Libertarians Campaign for Ballot Initiatives

Libertarian activists around the country have been taking greater advantage of the opportunities presented by ballot initiative campaigns in recent months.

Illinois

Illinois Libertarians are active in the Tax Accountability Amendment, which would require a three-fifths vote of the Illinois legislature to pass any tax increase, as well as a two-week public notice and hearings prior to any tax increase. While recent polls show 77 percent of the people in support of the amendment, opponents filed suit to throw the amendment off the ballot on constitutional grounds. The TAA Committee won round one in the courts, and at press time were awaiting the decision of the Illinois Supreme Court on the matter.

California

San Francisco LP members were successful when voters recently passed an initiative calling on the state legislature to legalize intravenous needles. The effort sponsored by the LP gained the support of many other organizations, including the local Democratic Party.

Currently, California Libertarians are involved in Proposition 140, an initiative to limit the number of terms for state elected officials, eliminate the state officials' pension program, and cut the overall legislative budget to 80 percent of the current level. Current polls show 70 percent voter approval, but proponents of the measure expect the opposition to spend as much as $10 million on television ads opposing the measure. Other initiatives which California Libertarians have been involved in would require voter approval of some tax increases, require "super-majorities" for tax increase approval, and require voter approval of any changes to the initiative and referendum process.

Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, the state LP is involved in the Fair Ballot Access Initiative, which would cut the petition signature requirement from two percent of the vote for governor in the previous election to half of one percent. Libertarians collected over 80,000 signatures to place the initiative on the November ballot. The campaign has recently hired a public relations person to help get publicity for the initiative. This will be the first time voters have had the opportunity to speak on ballot access issues.

LNC Meets in San Francisco

The Libertarian National Committee voted to trim expenses back to $500,000 annually at its San Francisco meeting, August 11 and 12. The LNC also agreed to make a concerted effort to add prospect names from local LP campaign to national party lists for follow-up.

Arrangements for the 1991 Libertarian Party National Convention to be held in Chicago were also discussed at the meeting.

PAUL TO APPEAR ON C-SPAN

Ron Paul will appear on the C-Span cable network on a talk show, August 31 at 7:30pm. Don't forget to tune it!

**Private Life**

Robert Poole Jr. of the Santa Monica-based Reason Foundation has a vision of California issues in which the divergent economic interests and political cultures interact. Poole, who is a frequent contributor to the Wall Street Journal, is a co-founder of the foundation and a well-known critic of government policies.

**Reason Foundation**

Poole says he is concerned about the privatization of government operations and programs. He believes that the private sector can perform better than government agencies. Poole's foundation has published several reports on the privatization of government services, including the privatization of public schools and prisons.

**Reason Foundation, Privatization**

Poole and his colleagues argue that the private sector is more efficient and less costly than government agencies. They believe that privatization can improve the quality of services provided to the public.

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Libertarians formally back food tax repeal

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Utah Libertarians formally endorsed at their state convention a Nov. 6 ballot initiative to repeal the sales tax on groceries.

And the 50 Libertarian delegates, gathering Saturday, also unleashed two new petition drives of their own for a future ballot.

The first would place a question asking whether jurors should be able to set aside civil verdict instructions and statute interpretations in criminal cases and be able to vote "their conscience based on facts."

A second would turn over liquor sales to private enterprise in an attempt "to legalize adulthood in Utah."

The Libertarians' so-called "Fully Informed Fury" petition was cleared for signature collections Friday by the Utah lieutenant governor, according to party officials.

The so-called SOBER initiative — standing for Society Opposed to Bad Entertainment Regulations — is still being reviewed by the Utah attorney general for any constitutional snarls.

"This initiative is designed so people who drink responsibly, the state has nothing to do with," explained Bob Waldrop, a former Utah Libertarian Party chairman and the SOBER initiative's chief sponsor.

"If they drink irresponsibly, boom, the state comes down on them like a ton of bricks," said Waldrop, noting the initiative's stringent sentencing and restitution edict.

Both petitions would need nearly 65,000 signatures by Utah's registered voters over the next two years to be directly placed on the 1992 statewide ballot.

Assembled at M. Lynn Bennion Elementary School, the Libertarian delegates ended their work Saturday with quick, unanimous endorsement of Nov. 6's food-tax repeal — largely a spin-off of 1988's tax-protest movement.

W. Gary Johnson, deputy chairman of the Libertarian National Committee, said he'll stand apart from the major candidates on the drug issue.

"We're going to have to go to the decriminalization route — and give addicts an opportunity to come out," said Johnson at a news conference outside the Federal Building.

Johnson said that making drugs illegal has only exacerbated the problem.

"Prohibitions have made drug dealing very profitable, so lucrative. You don't have people peddling gin and vodka and beer and tobacco because those things are legally available in stores in a controlled environment," Johnson said.

"Deteriorization of drugs is part of Johnson's philosophy: the best government is one that governs least.

Still, Johnson said political realities would prevent dismantling the existing social welfare system. "I'm not saying we need to abolish these programs tomorrow. I would look toward providing alternatives."

Today, Johnson will appear at a picnic organized by Libertarian tourists, the event, which begins at 1 p.m. and is open to the public, will be held at the Valley View Shelter at Weber State Park.

(Ogden, UT, Standard-Examiner, June 25, 1990.)

Libertarian seeks to make drugs legal

By James Goodman

Democratic and Chronicle

W. Gary Johnson readily admits his chances of becoming the next governor of New York are slim, but the 20 year-old Manhattan insurance-sale representative hopes to give the Libertarian cause a boost.

Johnson's campaign appearance in Rochester yesterday suggested that he'll stand apart from the major candidates on the drug issue.

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A 4TH OF JULY PROPOSAL: LET'S WORK FOR LIBERTY AGAIN!

H as America lost sight of the real meaning of the 4th of July?

The day was originally set aside to honor the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the document which proclaimed the United States of America an independent country, free of the taxes and tyranny of England.

But now, a little more than 200 years later, our freedoms are under attack again.

The Declaration of Independence is best known for its stirring definition of the rights of free men, including "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But it also listed specific grievances against the oppressive English government.

While some of those grievances might seem archaic, one is still worth quoting:

"He has erected a multitude of new Offices, and sent hither a swarm of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their subsidence.

That was Thomas Jefferson's complaint against King George in 1776—but have you ever read the Declaration of Independence...?

As examples, look at the worldwide trend now toward privatization or "service shedding" by governments, which was first championed by the Libertarian Party. Or consider the Socialist Party's earlier success in getting its platform including Social Security and a progressive income tax implemented by both the Republicans and Democrats.

Taylor's idea may serve to strengthen the Republican and Democratic party power structures, but it is just one more example of how these parties effectively kill new ideas.

Cook


Libertarian Candidate Rand Qualifies for November List

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgians will be able to choose a governor from one of three parties when they go to the polls in November.

In addition to the Republican and Democratic nominees, who will be selected in the July 15 party primaries and runoff, the ballot will list a woman representing the Libertarian Party, Carole Ann Rand of Atlanta, who paid her qualifying fee Tuesday.

She has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither a swarm of officers to harass our people, and eat out their subsistence...

The party won the right to place candidates on the statewide ballot without a petition when one of those candidates, Elizabeth Goldin, got more than 1 percent of the vote.

Also qualifying Tuesday were Libertarians Walker Chandler, candidate for lieutenant governor, and Mr. Rand, who was seeking the party's nomination for governor.

Mrs. Rand, who was nominated at a party convention this spring, is the first Libertarian party candidate for governor, whose name will be printed on the ballot.

The Libertarian Party submitted petitions with 26,000 signatures of registered voters in 1986 to place process of law. In spite of the fact that even the IRS can't agree on the meaning of the massive tax code, the taxpayer is never excused for filing errors.

No wonder Malcolm Forbes once said: "I think the terror most people are concerned with is the IRS."

Something has to be done. If you want to stop the erosion of liberty in this country, consider joining the Libertarian Party. The third largest and fastest growing political party in the United States, the Libertarian Party is dedicated to a smaller, less intrusive government—and dedicated to protecting the rights we gained in the Declaration of Independence and celebrate on the 4th of July. Including the right not to live in fear of the IRS.

After all, as Andrea Marrow, a former Libertarian state legislator from Alaska said: "This shouldn't be the kind of country where we have to live in fear of our government."

For a no-obligation information package about the Libertarian Party, write: LPNH, P.O. Box 669, Windham, NH 03087.