

Platform of the Libertarian Party of Mecklenburg County

PREAMBLE:

Respecting the natural rights of all people to Life, Liberty, Property, and the pursuit of Happiness is at the foundation of the Libertarian Party's political philosophy. Economic freedom, a free market economy, property rights, personal responsibility, and individual liberty are essential qualities inexorably linked in helping us form a peaceful and prosperous society.

Governments, which derive their powers from the consent of the governed, must not violate our individual rights nor erect barriers which would prevent citizens from pursuing the vibrant and meaningful life of their choice; so long as citizens uphold their duty to respect the rights of others to do likewise. We must oppose attempts by governments to manipulate the economy or interference in the private moral decisions of those who are governed.

We believe that when private enterprise, charitable organizations, and other voluntary associations are allowed to provide their services free from undue government interference they will be able to do so in a more economically sustainable, cost effective, and compassionate way. We envision an increased role for these voluntary associations to accompany a reduction in the spending and mandates of our local government. In this way we can ensure that those who currently depend on local programs are not left without options and a greater value can be offered to the taxpayer. Let it be known that we ONLY support a free, open and fair market in all things, which includes those services currently being performed solely or in part by government coercion.

Our goal is a freer and more prosperous society for all, which is based on individual respect and the acknowledgment of the creative potential of free people and unfettered markets. We hold an optimistic vision for our shared future where public policy and libertarian principles meet for the common betterment of our communities and an emphasis on local concerns.

1. JUSTICE

1.1 The Law

The LPMeck advocates for enforcement of just and fair laws in a sensible and constructive way. We advocate for only the most serious crimes and those with a clear and obvious victim, to be the priority of local law enforcement.

1.2 The Law Should Know No Exceptions

No person should have to endure victimization without recourse. No government official or representative, even when acting in the pursuance of their official duties, should have immunity from the law.

1.3 Jails

Jails exist to separate those who would violate the rights of others from civil society in the interim between their arrest and their timely trial or until they post bail. To that end, the rights of those jailed must be respected as much as possible. Among these rights, but not limited to, are the following; the right to healthy meals, the right to humane and sanitary accommodations, the right to see AND be seen by loved ones, family, and legal counsel.

1.4 Moratorium on the Drug War

The LPMeck calls for the immediate cessation of arrests and prosecutions related to the national policy of drug prohibition. While the LPMeck does not advocate for the use of illegal substances, we understand that the negative consequences of drug prohibition are often worse than the effects of these substances themselves. We advocate for more compassionate policies which will help those suffering from addiction and substance abuse, rather than a punitive approach.

1.5 Searches & Takings

The LPMeck opposes the taking or seizure of private property by local law enforcement in cooperation with Federal Civil Asset Forfeiture programs, which are in violation of both the North Carolina State Constitution and the 4th Amendment Protections afforded to citizens in the Bill of Rights. We support compensation for owners whose property is devalued or made inaccessible by local ordinances' and regulations. The LPMeck calls for a halt to random roadblocks or searches of any kind as they represent a violation of individual rights as protected by the Bill of Rights and present an opportunity for abuse of power against the citizen.

1.6 Trial by Jury

The LPMeck fully supports the right of every person accused of a public offense to a speedy trial by jury, regardless of the nature or severity of the crime, and regardless of the likelihood of a conviction. The LPMeck opposes the so called trial penalty and coercive plea bargains. We are in favor of the right of a jury to judge not only the accused but also the law itself through Jury Nullification.

2. SOCIAL ISSUES

2.1 Education

The LPMeck supports the rights of parents and students to take control of their own education. We favor local governments to ensure that children have access to a quality education by lifting the burden of regulation from private education and home schooling, and allowing for as much choice as possible within the public school system.

More specifically, with respect to public schooling, the LPMeck supports:

- **(a)** parents' rights to classroom observation and transparency into their children's curriculum, including any curriculum provided by private contractors paid with public monies,
- **(b)** full disclosure of how tax money is spent, including via private contractors,
- **(c)** evidence-based, independently-verified teaching methodologies most suited for the learner's needs and nature,
- **(d)** a hard opt-in for parents on all surveillance on their children at school, and
- **(e)** greater transparency in the public school system overall.

2.2 Marriage

The LPMeck believes that the state should leave marriage and domestic relationships to religious

institutions or private contracts that are entered into voluntarily by consenting adults. As long as the state continues to grant marriage licenses, LPMeck advocates for granting them on a non-discriminatory basis. The LPMeck believes as long as all parties involved are consenting adults, then the government has no grounds to deny or encourage a marriage license.

3. ECONOMY

3.1 Corporate and Franchise Tax Subsidies

The LPMeck does not support the use of public money for private benefit, and to that end is opposed to tax breaks, credits, or special arrangements for sports franchises, private institutions, and corporations.

3.2 Business and Labor

The LPMeck is in favor of reducing the barrier to entry for prospective entrepreneurs via the abolition of fees and or taxes associated with business licenses, occupational licenses, and franchise fees. We favor policies that would open the field of voluntary licensing and improve the supply of affordable professionals in the areas of health, law, engineering, counseling, real estate, dentistry, embalming, and food service, among others. We call for the minimum regulation required to ensure health and safety without passing on the burden to either the customer or entrepreneur.

3.3 Local Government Monopolies

The LPMeck favors a policy wherein local governments seek public-private partnerships to solve for basic government needs and services. We favor free and open competition in all areas that are heretofore reserved to government granted monopolies.

3.4 Zoning

We only favor policies that respect the rights of property owners to use and develop their property and land as they see fit and the rights of their neighbors to be protected from any direct harm caused by such use. We encourage the establishment of private contractual relationships to promote neighborly land use and development.

4. GOVERNMENT AND TAXATION

4.1 Democracy

The LPMeck favors access to the ballot for all constitutionally qualified candidates. All candidates for a given office need to be held to the same requirements regardless of party affiliation. The people's right to easy access to voice their will to the government through a variety of methods ought to be respected and encouraged. These methods include, but are not limited to, initiative, referendum, recall, proportional representation, and write-in votes.

4.2 Annexation and Secession

The LPMeck is opposed to forced annexation by municipalities of either adjacent municipal, county, or unincorporated land or territory without the direct approval of those living in the areas of proposed annexation. The LPMeck supports the right of any territory to secede from local municipalities or

counties to form their own local governments whereby to exercise their right of self-determination so long as such proposals are directly approved by those living in the areas that would seek to form their own local governments and associations.

4.3 Taxation

Taxation is, by nature, a coercive act against the people. To that end, it is incumbent upon local governments to use any revenue derived by taxation in an effective and equitable way to benefit the general welfare of the people who are to be taxed. LPMeck supports only the minimum amount of taxation required to accomplish the legitimate roles of local government.

4.4 Federal Grants and Bonds

The LPMeck does not support the use of federal grants with adjunct restrictions and mandates. The LPMeck favors full control of funding for such programs to the state and local government in accordance with the protections afforded in the 9th and 10th amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

To the extent that government bonds are merely deferred taxes and represent a continual liability to the taxpayer, the LPMeck favors paying off existing bonds as quickly as possible and to refrain from the issuance of new bonds.

4.5 Education Funding

The LPMeck supports the parents' right to economic freedom regarding their children's education. As long as tax money is used to fund compulsory schooling, the money should follow the child to the educational option of the parents' choosing.

5. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

5.1 Privacy

The LPMeck opposes any attempt by local governments to collect information on law abiding citizens, except in the constitutionally required performance of its duties. All personal information gathered by local governments must be kept confidential and not used nor shared except directly for the purpose for which it has been gathered.

5.2 Right to Self-Defense

The LPMeck acknowledges the inalienable right of citizens to choose their own means of self-defense without government interference. The LPMeck opposes government attempts to prohibit law abiding citizens from acquiring firearms and ancillary supplies, including the administrative bureaucracy associated with pistol purchase permits and concealed carry permits. The LPMeck calls for the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office to expedite the processing of the backlog of firearm permit applications.

5.3 Immigration

The LPMeck does not support the use of local law enforcement resources to enforce Federal Immigration laws or mandates. The LPMeck is neither for nor against so called “Sanctuary City” policies, but rather encourages the Federal and State Governments to use their own resources and personnel rather than to impress local law enforcement resources and talent.

5.4 Free Association

The LPMeck supports the right of free association between individuals to conduct their community affairs as they see fit consistent with individual liberty, without undue interference from local government. The LPMeck opposes any government-imposed shutdown of private businesses, houses of worship, or other private institutions, and any government-imposed stay-at-home orders.

5.5 Free Expression

The LPMeck supports individuals’ freedom of expression, including exercise of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances, as stated in the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of North Carolina. We support open dialogue, and oppose intimidation and bullying, especially in public meetings such as school board, city council, and county commissioner board meetings.

5.6 Medical Freedom

The LPMeck supports all individuals’ right to informed consent in making their own medical decisions free of government coercion, threats, intimidation, or mandates.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

6.1 National Libertarian Party Platform

The LPMeck affirms and adopts the platform of the national Libertarian Party.

6.2 North Carolina State Libertarian Party Platform

The LPMeck affirms and adopts the platform of the state Libertarian Party.

Omissions

In all matters where the LPMeck does not take a position in this platform, the party affiliate shall always be in favor of the position which grants the greatest freedom to the people while protecting individual rights, and which most limits the role of government.