivolous lawsuits. We oppose the abusive use of class action lawsuits.

Usury Laws – The Party calls upon Congress to immediately enact usury laws that apply to all creditors on all consumer credit products.

Right-to-Work – We oppose the Employee Free Choice Act and any action that eliminates the secret ballot. Every worker should have freedom to work in their preferred job without being forced to join or pay dues to any organization. Our Right-to-Work Law has provided this freedom and a good climate for industrial expansion, higher employment, and a stable management-labor relationship. We encourage adoption of a National Right-to-Work Act.

Small Business - We urge the federal and state legislatures to mitigate the impact of regulations on small businesses and to ensure that such businesses are adequately represented in the regulatory process.

Workers' Compensation - We urge the Legislature to resist making Workers' Compensation mandatory for all Texas employers.

Minimum Wage – We believe the Minimum Wage Law should be repealed.

Prevailing Wage Law - We urge the federal legislature to repeal the Prevailing Wage Law.

Incentives for Retention of Domestic Operations - We support incentives and deregulation to encourage capital investment to ensure retention and creation of jobs in America.

RESTORING AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY AND LEADERSHIP

DOMESTIC

S.A.V.E. U.S.A. – We support seven key steps to secure America.

S – Secure America's border; Northern, Southern, and ports.

A – Abolish Adjustment of Status in the United States.

V – Vigorously enforce immigration laws using federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

E – Eliminate government benefits to illegal aliens.

U – Unimpeded deportation process.

S – Stop employment of illegal aliens.

A – Amend legal immigration rates to more sustainable levels.

Border Security – “Order on the borders” is basic to solving complex issues of illegal immigration. All means must be deployed immediately to prevent illegal aliens, organized crime and potential terrorists from crossing the border. Secure American borders by any means necessary

Civil Defense – We support a national and local civil defense system. We urge Congress to rescind all gun laws infringing upon our constitutional rights.

Federalization of Police – We support having only local control over our police forces.

Foreign Military Bases on American Soil – We oppose relinquishing United States supremacy to any foreign powers on our soil. We urge Congress to prohibit all foreign or international military bases within the United States.

Foreign Control of US Interests – We oppose sale, transfer, management or ownership of critical U.S. interests by foreign or international entities. Foreign owned properties and income shall be subject to all US laws.

Homeland Security – We urge the Homeland Security Department to strengthen our national intelligence gathering; further enhance inter-agency coordination of intelligence; pass critical information on to local and state agencies; protect constitutional rights of all citizens; provide adequate protection of high profile targets for terrorists; enhance airport and port-of-entry security; use random selection and terrorist profiling in searching individuals; provide for armed guards and pilots on commercial aircraft; authorize the Navy and Coast Guard to board and search vessels entering U.S. waters from foreign ports. We further urge Congress to provide expert training of airline pilots for protection against terrorist attack.

National Defense – We continue to encourage and support funding for a strong national defense; continued development and funding of ballistic missile and space based weapons systems maintaining our military’s effective combat strength sufficient to defend our nation’s borders and its strategic interests; avoiding new arms control agreements with any nation not complying with previous agreements; never deploying the military except against invasion or threat to our vital interests, which may include pre-emptive action; and expiration of special emergency war powers unless renewed by Congress in six-month intervals.

Legal Immigration – One nation, one flag, one language, one loyalty

America is a country of immigrants, we should insist that any immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself/herself to the United States. He/she shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else. This is predicated upon the fact that the person is in every facet an American, and nothing but an American. There can be no divided allegiance. Anyone who says he is an American, but something else also, isn’t American at all. We have room but for one flag, the American Flag. We have room for but one language here and that is the English language. We have room for but one sole loyalty and that is loyalty to the American people. (Teddy Roosevelt, 1907)

Illegal Immigration – No amnesty! No how. No way.

Illegal aliens have committed a criminal act. We oppose illegal immigration, amnesty in any form, or legal status for illegal immigrants. We support an end to the “catch and release” policy; criminal penalties and aggressive enforcement for those who knowingly employ illegal workers; expeditious hearings on deporting non-violent illegal immigrants; suspending automatic U.S. citizenship to children born to illegal immigrants; elimination of federal funding to cities with “sanctuary” laws; empowering state and local law enforcement agencies with authority and resources to detain illegal immigrants; rejection of non-verifiable foreign-issued cards as valid identification; strict prosecution of any entity involved in phony identification documents; elimination of day labor work centers; elimination of laws requiring hospitals to give non-emergency care to illegals; elimination of social security benefits or government funding to illegals for education, housing or business loans; preventing any foreign entity from using our judicial system to enter the United States; strong document verification prior to issuance of a Texas drivers license; withholding federal highway funds from any state issuing drivers licenses to illegal aliens; and aggressive prosecution of persons smuggling humans across our borders.

Enforcement of Immigration Law – We support strict and immediate enforcement of all immigration laws.

Birthright Citizenship – We call on the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of these United States to clarify Section 1 of the 14th amendment to limit citizenship by birth to those born to a citizen of the United States: with no exceptions.

NASA – We support appropriate funding for NASA and the Texas Aerospace Commission. We also support private sector research and development of space technology.

Support of Our Armed Forces – We encourage all Americans to support the brave and patriotic men and women of our armed forces. They should be paid a wage sufficient to prevent them from ever needing food stamps and that encourages retention. We strongly recommend that all our armed forces remain commanded only by the Commander-in-Chief and his subordinate commanders; upgrading, modernizing and maintaining the equipment, weapons, and vehicles for the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of our armed forces; the continuation of the all volunteer armed forces, the recruitment and advancement of military personnel based on the needs of the military and the qualifications of the person; disqualification of homosexuals from military service; immediate discharge of HIV positive individuals; separation of men and women in basic training; exclusion of women from ground and submarine combat roles; provision of full military honors for burial of veterans; restoration of all veteran benefits without an offset for disability pay; health and disability benefits equal to active military for national guard and reserves; passage of a “new” G.I Bill that fully funds expanded educational scholarship opportunities for honorably separated Veterans; restoration of full lifetime health benefits to retired military and their families; and assurance that military and civilian voters displaced by their service be afforded full opportunity for their votes to be counted; and the expeditious construction of a Veterans Museum in Texas.

Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) and the North American Union– We strongly oppose and call on Federal and State officials to place high priority on the withdrawal of the United States from the Security and Prosperity Partnership and the formation of the North American Union.

Trans-Texas Corridor – We emphatically oppose the Trans-Texas Corridor in any form or manner. We call for full investigation of any public officials authorizing any form of eminent domain for the Trans-Texas Corridor and foreign funding.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Foreign Policy – We support the spread of a representative form of government and free market enterprise. We also support and encourage private humanitarian aid to developing countries. We support continued favorable treatment of proven allies, and censure of adversarial entities that seek destruction of other countries or harbor terrorists. No United States treaty shall permit any foreign entity to control our citizenry. No foreign entity that consistently votes against our interests or is openly hostile to our nation shall receive U.S. aid.

MIA's and POW's – We urge our government to continue to seek and act upon all information concerning our military personnel and other citizens carried as Missing in Action or Prisoners of War.

China – We strongly recommend removal of Permanent Normal Trade Relations status for Communist China until North and South Korea sign a peace treaty; China significantly improves its policies on human rights; China ceases persecution of Christians; China ceases aggressive behavior toward all neighbors; China ceases transferring nuclear, biological, and chemical technology to Iran, Pakistan and North Korea. We further urge imposition of trade sanctions against Communist China for interfering in United States political campaigns.

Cuba – We support continuing the Cuban embargo.

Taiwan – We urge full recognition of Taiwan with a “One China, One Taiwan Policy.” Being a long-time ally of the United States as well as an independent and sovereign nation, we call upon the President and the U.S. State Department to strongly support the people of Taiwan.

War on Terror – There is no substitute for Victory! We commend and support the Bush Administration's current policy regarding our military operations fighting the War on Terror and confronting radical Islamist terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries around the world. We believe our military forces deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, in particular, should not be prematurely withdrawn from the conflicts until victory has been secured and both countries are able to sustain peace with limited assistance from the United States. There should be no “time-table” applied to the withdrawal of our forces. We also support keeping Guantanamo Detention Center for terrorist detainees. We oppose any plan to close Guantanamo and to bring detainees into the U.S. for Court trials.

Israel – We believe that the United States and Israel share a special long-standing relationship based on shared values, a mutual commitment to a republican form of government, and a strategic alliance that benefits both nations. Our foreign policy with Israel should reflect the special nature of this relationship through continued military and economic assistance and recognition that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths. We believe that the US Embassy should be located in Jerusalem. In our diplomatic dealings with Israel, we encourage the continuation of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, but oppose pressuring Israel to make concessions it believes would jeopardize its security, including the trading of land for the recognition of its right to exist. We call on the U.S. to cease strong arming Israel through prior agreements with the understanding of delivering equipment to them to defend themselves in exchange for future diplomatic concessions, such as giving up land to the Palestinians on the West Bank. We support the continuation of non-recognition of terrorist nations and organizations. Our policy is based on God's biblical promise to bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse Israel and we further invite other nations and organizations to enjoy the benefits of that promise.

Hamas – Palestinians shall not receive American aid as long as Hamas is their elected government. We should withdraw all financial support to Hamas and other elected terrorists. We should not reward terrorism by allowing a Palestinian state carved out of historical Israel.

Iraq - We support our military strategy and the democratically elected government in Iraq in order to avoid tyranny and provide stabilization of the Middle East. We support continued economic and security assistance to Iraq. There should be no timetable for pulling out of Iraq or Afghanistan.

Iran -- We encourage the President to do whatever is necessary to prevent Iran from acquiring and/or developing nuclear weapons.

Afghanistan – The conflict in Afghanistan is not over. We support our continued military operations to prevent the resurgence of Taliban forces. We admonish Afghanistan to uphold fundamental human rights of its own people, including freedom of religion.

Pakistan – We support the stabilization of the Pakistani government as a strategically in the war on terror.

Kashmir – We acknowledge that India and Pakistan seek a strong friendship with the United States and encourage both nations to resolve the Kashmir dispute for the Kashmiri people.

One World Government Organizations – We oppose a one-world government in direct opposition to our basic principles and eroding our sovereignty.

International Monetary Fund – We demand Congress stop funding the IMF and any other international financing agencies.

International Trade – We favor fair international trade. We oppose taxation and regulation of American industry that makes American products uncompetitive. We oppose free trade expansion at the expense of national security and sovereignty. We call for withdrawal from agreements that compromise our sovereignty and security. We urge sanctions against nations that disrupt free trade, bar or excessively tax American products, violate human rights, or engage in technological espionage. We urge repeal of international trade agreements that do not promote free trade, withdrawal from the World Trade Organization, and cessation of negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas. All foreign trucks and drivers operating on American roads must meet American safety standards.

Import Restrictions – We urge Congress to require all imported products and by-products to conform to all U.S. standards.

American Patent Rights – We support protecting our inventors, enforcing our patent laws, and strengthening penalties for patent law violations by foreign entities.

Sudan – We urge censure of the Sudanese government for supporting atrocities against ethnic minorities in Darfur.

United Nations – We believe it is in the best interest of the citizens of the United States that we immediately rescind our membership in, as well as all financial and military contributions to, the United Nations. We will:

1. support legislation similar to “The American Sovereignty Preservation Act”, which would remove the United States entirely from the control of the UN;
2. demand that Congress ratify no more, and rescind any existing treaties that compromise the United States Constitution;
3. support immediate recall of our military forces from UN initiated engagements, and restore them to their traditional mission of defending the liberty and freedom of the people of the United States of America;
4. support an amendment to the United States Constitution stating, “a treaty that conflicts with any provisions of the Constitution shall not be of any force or effect”;
5. urge our Texas Senators to unalterably oppose any agreement or treaty that seeks to establish an International Criminal Court (ICC), make the United States a participatory party to such a court; recognize the jurisdiction of such a court within the United States or upon any native-born or naturalized citizen of the United States; and

We oppose:

1. UN control of any United States land or natural resources;
2. the use of Presidential Executive Orders to implement UN treaties, thereby circumventing our elected Congress;
3. any attempt by the federal government, or the UN, to directly or indirectly tax United States citizens for UN support;
4. a UN resolution that would force the United States to adopt gun control measures by treaty;
5. the placement of the UN flag and emblem on public property or in government facilities;
6. payment of any debt allegedly owed to the UN;
7. Any attempt to grant veto power over the sovereignty of the United States to set national defense priorities, wage effective war, and negotiate peace in terms favorable to our vital interests; and
8. Ratification of the Law of the Sea Treaty (LOST).

We urge Congress to evict the United Nations from the United States and eliminate any further participation.

MINORITY REPORT CONCERNING SCHOOL CHOICE

We, the members of the platform committee which signed this document, respectfully ask to strike the current platform plank titled Parental School Choice:

SD 10	Kyleen Wright
SD 2	Pamela Derr
SD 4	Tony Sims
SD 30	Deon Starns
SD 17	Rick Miller
SD 18	Richard Whitmore
SD 12	Paul Stockard