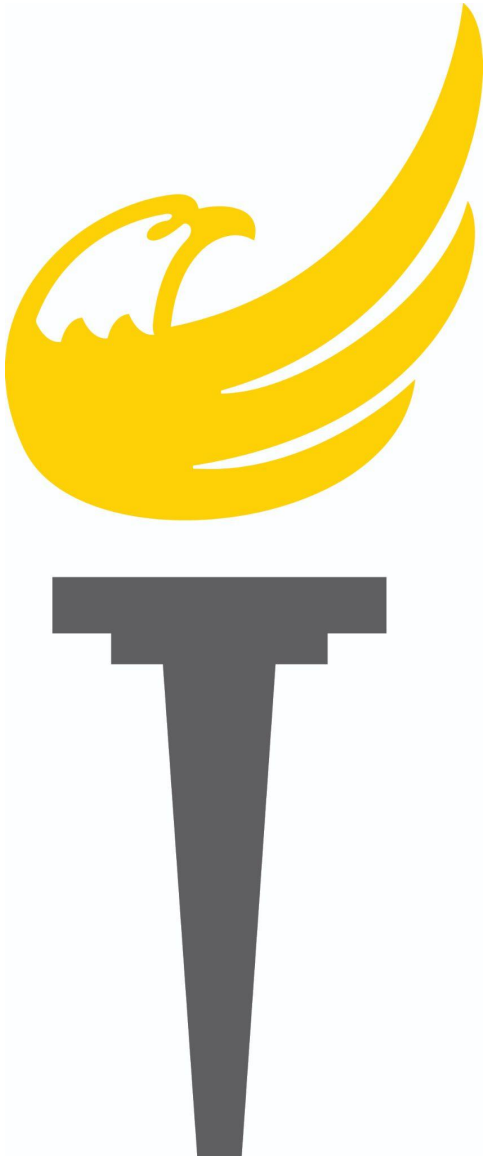
LPTexas Platform

as amended at the 2022 State Convention



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PREAMBLE

As the Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas), we seek a world of liberty; a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their lives and no individuals are forced to sacrifice their 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 eliminated 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.

The following pages set forth our basic principles and some of the policies derived from them. Our goal is a world set free in our lifetime, and it is to this end that we take these stands.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We, the Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas), seek the maximum protection for the rights of all people against any violation, be it by other people, other nations, or our own government. We oppose the initiation of force, threat of harm, coercion, or fraud as a means of achieving personal, political, or social goals.

Every human being is born sole owner of his or her body and mind, free to live and act as he or she sees fit. It is our principle that, so long as a person does not violate the rights of others, he or she should be left free and unrestrained.

LPTexas opposes coercion of peaceful individuals. Governments may only exist for the sole purpose of defending the freedoms of people. These freedoms include the right to life; the right to liberty of thought, speech and action; and the right to property.

Government is, essentially, raw concentrated force, and thus, prone to abuse. It is established and tolerated only as the agent and servant of the people--not their master. The force of government must be used only in response to an attack, fraud, or other initiation of force against an individual, group or government by another individual, group or government.

Governments have no business interfering in voluntary and contractual relations amongst individuals. All people should be equal before the law, free to deal with one another in a free market, the only system compatible with the principle of individual rights.

Government should reflect the consent of the governed and not subject individuals to tyranny of the majority. Where it exists, government must be kept to the minimum necessary to protect the rights of individuals. LPTexas holds that all human interaction should be voluntary and consensual, in accordance with the Non-Aggression Principle.

I. PERSONAL LIBERTY

I.1 RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS, CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES

I.1.a. Word and Thought

LPTexas upholds the ideal that government should not interfere nor discriminate in matters of personal conscience, such as religion, speech, creativity, or political activity.

We encourage citizens to practice their freedom of speech liberally in an open marketplace of ideas. Likewise, freedom of thought and belief is essential to a free society. No one may force their own beliefs on others through use of government power or support.

I.1.b. Defense of Person and Property

The defense of person and property are inherent individual rights, and must not be restricted or impeded. Therefore, LPTexas supports the right of individuals to keep and bear arms in a manner consistent with the Non-Aggression Principle.

These rights have been infringed upon by the State, namely through Section 46 of the Texas Penal Code. Therefore, LPTexas calls for the repeal of this Code, specifically the following items:
Section 46.01.(6) Illegal knife
Section 46.02 Unlawful Carrying Weapons Section 46.03 Places Weapons Prohibited
Section 46.035 Unlawful Carrying of handgun by License Holder Section 46.04 Unlawful Possession of Firearm
Section 46.041 Unlawful Possession of Metal or Body Armor by Felon Section 46.05 Prohibited Weapons

I.1.c. Individual Equality and the Law

LPTexas supports the full and complete protection of all people from biased legislation that violates individual rights. Government should not discriminate based upon gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, wealth, profession, creed, national origin, personal habits, or political affiliation. LPTexas believes government does not have legitimate authority to define or restrict personal relationships or associations to any group of citizens. We believe that "Hate Crime" legislation is unconstitutional, and that our nation has prospered under the concept of "equal protection under the law."

I.1.d. Marriage, Partnerships, and Relationships

LPTexas recognizes the state should not have the privilege to define or regulate marriages, domestic partnerships, or personal relationships. Relationships between consenting adults, regardless of the number of participants, should have no impact on the government’s treatment of individuals in child custody, adoption, or other legal proceedings or government employment practices.

I.1.e. Rights of the Family

LPTexas seeks to abolish legislation and policies that define what a family is.

LPTexas holds that legal rights of parents/guardians must not be infringed by the state based upon unsubstantiated claims and not without due process.

I.1.f. Family Welfare and Government

LPTexas views government welfare programs as unnecessary as they drive out private charity organizations and replace the role of the family and of the community. As such, we generally oppose government charity programs. These programs can be better served by the local/private sector of society in the form of private charity.

LPTexas believes there is a great amount of wasted tax dollars in government programs due to mismanagement, fraud, and waste. We would seek to replace, where possible, all welfare programs by private charity organizations.

I.2. PROPERTY RIGHTS

LPTexas stands firm with an individual's inherent right to own property; examples include land, buildings, belongings, and ownership of one's body and personhood. Property rights are subject to neither infringement nor interference by any individual or governmental entity.

I.2.a. Eminent Domain

Under no circumstances should government have the power to force the transfer of land from a private entity to another against the will of the owner. LPTexas strongly opposes the use of eminent domain to establish toll roads, transportation corridors, and any other projects, public or private.

LPTexas supports vested property rights above, on, and below the surface, and there shall be no limitation by regulation, ordinance, or authority.

I.2.b. Civil Asset Forfeiture

LPTexas calls for the elimination of civil asset forfeiture, which allows for the unjust seizure of property from the accused without due process, with the exception of criminal conviction, in which such property may only be used in restitution to the victims.

I.2.c. Property Rights - Homeowner Associations (HOA)

LPTexas supports moving private homeowner associations to the current government code to protect private property owners from further violations of the constitution of this state and nation by such associations, until further remedies can be pursued. HOA's should only be incorporated by members residing within the property affected and governed by said HOA members. No HOA assessment fee shall be enacted without a simple majority of said members.

I.3. GOVERNMENT AND HEALTH

I.3.a. Medical Freedom

LPTexas supports the right of individuals to seek medical and healthcare of their choice. We support a free market, in which government does not restrict access to care. We oppose the use of government to force a medical procedure without the individual's consent.

I.3.b. Health Care

Government should neither provide, control, nor require health care. LPTexas does not believe that people have a right to be provided with healthcare at other peoples' expense. We advocate the phasing out of Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIPS programs. LPTexas supports free market based healthcare systems and health insurance. We oppose a "single payer" concept and the federal legislation known as the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Obama Care). LPTexas opposes any and all forms of unearned tax credits, tax subsidies, and tax penalties that are directed under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or "Obama Care."

I.3.c. Drug Policy

LPTexas opposes the War on Drugs. Consistent with the principles of self-ownership, consenting adults ought not be restricted from partaking in activities that harm no one else. This includes possession, consumption and/or market transactions of substances for medicinal, recreational, or other purposes. Individuals seeking or providing medical treatment should not be subject to prosecution. Individuals seeking or providing treatment for addiction or offering Good Samaritan aid should not be subject to prosecution.

I.3.d. End of Life Choice

LPTexas believes in self-ownership. LPTexas supports the inherent right of individuals to end their lives with dignity. LPTexas opposes the prosecution of physicians and loved ones who participate in consensual assisted suicide.

I.3.e. Reproductive Rights

Recognizing that reproductive rights are a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, LPTexas believes that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration. LPTexas does not condone that tax dollars be spent for any such medical cost.

I.3.f. Healthcare Mandates

LPTexas believes that any government mandate requiring an individual to wear particular protective equipment or receive any specific medical treatment is a violation of that individual's personal liberties. LPTexas also respects the decision of private property owners to establish requirements to enter said property.

I.4. PRIVACY AND UNIVERSAL IDENTIFICATION

I.4.a. Privacy

LPTexas believes in an inherent right to privacy. As such, we oppose any legislation that restricts an individual's ownership and use of property (real, personal, or intellectual) or conduct of consenting adults while on their privately owned property. We also oppose any requirement to register property with a government entity as a condition of ownership, the exceptions being of real property and conveyances, for the sole purpose of documenting the holder of a clear title to said property. We hold that the only legitimate purpose of government is to protect our rights and property, and should never become a threat to the very things it was established to protect.

I.4.b. Police Powers - Searches

LPTexas calls for the complete repeal of the USA-PATRIOT Act. We also call for the repeal of any and all laws which authorize the wiretapping or other search and seizure of private communications or property without a warrant issued in a free and independent court of law including, but not limited to, utilization of drones, NSA eavesdropping, internet data interception, etc.

LPTexas supports legislation or judicial rules that forbid the execution of "no-knock" warrants unless there is substantial probable cause with supportive evidence that they are necessary to avoid death or serious injury to an innocent person. We require that all warrants be presented to the subject for examination, with an original signature and a copy of the affidavit attached, and that the subject have an immediate opportunity to contact the court that issued the warrant to verify its validity.

I.5. ELECTIONS

I.5.a. Verifiable Balloting

LPTexas supports transparency in all publicly funded elections through verifiable ballot receipts and/or electronic tracking. We oppose any efforts to count the votes outside of public view.

I.5.b. Party Affiliation

LPTexas opposes mandatory affiliation, at the time of voter registration, either as an Independent or with a political party. We support voting as a voluntary expression of the right to freedom of association. LPTexas opposes partisan labels on the ballot, as well as straight-ticket voting.

I.5.c. Primary Screen-out

LPTexas supports the right of voters to decide who will be on the ballot. As such we support legislative efforts which would remove restrictions regarding eligibility to sign candidate and party petitions to appear on a ballot. All eligible voters should have the opportunity to voice their opinion. Their voice should not be silenced due to their participation in a primary election or their decision to sign an alternative candidate's petition.

I.5.d. Election Reform

LPTexas supports election reform that does away with a two-party duopoly and the uncontrolled corporate and PAC influence that exists today. LPTexas believes that party primaries are not a function of the state, and rather are processes which should be self–funded. We also believe that all races should be decided by a more representative election process that includes a choice for None of The Above (NOTA). We support transparency of all monies utilized by or on behalf of any campaign or elected official.

I.6. CRIME AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

I.6.a. Federal Prosecution Limitation

Federal authority to prosecute crime is limited to only a few subjects: Treason; Counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States; Piracy and Felonies committed on the high Seas; Offenses against the Law of Nations; and violations of rights by state agents. We find no authority in the U.S. Constitution for extraterritorial criminal jurisdiction, including drug trafficking.

I.6.b. Judicial Reform (Grand Juries)

LPTexas supports reviving direct citizen access to grand juries for presentation of public complaints and for private criminal prosecutions, in which the grand jury authorizes private prosecution by issuing the indictment to the complainant. An adequate number of grand juries should be impaneled to provide sufficient time to investigate and deliberate on each complaint.

LPTexas supports making grand juries independent from public prosecutors and encouraging them to exercise oversight on governmental operations within their district. We also support enabling grand juries to decide whether an official has acted with in his jurisdiction, and remove immunity from suit for any who has not.

I.6.c. Judicial Reform (Informed Juries)

LPTexas supports a juror’s right to be fully informed of the potential sentence of a guilty verdict. Each juror should judge the facts in each case, as well as the merits of the law itself. Therefore, we support an amendment to the Oath of Jury reflecting the right, and duty, to nullify.

I.6.d. Vice and Morality Based Laws

LPTexas supports the repeal of all Vice and Morality based laws that are against consenting adults and that do no harm to others. The State has no right to either criminalize or legalize the morality of adult individuals and their interaction with other consenting adults.

I.6.e. Capital Punishment

LPTexas opposes the death penalty as a form of punishment by the state, as well as any other unnecessary use of force by state agents in response to criminal action.

II ECONOMIC LIBERTY

II.1. TAXATION

All persons are entitled to the fruits of their labor. As such, LPTexas opposes the imposition of income tax by any governmental entity. Additionally, we support a Constitutional amendment that would require at least two-thirds majority vote by each house of the legislature to increase the rate of any tax. Taxation should be used only for services that cannot be provided by free market solutions.

We seek to reduce the size and scope of government. The budgets of all levels of government must be balanced, and government spending reduced. Each existing tax must have a clearly specified purpose, and be subject to sunset at the end of each legislative session following its effective start date.

Expanding on these general principles concerning taxation, LPTexas holds the following positions on issues specific to the state of Texas:

II.1.a. Gross Margin Tax

LPTexas seeks the complete repeal of the Gross Margins Tax adopted in 2006. Rather than a slow reduction in these franchise taxes, we call for the legislature to reduce the state's constitutional spending limits.

II.1.b. Property Tax

LPTexas supports the elimination of all property taxes, as ad valorem tax cannot be assessed objectively, and inequitably harms the poor. Until such taxes are eliminated, we call for a moratorium on appraisal valuation increases. Additionally, we call for the election (subject to the Texas Election Code), not appointment, of all members of any Board of Directors of any Appraisal District. These elected positions would be limited to two consecutive two-year terms, until the positions are abolished along with the ad valorem taxes.

II.1.c. Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones

Recognizing that Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) have been abused by many local governments as a means to enrich cronies, LPTexas calls for the abolishment of TIRZ districts.

II.1.d. Occupational Licensing

The exercise of an occupation or profession should be regarded as a natural right, not subject to regulation or taxation by the government. Government's role in professional practices, if any, should be limited to protection against fraud or abuse. Therefore, LPTexas advocates for the repeal of all statutes regarding licensing occupations or professional practices.

II.1.e. Government Debt

LPTexas supports a moratorium on bond issuance, Certificates of Obligation, and all other forms of government borrowing. Additionally, government-owned assets should be liquidated for the repayment of outstanding debt.

II.2. EDUCATION

II.2.a. General Education

LPTexas seeks to eliminate truancy laws and other barriers to school choice, and supports competition in education, in accordance with community standards. We believe that parents/guardians should have the authority to decide where and how their children are educated. We support measures to restore decision-making regarding education to parents, guardians, teachers, and/or local education boards.

LPTexas rejects any involvement of the federal government in our local school systems, including funding.

LPTexas seeks a nonpartisan education funding policy that would provide equitable use of state funds to eliminate waste and decrease bureaucracy, with the ultimate goal of voluntary funding.

II.3. TRANSPORTATION

LPTexas supports eliminating barriers to free market construction and maintenance of infrastructure. Let market demand and willingness to fund dictate which routes are developed. LPTexas supports legislation that would forbid tolls on any highway right-of-way which was obtained with tax dollars, or through the use of eminent domain, or condemnation. LPTexas upholds the right of private enterprise to construct and operate private toll roads, provided that such private toll roads are established through free market transactions and private negotiation for purchase or lease of property.

III. LIBERTY TO IMMIGRATE AND FREELY TRADE (LIFT)

LPTexas advocates for the freedom of individuals to live, work, study, and travel, with respect for others' rights and freedoms, without government impediment.

LPTexas supports the free, fair, and voluntary exchange of currency, goods, labor, services, and ideas, whereby all may prosper through free market principles and individual responsibility.

IV. UNCATEGORIZED

IV.1. Perpetuities and Monopolies

LPTexas supports the abolition of all existing government enforced monopolies, whether government or private corporations.

IV.2. Nullification

LPTexas supports nullification of unconstitutional federal acts by all sworn to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America from all enemies foreign and domestic. Those who can and should engage in nullification and interposition include our Texas governor, legislature, and law enforcement officials, and especially our constitutional county sheriffs.

IV.3. Texas Independence

LPTexas fully supports the rights of the people to alter their form of government. As the U.S. federal government is increasingly expanding its influence well beyond its Constitutional authority and clearly violating citizens' rights as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, the right of the people of Texas to alter their form of government, as stated in Article I Section 2 of the Texas Constitution, must be acknowledged by allowing Texans to have an honest and frank discussion on the merits of independence and being allowed to vote accordingly to reassert Texas' Independence.

V. OMISSIONS

Our silence about any other particular government law, rule, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, machination, or any other matter, should not be construed to imply approval, disapproval, or indifference.