

King County Republican Central Committee 2012 Platform

Preamble

The United States of America was founded upon the principles of Limited Government, Personal Liberty and Individual Responsibility under God. As Republicans, we believe that the role of government is to defend these principles and secure the rights of its citizens. We agree that government should *“establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.”* We affirm that there are God-given rights, which, as protected by guarantees in the U.S. Constitution, form the foundation of our rights as citizens. We reject the notion that government can, or should attempt to, limit individual achievement or impose equal social outcomes. We believe that from freedom comes opportunity; from opportunity comes growth; and from growth comes progress and prosperity.

Citizens' Rights

Government has no power or authority of its own except for that which is delegated by the people. All power and authority not explicitly delegated to government is retained by the people. We are guaranteed freedoms of speech, religion, peaceful assembly, individual possession of firearms, unabridged property rights and the Washington State initiative process.

Government

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

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

Governments at all levels have relentlessly encroached into all spheres of public and private life. We are not against government — we are for a smaller, more accountable and effective government. Our federal government was created by the states with powers limited to those in Article I, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution and those limits are emphasized in the Bill of Rights. The states and the people bear the responsibility to enforce those limits upon the central government. We believe that government exists to serve the people, and not the other way around. But above all, we believe the people should have more choice in how they live their lives and spend their own money. We support:

- The Federal government protecting our Constitution by providing for the national defense, defending our borders, preserving our sovereignty and protecting the private property rights of citizens;
- The orderly dissolution of GSE's (e.g. Fannie, Freddie etc.) as well as an end to bailouts (e.g. AIG, GM and the banks) and crony capitalism that place the taxpayer at risk while the profits go to others;
- Full and honest Congressional audits of the Federal Reserve's management of the money and credit system of the United States;
- Regular and independent performance and fiscal audits of government agencies by the State Auditor. These agencies are to make the findings public. Agencies, with the full cooperation of the Legislature, should either implement such audit recommendations or publicly state why they have not been adopted;
- Enforcement of criminal laws with stringent sentences coupled with strict parole supervision;
- That all elected officials be held accountable for violations of state and federal laws and any elected official convicted of a felony shall lose his or her government pension; and
- The prohibition of 'earmarks' – under-the-table funding of pet projects attached to unrelated bills with the hope that nobody will notice. If a project needs funding, it should be voted on as a normal part of the budgeting process.

Economy & Jobs

We believe that free enterprise is the foundation of our country's economic system. Protecting merit encourages entrepreneurship. The wealth of a nation rises as labor and capital are put to productive use.

Millions of workers have lost their jobs or are part-time, but the American public recognizes that the unemployment rate is far worse than published figures. The Bureau of Labor Statistics hides reality behind statistical tricks, seasonal adjustments and redefinition of labor participation. The illusion of a stimulus and Fed-driven economic recovery is used to justify an idea that government can fix things. It cannot.

Jobs are created when profitable concepts are matched with capital and invested in a new economic activity. Government attempts to stimulate employment but it cannot create any 'job growth' because it has no capital of its own. It can only tax and borrow. The current government's spending and borrowing policy is redirecting investment capital toward government, by monopolizing credit. Real growth based on rising productivity is sustainable. "Growth" based on our ever-expanding level of public debt is not. This inflation is an expansion of counterfeit credit and it cannot be paid back.

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

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

Debt, Deficits and Entitlement Reform

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

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

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

National Security

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

- Our strategic interests throughout the world must be protected and maintained. Therefore, we absolutely oppose the proposals that would shrink our military, and we do not support wholesale reductions in our nuclear deterrent based on naive and idealistic theories. Peace through strength should remain our national policy;
- Continuing to honor all past and current obligations to our troops and veterans is our duty, including audits of military hospitals to ensure high quality care;
- Our intelligence agencies must be strengthened and empowered to work together and to cooperate with immigration authorities and local law enforcement;
- Our national security must take precedence over international commerce, including securing our key infrastructure, ports and utilities; and
- Israel has a right, as do all sovereign states, to defend itself against foreign enemies and state-sponsored terrorism.

Border Security & Immigration

The United States has the world's most vibrant economy, and a system of laws and government that ensures freedom. Our country is a beacon of hope for peoples around the world, many of whom live in countries with oppressive regimes and limited

economic opportunities. We cherish America's heritage as an immigrant nation while understanding that our nation has the right and need to secure its borders, and to determine temporary visa, residency and citizenship requirements.

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

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

Agenda 21

The United Nations Agenda 21 is a comprehensive global plan for "improving" society and the "distribution and use" of the world's resources. This collectivist or "communitarian" philosophy was formalized at the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, 1992 Rio de Janeiro). "Smart Growth" policies are being implemented worldwide by actions of the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). The stated goals are greater "social justice" and "sustainability." The results are economic stagnation and loss of both freedom and sovereignty.

We oppose Agenda 21 which uses economic, natural resource, transportation, environmental and education policies to further its unwise objectives. These include:

- Moving authority and responsibility from individuals to governments, and merging both local and global governments;
- Reducing the human footprint through population redistribution and resource restriction using strategies disguised as "Green Policies";
- Redistributing wealth from both developed countries and wealthy individuals; and
- Transferring property rights, resources and use from individuals to collectives using taxes and fees, restrictions, easements, trusts, parks and green corridors.

Agenda 21 links U.N. policy, wealthy NGOs, grants and memberships. Local governments use taxpayer dollars to support memberships such as ICLEI. King County is a paying member along with the cities of Auburn, Bellevue, Bothell, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, Seattle and Shoreline.

We recognize the dangerous and destructive intent of Agenda 21 and encourage all citizens to educate themselves (e.g. ICLEI website www.iclei.org). Defending freedom starts at the local level, and we call upon member government entities to cancel their ICLEI memberships as several U.S. cities already have.

Property Rights

The right to own and control property is one of the key foundations of personal liberty. Increasingly onerous and unjustified land-use regulations are eroding this basic freedom and our ability to maintain a growing economy. The Washington State Growth Management Act, especially as implemented by the King County Critical Areas Ordinance, has violated property rights without just compensation. Such policies reduce choice and raise housing prices for owners and renters at all economic levels. We support:

- Repealing the Growth Management Act and replacing it with legislation that balances property rights and responsible conservation of the environment;
- Restricting the use of eminent domain to genuine public works projects;
- Requiring that adequate notice of any proposed condemnation or change in land use regulations be published in print media and be presented to the owner by registered mail or other verifiable means;
- At least full market compensation and appropriate tax reassessment for property taking or reduction of usage;
- Legislation to limit property tax increases and fees; and
- Preservation of historic water rights.

Environment

The Republican Party has a long tradition of promoting responsible stewardship of our environment, such as the landmark Republican legislation that created our National Parks system and established the Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental policies should be based on sound, well-established science subject to all the rigorous debate and constant re-examination that is expected of scientific study and not based on political ideology. We all need clean air, water and land. We believe it is possible to have these without seriously damaging our economy or compromising our standard of living. Environmental policies should not be used for wealth redistribution. We support:

- Commonsense practices in forest, wetlands, fisheries, and wildlife management, promoting multiple uses of natural resources in most circumstances;
- Maintaining and adequately funding national, state and local parks so that they can be enjoyed for decades to come;
- Shoreline management programs that protect property owners while respecting water quality;
- Improved and affordable access for citizens to enjoy the public lands;
- Private property rights, which are the foundation of liberty and which deserve consideration in all environmental policy decisions; and
- The concept that the science involved in climate change is not settled. Scientists around the world now question whether sufficient attention has been paid to the proven historical influence of natural solar cycles, and many other aspects of climate science.

Energy

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

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

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

Current government policies regarding permitting new and existing power plants and the opening of Federal lands for leases hinder future prosperity. North American partnerships, including the proposed Keystone pipeline, will provide additional energy supply and security.

Our economic, security and environmental future is bright if we follow realistic policies.

Transportation

An effective transportation system is critical to our economy and quality of life. Roads, rail, air, and marine transportation all play important roles in moving people and products in Washington. Government transportation policies should be responsive to the needs of the people, not an attempt to artificially control transportation choices and should not be a tool for social engineering. Gas taxes must be used exclusively on roads. Toll funds must be used only toward the same tolling project. Top priority solutions will include: roadway congestion relief, safe and attractive bus transit, car and van pools, decreased regulation, and the modernization of our rail rights-of-way.

Education

It is a paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, economic status, or sex. Families bear primary responsibility for making their best educational choices. They need options including: appropriately funded public schools, charter schools, home-based activities and tax exemptions for private choices. Local school districts must be given the freedom from bureaucracy to provide education as directed by the local community and elected school boards. Public schools must meet basic standards outlined by the state with an emphasis on reading, writing, history, U.S. history, the Constitution, mathematics and the sciences. Schools need to require all children learn the English language. Control of curriculum must be maintained by local elected school boards.

Government must appropriately fund public schools and hold them accountable through performance audits. Basic state standards must not be accompanied by onerous directives and unfunded mandates. Funding for basic education must not be financed with cuts to higher and vocational education programs.

Family

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

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

Life

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

Health Care

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

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

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

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

- Repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), which violates the Constitution, the people's freedom, and the rights of conscience and of contract. It does little to control costs and will destroy the private insurance market as business and individuals drop coverage. Inevitably, it will lead only to rationing of care and a single-payer government plan;
- Immediate repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board, 15 unelected bureaucrats with no medical expertise;
- Revision of Medicare to eliminate price controls and give Americans a choice among competing plans without government mandates;
- The inviolability of the vital doctor-patient relationship;
- That churches and religious institutions such as schools or hospitals have the right to the free exercise of conscience;
- That the use of contraception and family planning for competent adults are deeply private and personal decisions, into which governments should not intrude. These costs should not be mandated for third parties nor born by the state;
- The consumer's right to buy health insurance across state lines;
- Private insurance, without government mandates, which allows individual choice of both in-state and cross-state providers, policies and coverage through Consumer-Directed Health Plans such as Health Savings Accounts, and allowing interstate competition in health insurance;
- Insurance pools for small businesses and associations to acquire coverage that has the tax-advantages given to large businesses and unions;
- Portability for policies so individuals can keep their coverage between jobs and during unemployment;
- Reform of Washington Medicaid by turning enrollees into active health care consumers by allowing them to use Medicaid money to purchase health insurance or to enroll in a Medicaid HSA plan that rewards healthy living;
- Restoration of variable-benefit plans, from basic to comprehensive, according to personal preference, with the option of lower premiums, higher deductibles and co-pays which will reduce unnecessary utilization;
- Guaranteed Access pools for high risk individuals (e.g. chronic diseases and pre-existing conditions);
- Revision of the outdated tax code, giving persons in need a tax credit or voucher toward purchase of health insurance;
- Deductibility of medical insurance cost for all citizens and groups;
- Meaningful malpractice liability reform (Tort reform);
- The right of any medical professional to refuse to provide a service which would violate his or her conscience or professional judgment; and

- Parents' right to health care information concerning their minor children, and prior parental consent for all medical procedures, treatments and pharmaceuticals.

Social Security

We recognize that Social Security has become the sole or primary source of retirement income for millions of Americans. However, the increase in American life expectancy, the imminent demographic wave of retirees and the expansion of benefits has made the system unsustainable. From its origin as a supplemental retirement system it has been transformed into an inter-generational transfer of wealth with today's contributions diverted to current retirees. Any reform must recognize that promises made to current beneficiaries and those nearing retirement must be kept. Viability solutions include linkage between contributions and benefits.

Election Integrity

Fair and open elections are the cornerstone of republican government. It is the duty of government to ensure that only legally registered living U.S. citizens vote, every voter has the ability to cast their ballot in absolute secrecy, all legally-cast ballots are properly and impartially counted, and all voters and elections officials adhere to the letter of the law.

Citizens have the right to actively monitor all aspects of the elections process and challenge irregularities. Election law must ensure the ballots of overseas and military voters are received and counted and any credible cases of voter registration and election fraud be prosecuted.

State Labor Relations

There exists a fundamental conflict of interest between the governor and state labor unions in the area of contract negotiations. Labor negotiations should not be conducted by an elected official who receives campaign support from the involved unions. We recommend appointment and oversight of the Labor Relations Board by a joint committee of the legislature.

King County Republican Central Committee

Chairman: Lori Sotelo

Platform Committee

Dan Thwing – Committee Chairman
 Bob Carsrud – 1st District
 Jim Callow – 5th District
 Margaret Sackett – 11th District
 Karen Pettingill – 30th District
 Bob Vos – 31st District

Paul Hess – 32nd District
 Dennis Reanier – 33rd District
 Chuck Rangel – 34th District
 Sarina Forbes – 36th District
 Jonathan Fox – 37th District
 Tom Twiggs – 41st District

Kurt Anderson – 43rd District
 John Vasko – 39th/45th District
 Ralph Kosche – 46th District
 Cory Cappelletti – 47th District
 Chuck Dermody – 48th District