

2012 Missouri Republican Party Platform

“Reclaiming America’s Future”

PREAMBLE

Most of what is important in life we do for ourselves, without the government. We form our own families and raise our own children. We choose what we want to do in life. We pray to our God as we choose; we form and join the religious and civic groups that care for our neighbors in need and shape the direction of our state. There are only a few things we need the government to do for us; but it should do those things well and faithfully.

Missourians deserve a state and national government with the vision to see the bright future ahead, and the effective leadership to guide us there. We pledge to provide both the vision and the effective leadership Missourians deserve.

WE BELIEVE that all of us are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is our fundamental belief that our morals, our values and our culture are derived from Almighty God. To quote the Psalmist, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.” Psalm 33:12.

WE BELIEVE that the strength of America is in the hearts and homes of its citizens.

WE BELIEVE in the right of Missourians to be secure in their persons, their homes and their communities.

WE BELIEVE government governs best when it governs least.

WE BELIEVE that all political power is vested in and derived from the people; that all government originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

WE BELIEVE the role of the federal government should be "to ensure domestic tranquility, to provide for the common defense and to promote the general welfare." And we believe that the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution grants all other duties to the states.

WE BELIEVE the Republican Party is the best vehicle to build on the principles of free enterprise, personal responsibility, economic opportunity, strong families, moral values and sound government.

WE COMMEND the efforts of elected Republican officials at the county and local levels. We encourage their work to advance good government.

WE COMMEND the efforts of elected Republican officials at the state level. Without question, Missourians are better off with Republicans leading both chambers of the Legislature.

WE COMMEND the efforts of elected Republican officials at the federal level. We encourage their continued efforts to balance the federal budget, to reign in the growth of the federal bureaucracy, to empower the states and reverse the trend towards socialism and the high taxes that pay for it.

WE BELIEVE that the first 3 years of the Obama-Biden administration has been marred by an unprecedented level of government spending and overreach. National Democrats have abused the political process to pass a health care bill that we believe to be unconstitutional. They have accelerated already-unsustainable federal spending and racked up record amounts of debt. And they have ushered in an era of out-of-control rule-making by federal agencies that has stalled the economic recovery.

WE BELIEVE the election of a Republican president and Republican U.S. Senate will reverse the past several years of Democrat mismanagement and, by reining in Washington and restoring government to its proper place, will give our citizens the opportunity to once again realize the American Dream.

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Freedom

The people of Missouri should be taxed only to the extent necessary to provide a balanced budget funding the essential functions of government in a manner that is simple, equitable and uniform. Missouri families can be trusted to know how to spend their money more wisely than government. Free enterprise and fiscal responsibility go hand in hand. Creating an environment in which high quality, family-supporting jobs can flourish must be a priority.

Job Creation

We believe that the free market creates jobs and allocates resources much more efficiently than government. Extreme and unnecessary federal regulations have stifled innovation, killed jobs, and restrained the economic recovery. Whenever possible, the government should get out of the way and allow entrepreneurs and businesses small and large do what they do best: put Americans back to work.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Reducing government regulation and restrictions that prevent the creation of jobs and the growth of Missouri businesses.
- Enacting a moratorium on new federal regulations to reduce regulatory uncertainty caused by out-of-control federal bureaucracies.
- Reforming the workers compensation system to balance the rights of employees and their employers.
- Continued efforts to limit job-killing frivolous lawsuits.
- Opening new markets for Missouri products.
- Making the 2001 federal tax cuts permanent.
- Eliminating the Death Tax.
- Eliminating the Alternative Minimum Tax.
- Reducing the overall combined tax burden.
- Revitalizing Missouri's urban communities through policies that encourage the creation of jobs and economic opportunities in those areas.

Spending & Debt

In recent years, the federal government has seen an unprecedented explosion of debt that will have to be paid off by future generations. This must be stopped, before it's too late. Governments must learn to live within their means—just as Missouri families do every day.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Passage of a federal Balanced Budget Amendment.
- Balancing the state budget without increasing taxes.
- Streamlining of government services to avoid duplication at the city, county and state level.

- Continuing to streamline the state and federal government by eliminating fraud, waste and abuse.
- Using technology and improved management principles to deliver the highest quality of government services at the lowest possible cost.
- Keeping and enforcing the Hancock Amendment and electing officials who respect its goals and principles.
- Performance of government functions at the level of government closest to the people that can most efficiently perform the task.

Health Care Freedom

Every Missouri citizen should be able to choose and access a health plan that meets their needs at a price they can afford, without the interference of the federal government. Seniors deserve more health care choices and assistance where needed to enable them to access appropriate care and services.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Efforts to overturn “Obamacare” and the individual mandate, including the various constitutional challenges to the law.
- Proposition C, which exempts Missouri from the federal health care law’s individual mandate, and which Missourians passed with an overwhelming 71% of the vote in 2010.
- Allowing every American to purchase health insurance policies across state lines.
- Giving every American the ability to maintain a Health Savings Account (HSA), and removing any requirement that individuals must obtain a high-deductible insurance policy before opening up an HSA.
- Empowering Missourians to purchase their own personal health insurance, including allowing small business owners to join together to purchase quality, affordable health insurance for themselves and their employees.
- Missouri’s legal reform law that stopped the abuse and misuse of Missouri’s judicial system through the filing of frivolous lawsuits and has allowed doctors to remain in our state.

Cap & Trade & the Environment

At a time when the state and federal economy is faltering, some in Washington have proposed extreme, job-killing measures to regulate carbon dioxide. While it is important to balance economic growth and the environment, these regulations, which would raise prices on every single person in the country, are a step too far.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Efforts to prevent any state or federal cap & trade scheme from taking effect.

- Efforts to prevent EPA from unilaterally regulating carbon dioxide.
- Providing reliable, affordable and environmentally sound energy for America's future, reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy and responsibly providing for the development of our domestic energy sources.
- Efforts to promote conservation and diversify our energy supply.
- Environmental regulation premised upon sound free market principles and elimination of environmental regulation that imposes excessive financial burdens for tenuous incremental benefit.

Educating Our Children

Education is a true vehicle of opportunity. The education of Missouri's children is much more than the first fiscal priority mandated in the Missouri Constitution. It is our moral imperative.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Efforts at the state and federal levels to adopt a fair system that grants parents the ability to help their children escape failing schools and attend schools of their choice—whether private, charter, or public.
- Quick action to address the urban education crisis that has already sacrificed the futures of generations of young people.
- The foundation formula that funds education based on the needs of our children rather than the taxing capacity of a school district.
- Education savings accounts that are tax exempt and may be used for meeting education expenses for each individual or family member without penalty for withdrawal.
- Local school boards in their efforts to guarantee quality instruction and to remove an unfit teacher.
- Reforming teacher tenure to ensure that the best teachers, regardless of their length of employment, remain in classrooms.
- Establishing a merit pay system that rewards the most effective teachers.
- Policies to reduce bullying in schools.
- Policies that stress the importance of parents in the education system and allow and encourage parents to play an active role in their local education system.
- The authority of parents as the primary educators of their children in all matters, including morality and sexual responsibility.
- The fundamental right of parents to raise their children according to the convictions of their family and faith, to be the primary authority to determine and direct the nurturing, health care, education, guidance, discipline, and moral upbringing of their children including, the ability to home-school or send children to faith-based schools free of burdensome government regulations.

- Protecting children in our public schools and any public entity where computers and the Internet are made readily available from pornography on the Internet, with local entities choosing the proper filter.
- Rejecting the establishment of school-based clinics/health links that dispense contraceptives and provide abortion counseling.
- Requiring the informed consent of a parent or guardian before providing health, mental health or substance abuse treatment services to minor students in public schools.
- Empowering local school districts to determine how best to handle the teaching of creationism and the theory of evolution.
- Encouraging people to use their real life experience to teach in elementary and secondary schools.

Property Rights

Landowners have the right to manage their property as good stewards of the land without government interference. We believe the source of our riches is embodied in the production of our foods and the protection of our environment. We realize the wealth of our nation comes from the land and the conservation and wise use of our resources are essential to the future of America. We understand that agriculture is Missouri's largest industry and we support the great work of all our farming families.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- The restricted use of eminent domain only in cases when it is necessary for the benefit of the general public and only when full and adequate compensation is provided to the property owner.
- Policies and programs that enhance agricultural production.
- Value-added production and job growth by processing our raw agricultural products in Missouri.
- A long-term agricultural policy that enhances Missouri family farms and their ability to compete.
- A common sense approach to environmental policy by both the federal and state governments that does not infringe upon the rights of landowners.
- Limitations upon excessive land use regulation and zoning that deny property owners the fair use of their property.
- Policies that recognize that food production and environmental protection are both essential to life in our society.
- Sound river management policies that do not threaten the flooding of farmland.
- Encouraging the pursuit of agriculture, promoting agriculture-based economic opportunities, and protecting farming in Missouri by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict.

Security

Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is God's gift to each individual. America has a solemn duty to stand for freedom, at home and abroad, and a special responsibility to help make the world a more peaceful place. Fighting for freedom in foreign lands helps prevent the necessity of fighting the enemies of freedom in our homeland.

Homeland Security

Since September 11, 2001, America has made tremendous progress in protecting and defending our homeland. We have improved the government's ability to protect our infrastructure, guard our borders and patrol our skies.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Taking the War on Terror directly to the enemies of freedom.
- The continued work of the federal and state Departments of Homeland Security and the increased coordination of the gathering and use of intelligence.
- The fair application of the Patriot Act as a means to provide law enforcement authorities with the tools necessary to prevent terrorist attacks while protecting our individual liberties.
- Greater security at our borders to prevent illegal immigrants and terrorists from entering our country.
- Revamping the system of monitoring the status of all visas, including student and work visas, and mandating better background checks on all aliens applying for visas.
- All efforts to root out the agents of terror and protect Americans from the evils of terrorism.

Strong National Defense

Defending the nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the federal government. America must use its position of unparalleled strength and influence to create a balance of power in the world that favors freedom.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- A strong national defense that protects our strategic interests and those of our allies.
- Extending the peace by seeking to spread the benefits of freedom and prosperity across the globe and fostering an era of good relations among the world's great powers.
- Committing the resources necessary to fight and to win the War on Terror, including ongoing military and civilian operations around the world.
- Defending the peace by opposing and preventing violence by terrorists and outlaw regimes both at home and abroad.

- The expansion of all technologies, including the national missile defense system, which will allow the United States to intercept any nuclear attack before it reaches our borders.
- Protecting the size and strength of our armed forces.
- Improving the compensation provided to military personnel and providing better benefits to their spouses and families.
- Honoring our commitment to all military personnel, veterans and their families.
- Maintaining and expanding each of our excellent military facilities in Missouri.
- A strong Missouri National Guard and Reserve as an element of the national military structure and to provide support to civil authority, in time of emergency or disaster.
- All troops deployed by the United States government.
- The integrity and independence of our U.S. troops under U.S. command.
- The military's courageous efforts to protect us from the threat of global terrorism.
- The special relationship between our state and nation and our strong ally Israel.

Protecting our Borders

America's immigrants helped forge a nation built on a foundation of laws. We welcome those who continue to look to America to pursue life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—and we owe it to the legal immigrants who respected our nation's laws to prevent those who break our rules from entering the country illegally. Securing our borders against illegal immigration must be a priority in the ongoing battle against international terrorism and in our efforts to ensure that only law-abiding citizens receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- An immigration policy that does not include amnesty for illegal immigrants.
- Preventing illegal immigrants from receiving taxpayer benefits.
- Securing the border to prevent illegal immigrants or terrorists from entering the country.
- Fair and effective efforts to assure that people who register to vote in our elections are indeed citizens of the United States lawfully entitled to cast a ballot.
- Empowering state and local law enforcement agencies with the authority, responsibility, and resources needed to detain illegal immigrants within the course of their regular duties.
- Punishing employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants.

Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice

The Missouri Republican Party is committed to supporting our brave law enforcement personnel and a fair and swift judicial system that protects us from those who would hurt our families or threaten our communities. Missourians deserve protection from the concerns and fears associated with crime and

drugs. Our law enforcement officers are putting their lives on the line every day to protect us. They need and deserve our help.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS**:

- Protection of individual liberties guaranteed under the Constitution.
- Appointment of federal and state judges who believe in the rule of law and understand that the role of a judge is to interpret our laws, not make them.
- Preventing activist judges from violating the Missouri Constitution by imposing burdensome taxes on hard-working Missourians.
- Opening the selection process for Missouri State Judges to the public in accordance with the Sunshine Law.
- Efforts by the Missouri General Assembly to improve the selection of Missouri judges and reduce the influence of special interests in the selection process.
- Expansion of state laws that fully protect our children against sexual predators.
- Aggressive enforcement of existing laws related to child pornography and adult-oriented industries that target Missouri families and children, and further development of law enforcement tools to protect Missourians from such exploitation.
- Continued efforts to address the special concerns of spouses, children, older people and others who become victims of abuse.
- An act of Congress mandating the supremacy and controlling authority of the U.S Constitution and federal law and the constitutions and laws of the several states and prohibiting federal courts from according any United Nations or foreign court declaration, law or precedent any weight or authority greater than such federal and state constitutional and statutory authority.
- Restricting the transfer of power and sovereignty from our United States government to foreign powers and international organizations.
- Prohibiting the further expansion of gambling within Missouri beyond that already authorized.
- Strict enforcement of current laws on gambling.
- Zero tolerance for illegal drugs and those who make, sell and distribute illegal drugs.
- Preserving and interpreting the Bill of Rights, including the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, in the manner intended by the founding fathers.
- State law allowing law-abiding Missourians to carry concealed firearms and other Second Amendment protections such as the Castle Doctrine and the protection of those rights during emergencies.
- The strict enforcement of existing gun laws but not the creation of new and unnecessary gun control laws.
- Limiting frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers.
- Limiting government's ability to over-regulate ownership of all guns and firearms.
- Efforts by the Federal Communications Commission to enhance the enforcement of obscenity and decency standards on television and radio, and to increase the punishments for violators.
- Swift judgment and sure and appropriate punishment of those who are guilty, with limits on the number of appeals.

- Capital punishment where called for and administered in a fair and constitutional manner with all protection afforded by judicial review but without protracted and frivolous appeals.
- Greater latitude for law enforcement officials to use incriminating evidence in the courts.
- Creating a consistent standard for trying violent juvenile offenders as adults.
- Making records of violent juvenile offenders available to school and local authorities.
- Requiring drug testing for welfare recipients when there is reasonable suspicion that the individual is using illicit substances.

Protecting the Integrity of Elections

The legitimacy of our democracy comes from the knowledge that every American has equal say in the elections that determine the direction of our nation. Those who cheat not only dilute the lawfully cast ballots of their fellow Missourians, but they undermine the foundation of our entire political system.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Requiring voter photo-identification to prevent voter fraud.
- Efforts to assure fair and honest elections, making sure all legally cast votes are not diluted, but are counted so that all participants respect the integrity of the election.
- Creating a more efficient and secure system of voting by our military personnel, which guarantees that those who are on the front lines have a say in governing our country.
- Strict and swift prosecution of election fraud—including ACORN-style voter registration fraud.
- The use of fair and nonbiased ballot language for petition-driven initiatives.
- Special elections in the event of vacancies in statewide constitutional offices.

Faith & Family

Families are the bedrock of Missouri. This question should measure every public policy: Does it strengthen or weaken our families? Policies that strengthen our families should be pursued. Those that would weaken the family structure must be discarded.

The Fundamental Right to Life

God-given rights for all citizens including the fundamental right to life for born and unborn children, the aged, the terminally ill and the handicapped should be provided for in our laws and in our Constitution. We believe that life begins at conception and reaffirm our support for a human life amendment to the Constitution. We endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply

to unborn children, and encourage those institutions, including faith-based initiatives, that take a proactive approach in teaching sexual responsibility including abstinence to our young people.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS**:

- Legislation overturning Roe v. Wade and the appointing of federal and state judges that respect the sanctity of innocent human life.
- Current state law providing women seeking an abortion with information regarding alternatives such as adoption, and increasing tax credits to encourage adoption.
- Legislation requiring that a minor obtain parental notification and consent before obtaining an abortion.
- An immediate end to partial birth abortions.
- Preventing taxpayer money from being spent on abortions or being given to organizations, which perform abortions or make abortion referrals.
- Legislation that prevents public employees from making abortion referrals.
- Current state law that ensures that abortion clinics meet the same Department of Health standards required of comparable surgical facilities in the state.
- The compassionate work of individuals and organizations that offer alternatives to abortions by meeting the physical, emotional and financial needs of pregnant women and those support systems necessary for legal adoption.
- Legislation to prohibit all human cloning.
- Legislation to define and standardize Missouri's informed consent law, and to prohibit and penalize coercion of women to have an abortion.
- Legislation to prohibit "assisted suicide."

Marriage

The traditional family is the foundation of our great history and critical to our future. Building futures through hard work and personal responsibility are American values that should be encouraged by government policy.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS**:

- Missouri's constitutional amendment approved by more than 70 percent of Missourians clearly stating that only marriages between one man and one woman will be valid and recognized, whether performed in Missouri or any other state or nation.
- Efforts to promote healthy marriages.
- A permanent end to the marriage penalty in the tax code.

Faith

Missouri's many and diverse faith communities are critical to the rich fabric of our society. Government has nothing to fear from people of faith and much to gain. Faith communities should be embraced and allowed to offer assistance to those in need without undue bureaucratic interference. The most powerful sources of charity, virtue, and shared prosperity in our society are not found in government, but in families, houses of worship, charities, and free markets. The Missouri Republican Party believes in protecting the religious freedom of citizens.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS**:

- Freedom to practice religion, as an individual choice, including the ability to pray in school.
- Protecting the acknowledgement of God in our public life.
- Keeping the phrase "one nation under God" in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.
- Keeping "In God We Trust" on our currency and in other public declarations.
- All efforts to honor and preserve America's religious heritage, including the public display of the 10 Commandments or other religious symbols, and remaining true to the principles upon which this nation was founded.

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