

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **December 10, 2001**

On Tuesday, America's #1 third party celebrates historic 30th anniversary

WASHINGTON, DC — The Libertarian Party will celebrate its 30th anniversary on Tuesday, December 11, marking three decades as arguably the most influential “alternative” party in America.

The Libertarian Party — which favors rolling back the size of government and eliminating laws that stifle the economy or control people’s personal choices — was founded on December 11, 1971, in Colorado Springs.

Since then, despite being a “third wheel” in a two-party system, the Libertarian Party has grown to 224,000 registered voters and 301 elected officeholders — more than any other third party. It has also had an enormous impact on the political debate, turning previously taboo topics into issues that enjoy wide public support.

“For three decades, the Libertarian Party has been the jalapeño pepper in the recipe of American politics,” said the party’s national director, Steve Dasbach. “We’ve added spice to the political debate, given voters a zesty, new choice, and made Republicans and Democrats sweat a little. Libertarians can be proud of what they have accomplished.”

Since it began in 1971, the Libertarian Party has:

■ **Helped fundamentally shift the nature of American political debate.**

“Libertarian ideas that were considered outlandish 30 years ago — like replacing the bankrupt Social Security system with private retirement accounts, ending the failed War on Drugs, and so on — are part of mainstream political debate now,” said Dasbach.

■ **Rewritten the record book on third-party electoral success.** According to a new study, the Libertarian Party is the #1 third party of the last 50 years, based on the number of “most-successful” U.S. Senate and gubernatorial candidates it has fielded. The party has also elected state representatives in New Hampshire, Alaska, and Vermont.

■ **Started to win over America’s celebrities.** In the past decade, public figures like movie star Clint Eastwood, humorist Dave Barry, country star Dwight Yoakam, comedian Dennis Miller, actor Kurt Russell, author Camille Paglia, guitarist Neil Peart, TV reporter John Stossell, and newsman Hugh Downs have all described themselves as “libertarian.”

What’s next for the Libertarian Party? It will keep working to become one of America’s two “major” parties, said Dasbach.

“For 30 years, Republicans and Democrats have been hoping Libertarians will go away,” he said. “But every time they suggest a new tax, create a new bureaucracy, impose new regulations, demand more censorship, or subsidize their corporate clients, we’ll be there to point out their sins. The Libertarian Party will stick around until big-government Republicans and Democrats follow the Whigs into the history books.”