

## **Platform of the Libertarian Party of Colorado**

[Adopted in Convention, May 22, 2021]

### **Preamble**

As Libertarians, we seek a world of liberty: a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their own lives, and no one is forced to sacrifice his or her values for the benefit of others.

We believe that respect for individual rights is the essential precondition for a free and prosperous world; that force and fraud must be banished from human relationships; and that only through freedom can peace and prosperity be realized.

Consequently, we defend each person's right to engage in any activity that is peaceful and honest, and we welcome the diversity that freedom brings. The world we seek to build is one where individuals are free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government or any authoritarian power.

We hold that individuals have inherent sovereign rights to their own bodies and property, including their labor and the fruits thereof. As such, we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force and fraud against other people and their property by anyone. These principles guide Libertarian policy positions in every area.

Our goal is nothing less than a world set free in our lifetime, and it is to this end that we take these stands.

### **Statement of Principles**

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within

the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life — accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action — accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property — accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

## **Implementation**

We support any measure that actually reduces, and does not increase, illegitimate governmental action or violations of the rights of the individual, as put forth in our Preamble and the Statement of Principles. While recognizing that change often takes the form of increments and transitions, the policies in the planks that follow are to be taken as quickly as possible.

## **The Individual**

Individuals own their bodies and have rights over them that other individuals, groups, and governments may not violate. Individuals have the freedom and responsibility to decide what they knowingly and voluntarily consume and what risks they accept to their own health, finances, safety, or life. Individuals must be free to make choices for themselves and accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make, provided those choices do not violate the rights of others. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.

*Victimless Crimes*

Criminal and civil laws must be limited to violations of the rights of others through fraud, force, or deliberate and credible threats of imminent force. We therefore reject all laws that create “crimes” without victims for voluntary and consensual activities such as, but not limited to, the manufacture, sale, possession, and use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes; prostitution; and gambling. We also reject government placing itself as a proxy victim of alleged “crimes.”

### *Freedom of Expression*

We support full freedom of expression and oppose government censorship, regulation, control of technology, or collusion with communications media. Language that is perceived to be offensive to certain groups or individuals is not a cause for any legal action. While private entities have the right to exclude speech, we believe that the practice of government supported or initiated “de-platforming” harms the free and open exchange of ideas, and freedom of speech is valuable in its own right and should be strongly advocated in both public and private spheres. We favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others. We oppose government actions which either aid or attack any religion.

### *Protection of Privacy*

Libertarians advocate individual privacy and call for government transparency. We condemn government’s practice of spying on individuals without probable cause and due process. We support the rights recognized by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, property, communications, and other effects, including data held by third parties, such as, but not limited to, email, library, medical, and phone records.

### *Freedom of Association*

Libertarians embrace the concept that all people are born with certain inherent rights and reject the idea that those rights can impose an obligation upon any other person or non-government organization to fulfill any right. The right to trade includes the right not to trade—for any reason. The right of association includes the right not to associate—for any reason. The right to contract includes the right not to contract—for any reason. Individuals and business owners retain their rights and privileges to set their own standards of association and terms of voluntary interaction. Other individuals and business owners are free to respond with ostracism, boycotts, and other free-market solutions. We therefore

favor the repeal of any governmental attempts to regulate any private association, including public accommodations laws.

### *Personal Relationships*

Sexual orientation, preference, gender, or gender identity should have no impact on the government's treatment of individuals—such as in marriage, child custody, adoption, immigration, or military service laws. Government does not have the authority to define, license, or restrict personal relationships. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships, regardless of the number of participants. We favor the complete extrication of government from private consensual relationships.

### *Sexual and Gender Self-Determination*

We believe that government should be kept out of the matter of sexual and gender self-determination and control, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.

### *Right to Self-Defense*

The only legitimate use of force is in the defense of individual rights—life, liberty, and justly-acquired property—against aggression. This right inheres in the individual, who may seek to be, or agree to be aided by any other individual or group in the exercise of the right to self-defense. Maintaining our belief in the inviolability of the right to keep and bear arms, we reject all laws at any level of government restricting, registering, or monitoring the ownership, manufacture, transport, or transfer of any item or tool that could be used for self-defense, along with any related accessories, parts, or supplies. Further, we oppose all laws that de facto restrict arms ownership by adding additional burdens such as mandatory storage and insurance requirements.

## **The Market**

We believe that each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. Private entities should be free to choose with whom they trade and set whatever trade terms are mutually agreeable. Therefore, we oppose all intervention by government into the area of economics. The only proper role, if any, of existing governments in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected. Efforts to forcibly redistribute wealth or forcibly manage,

regulate, or impede trade violate individual rights. We believe that all individuals have the right to dispose of the fruits of their labor as they see fit.

### *Taxation*

Taxation is government confiscation of the property of its citizens through the use of force. Because of its non-voluntary nature, it cannot be justified, regardless of the purpose. Therefore, we oppose coercive taxation, and we support any and all initiatives to reduce or abolish any tax, and oppose any initiatives to increase any tax or add new ones. We advocate that all public services be funded in a voluntary manner such as through contributions, lotteries, subscriptions, and user fees. We contend that a tax by any other name, including a fee, excise, or assessment, is still a tax. We oppose the use of taxation as a punitive measure against certain goods or services, such as “vice” taxes.

### *Healthcare*

We support a free-market health care system and oppose government mandates in insurance and health care. We recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the services they want (if any) and all other aspects of their medical care, including end-of-life decisions. People should be free to purchase health insurance across state lines. We oppose any government mandating or denying treatments or vaccines. Individuals have a presumption of health and should not have to prove they are healthy to avoid forced quarantine, isolation, or other restrictions of their rights and freedoms.

### *Money*

Individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use any mutually agreeable commodity or item as currency. We oppose inflationary monetary policies and unconstitutional legal tender laws. We oppose government use of debt to conceal or cover the cost of their expenditures.

### *Licensing*

Licensing is a method for government to convert a natural right into a privilege, then require one to pay fees to the government to exercise that right. Privileges can be and often are revoked by government and allow for stifling of competition to create government-mandated monopolies. Rights must be held inviolate, and no one should be

forced to pay to exercise a right. We encourage certifications by voluntary associations of professionals.

### *Property*

We hold that rights to property, including real property, are individual rights and, as such, are entitled to the same protections as all other individual rights. The owners of property have the full right to acquire, trade, control, use, dispose of, rent, collateralize, or enjoy their property in any manner, without interference, unless the exercise of their control infringes upon the valid rights of others. Eminent domain, civil asset forfeiture, governmental limits on profits, governmental production mandates, and governmental controls on prices of goods and services (including wages, rents, and interest) are abridgements of fundamental rights. We support ending taxation of real property, because taxation makes the government the de facto owner of all lands and forces individuals to rent their homes and places of business from the government.

### *Intellectual Monopolies*

As we oppose all government intervention in the marketplace, we favor the repeal of intellectual property laws. Disputes between inventors, creators, authors, artists, businesses, and other such entities should be resolved without government intervention.

### *Labor Markets*

The contract between a private employer and employee is a voluntary relationship which both sides choose to enter into, and whose terms can only be fairly negotiated without interference by government. We support the right of private employers and employees to freely choose whether or not to bargain with each other through a third party, such as a labor union. There is no inherent “right to work” nor a “right to unionize” but merely the freedom for all to negotiate conditions of employment. We oppose all public employee unions.

### *Free Enterprise*

We defend the rights of individuals to form any type of business entity based on voluntary association and investment. We oppose all forms of government subsidies, bailouts, or any other preferential or punitive treatment to businesses, labor, or any other special interest. Government should not compete with private enterprise. We reject government charter of

corporations. Corporations are not individuals. We call for a separation of business and state.

### *Agorism*

We affirm the right of individuals and businesses to subvert state regulation, taxation, and restrictions enacted by executive order, through black and grey market activity, so long as such activity does not violate the individual rights and liberties of customers or community members through theft, fraud, or violence.

## **The Community**

Free and voluntary societies provide the best potential for all members of society to succeed and flourish. A free and competitive market for all services allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Voluntary cooperation and charity between people meets the needs of others without violating rights through coercion and force. Current problems in many societal areas such as energy, pollution, public services, and poverty are not solved, but instead are caused or exacerbated by government.

### *Education*

Education is a matter of conscience, values, and free expression—as much as assembly, press, religion, or speech. Accordingly, we advocate the complete separation of school and state, ending government ownership, operation, regulation, and subsidy of schools, colleges, and universities. Until that time, any government funds for education should be put entirely under parental and student control, for use in schools of choice (including, but not limited to, private, parochial, and home schools) or to carry forward for education in a future year.

### *Environment*

Pollution of air, water, and land violates rights. Polluters, including government, should have strict liability for harms caused by pollution. Strict liability should regulate pollution, not government agencies nor arbitrary government standards.

### *Welfare*

The forced taking of property from an individual for the benefit of others is a violation of individual rights. The most effective source of assistance for others is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals.

### *Utilities*

We advocate the termination of government-regulated franchise privileges and governmental monopolies for public services. The right to offer such services on the market should not be curtailed by the government.

## **The Government**

The principle of non-initiation of force should guide governments and individuals. We call for a non-interventionist foreign policy and recognize the rights to unrestricted travel, trade, and immigration while reserving the right to defend against specific and credible threats. Individual liberties must never be suspended or curtailed, whether based on circumstances of war, contagion, natural disaster, or any other pretense.

### *Equal Treatment*

Government should not deny, abridge, or enhance any individual's human right based upon sex, wealth, ethnicity, creed, age, national origin, personal habits and preferences, political affiliation, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Any laws which currently do so should be repealed rather than extended to all groups. However, freedom of association and contracts should not be denied or restricted in private consensual arrangements or agreements.

### *Sovereign Immunity*

Neither government agencies nor their representatives should be exempted from laws, statutes, and regulations applicable to everyone else. We favor an immediate end to the doctrine of Sovereign Immunity which ignores the primacy of the individual over the abstraction of the State, and holds that the State, contrary to the tradition of redress of grievances, may not be sued without its permission or held accountable for its actions under civil law. Government agents should be subject to civil and criminal liability for any injuries caused by their actions, without regard to whether those actions occurred during the course of their duties.

### *Judicial*

The only real crimes are crimes of violence or threat of violence, property loss, and fraud where an individual is a victim. The judicial process should be an earnest attempt, through due process of law, to extract reasonable restitution from a person convicted of a crime and to convey that restitution to the victim, to imprison or exclude criminals from society when necessary, to hold persons liable for damage they do, and to fairly settle contract disputes in which the parties have not voluntarily opted for private dispute resolution. A criminal, having paid for the crime, should be accorded full restoration of liberty. We assert the common-law right of juries to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law.

### *Death Penalty*

The death penalty is irreversible, and no recompense for a violation of an individual's right to life can be made for an execution later found to be in error. Given the fallibility of any judicial system, punishments that cannot be reversed or compensated for should not be levied. Even if the death penalty were morally appropriate, it cannot be implemented without risking the execution of innocents. Since it is impossible to trust any state with this kind of power, we reject all state-sanctioned death penalty laws.

### *Elections*

We support transparent and more representative election systems at all levels, including ranked-choice voting, approval voting, and proportional representation. As private voluntary groups, political parties should be allowed to establish their own rules for nomination procedures, primaries, caucuses, and conventions. We call for an end to any tax-financed subsidies to candidates or parties and the repeal of all laws which restrict voluntary individual financing of election campaigns. We oppose laws that effectively exclude alternative candidates and parties, deny ballot access, gerrymander districts, or deny the voters their right to consider all legitimate alternatives. We support the addition of "None of the Above" as an option on all ballots. If "None of the Above" wins, the elective office for that term would remain unfilled and unfunded. We oppose all attempts to bind Colorado's Presidential Electors to the national popular vote.

### *Colorado Legislation*

We adamantly oppose the attachment of a "Safety Clause" to any bill approved by the legislature. Use of the "Safety Clause" limits the ability of the electorate to reject improper

bills. Laws and regulations should not be written in a language that citizens cannot understand and that authorities can misinterpret. Whenever these happen, the government is enabled to abuse its authority and trample over the rights of the individual.

### *Self-Determination*

We recognize the right to political and personal self-determination, including—if necessary—secession. Exercise of this right, like the exercise of all other rights, does not remove legal and moral obligations not to violate the rights of others.

### *Colorado State Sovereignty*

In a free society, any existing governments are established of, by, and for the people. The United States Constitution specifies which powers the federal government may exercise, and explicitly forbids any others. We oppose unfunded Federal mandates and coercion of state legislatures by threats to withhold Federal funds. We support full enforcement of all anti-commandeering laws.

### *Localization of Powers*

We support the untangling of the layers of government from each other, such that federal, state, county, municipal, and district governments are separate and independent from each other, in both function and funding, in order to facilitate their reduction or repeal.

### **Omissions**

Our silence about any other particular government law, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, or machination, including the existence of any particular governmental system, should not be construed to imply approval or disapproval. In every matter, we adhere to the consistent application of the principle of the non-initiation of physical force or fraud.