



Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas

January 2004

Legislative Watch

At last count (December 30) Texas Representatives had filed 287 bills and Texas Senators had filed 135 bills to be considered once the session officially opens January 11, 2005.

The majority of these proposed bills either increase government regulation or spending. Many would do both. Bills concerning hot issues such as the death penalty, abortion, school textbooks, and school finance have all been filed. Several bills have been filed to increase penalties on the production/distribution of methamphetamine, ban using the phone while driving, and create new perks for government employees.

Some disturbing bills Libertarians may want to watch include HB 99, which allows the conversion of state highways to toll roads and HB 50 and SB 25, which allow police to set up sobriety checkpoints. Another, HJR 15 adds a state income tax.

Several bills that look good have been filed. HB 166 requires a paper audit trail for electronic voting machines. HB 54 and SJR 6 require the legislature to record votes and publish the results. HB 108 and HJR 16 lower the maximum annual increase in the appraised value of property from 10% to 5%. HJR 20 makes political subdivisions exempt from unfunded legislative mandates and HB 159 prevents them from spending money to promote ballot measures.

Lobbying for Ballot Access Bills

Rock Howard, LP Legislative Advisor, and Patrick Dixon, Chair, have been making the rounds in Austin looking for sponsors for our ballot access reform bills. While a primary sponsor has not been found there are members wanting to be co and joint sponsors.

By mid-December Rock and Patrick had met personally with Representative Baxter, Srama, Rodriguez, Naishtat, Keel and Hupp. They were also able to give a presentation to the staff of Representatives Denny and Madden, who "are the foremost authorities when it comes to election code," Patrick says.

"Our efforts have been very positive," Patrick reports. "We have presented Kris Overstreet's comprehensive bill and an overall legislative agenda to these reps. I believe this has conveyed that we are very prepared and competent to discuss the topic," he re-

ported to the SLECT. The ballot access reform bill written by Kris would allow registration of party affiliation that parties may use to demonstrate support. It would make requirements for independents identical to political parties. It would allow voters to support the presence of a candidate on the ballot without endorsing the candidate—allowing voters to sign more than one petition. It would increase the time for petitioning from 75 days to 180 and would lower the petition requirement to a flat 1,000 signatures.

A second bill would address only the primary screenout and the petitioning time period. This is offered as a simpler alternative that may have a better chance of passing. This bill was written to offset the chance that our numbers would be changed during the legislative process. Patrick reports that this version is less likely to be "tinkered with as it goes through."

Medical Marijuana Bill Expected

Karen Heikkala of Texans for Medical Marijuana reports that Representative Elliott Naishtat will author a medical marijuana bill during the 2005 Texas legislative session.

"We believe the bill has a strong chance of passing due to the overwhelming public support for this issue. Last month a statewide poll was released which stated that 75% of Texans support medical marijuana legislation. Recently, AARP released a nationwide poll showing that 72% of people over 45 years old support changing the law to protect medical marijuana patients from arrest," Karen reports.

Texans for Medical Marijuana will be organizing a Lobby Day at the State Capital scheduled for Thursday, February 17. Activities proposed for the lobby day include a morning training session with breakfast provided, a press conference, a complementary lunch and then legislative visits in the afternoon. If there is enough interest the group will be chartering buses to bring people from Dallas, Houston and San Antonio.

Local organizing meetings will be held this month in Dallas (Jan. 3), San Antonio (Jan. 3), Houston (Jan. 6) and Austin (Jan. 10). Please see [calendar for times and locations.](#)



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Submissions of party news, meeting minutes, photographs, bios of candidate, suggested websites, letters to the editor, etc. is encouraged. Send to Laura@libertyworks.org to submit.

Around the State: Activist Update

John Murray, Wilson County Chair, joined the State Libertarian Executive Committee of Texas as a District 21 Representative at the December 11 meeting. At the same meeting **Raymond Jagge** Representative for District 19 was removed for repeated absence. **Kris Overstreet**, District 3; **Tom Morrison**, District 6; and **Gordon Mobley**, District 24 resigned. Kris and Tom could not make the meeting and resigned so that the committee could make quorum.

Geoff Neale, former National and State Party Chair, has been appointed 2006 Candidate Recruitment Chair. Party Executive Director **Wes Benedict** reports about 40 individuals have so far expressed interest in running for office in 2006. Wes has set a personal goal of 200 candidates—if you are interested in discussing running for office contact him at Director@lptexas.org.

Jeff Daiell, Harris County Chair, will give a presentation on Lib-

ertarianism to an adult education class at a Houston Unitarian Universalist Congregation January 2. **Kristin Thompson**, Harris Secretary, will host a fundraising garage sale for the local party this month.

Fred Jones, Taylor County activist, sent outreach emails about the Patriot Act II. Check out www.prisonplanet.com for articles and information.

A letter from **Wes Benedict** was published December 8 by the Austin American Statesman titled "Don't tread on freedom of smokers," about the effort in Austin to ban smoking in all businesses. "Hopefully, a few candidates will take a leadership role in convincing voters to respect the rights of minority groups, including smokers," he wrote.

Kevin Tuntstall, Fort Bend County Chair, has new email: kdtunstall@houston.rr.com. Former State Chair **David DeLamar** has new email: thinkliberty@access4less.com.

Thanks!

The Libertarian Party of Texas Recognizes these Monthly Pledgers:

- Michael L. Abrams
- Stacey L. Bourland
- Christopher Jonh Claytor
- James Deslatte
- Patrick Dixon
- J. Wendell Drye
- Christopher Jagge
- Raymond Jagge
- Richard Kendrick
- David R. Mason
- Michele Messina
- Avery More
- Larry Nickerson
- Helen L. Precure
- Eric Rivers
- Robert W. Ruliffson
- James Skene
- James Tuttle

Parker— 10 Years of TV

Terry Liberty Parker concluded 10 years as a host of the Austin local TV program *Live and Let Live* last month.



Live and Let Live is the longest continually airing Libertarian television series. It is produced by Gary Johnson and the Travis County LP.

Terry was one of four hosts for the live weekly show that airs Saturdays at 8 p.m. on Channel 10 and repeats Sundays at 1 p.m. on Channel 16.

"Thank you for your service to Austin, to the cause of liberty and justice and to your defense of the Bill of Rights," wrote former LP officeholder Alan Weiss in an open letter to Terry.

Terry remains host of a Sunday evening get-together at Hickory Street Bar and Grill in Austin.

Yes, I want the Libertarian Party to Succeed!

Name : _____ Address: _____ City & Zip _____
Phone (evenings): _____ Phone (day): _____ Email: _____
County: _____ Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

- _____ I can distribute Libertarian Party outreach materials.
- _____ I can hold or attend a meeting in my county.
- _____ I can design or host a website for a candidate or county party.
- _____ I am considering running for a local office in 2005.
- _____ I am interested in being an appointed County Chair.

Print this form and mail to:
Libertarian Party
PO Box 27932,
Houston, TX 77227

- _____ Enclosed is a **one-time contribution** to help reach our goals.
- _____ **Monthly Pledge** (please bill my credit card on a monthly basis.)

Amount: ___ \$1,000 ___ \$250 ___ \$100 ___ \$50 ___ \$30 ___ \$10 ___ Other

Please enclose a check or money order made payable to the Libertarian Party of Texas. (No corporate checks, please.)
Or provide the following information to authorize billing to your credit card.

Name on card: _____ Signature: _____
Visa ___ Mastercard ___ American Express ___ Discover
Account number: _____ Expiration: (mm/yy) _____

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, and occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. The Libertarian Party of Texas also submits finance reports to the Texas Ethics Commission.

State Party Continues to Decrease Ballot Access Debt

The SLECT voted December 11 to repay another \$5,000 toward ballot access debt owed to five individuals.

State Party Treasurer Anthony Garcia reports current assets of about \$6,450 with liability remaining from ballot access drive of \$7,500. More than \$300 has accrued to counties under the County Revenue Share Plan, but that money is being held per SLECT motion until all remaining ballot debt is retired.

The Monthly Pledge program is slowly gaining participation with pledges of \$550 in October growing to \$670 for November. A fundraising letter sent to Texas National Party Members helped bring in the donations needed to make the partial repayment and fund the Executive Director's position.

About \$1,500 per month is

provided from National from the Unified Membership Program. This amount is a share of membership dues from National Party Members. Membership has increased by 2% with 1,234 dues paying members from Texas being reported in November. Top counties are Harris with 182, Travis with 170 and Dallas with 124.

Anthony reported that he was looking into Click to Pledge, a credit card processing service for non-profits, and direct deposit in order to cut credit card fees.

State Chair Patrick Dixon reports that we have 33 County Chairs (our goal is 50) and that we have succeeded in getting one organized county in every State Senatorial District.

The SLECT also moved to add Brazos County to those counties participating in the County Revenue Share Program.

Adams for Austin Council

At its November business meeting, the Travis County Libertarian Party endorsed Steven Adam's campaign for Austin City Council Place 1. The seat is being vacated by Daryl Slusher. Two others have filed.

Steven ran for Austin City Council Place 2 in 2003 and earned 34.9% in a three-way race. His campaign budget for the race was only \$100.

Steven, who is identified as a Libertarian in articles appearing about the race plans an active fundraising campaign and outreach this cycle and is looking for volunteer campaigners and donations.

Contact the campaign and send your donations (\$100 limit) to:

Steve "Adams for Austin"
P.O. Box 200428
Austin, Texas 78720
steveadams@jump.net

Events of Interest to Texas Libertarians

Jan. 2 (Sun.) 2 p.m. Harris County LP meeting, Houston. Contact Jeff Daiell at jeffdaiell@yahoo.com or 713-777-1776 for information.

Jan. 3 (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m. Texans for Medical Marijuana Lobby Day Dallas organizing meeting, Lakewood Branch Library, 6121 Worth Street. See www.texansformedicalmarijuana.org or 214-670-1376 for information.

Jan. 3 (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m. Texans for Medical Marijuana Lobby Day San Antonio organizing meeting, Bazan Branch Library, 2200 W. Commerce. See website (above) or 210-225-1614 for information.

Jan. 6 (Thur.) 6:30 to 8 p.m. Texans for Medical Marijuana Lobby Day Houston organizing meeting, Oak Forest Branch Library, 1349 West 43rd Street. See website or 832-393-1960 for information.

Jan. 8 (Sat.) Collin, Dallas, Denton and Tarrant County Activist Meetings. Time and location varies. Contact Wes Benedict at Director@lptexas.org or 512-442-4910.

Jan. 10 (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m. Texans for Medical Marijuana Lobby Day Austin organizing meeting, 1210 Rosewood. See www.texansformedicalmarijuana.org or 512-220-9209 for information.

Jan. 11 (Tues.) 79th Session of the Texas Legislature Opens.

Jan. 11 (Tues.) 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. Travis County LP Meeting, at Mekong River Restaurant, 215 E. 6th Street, Austin. Contact Rock Howard at rockmh@austin.rr.com.

Jan. 11 (Tues.) Noon to 5 p.m. Texas Impact Legislative Training in Austin. Legislative orientation and local liaison training for individuals interested in bringing social action to their religious congregations. First United Methodist Church, Austin. \$20 includes lunch. For information or to register contact justice@texasimpact.com or 512-472-3903.

Jan. 15 (Sat.) 9 to 6 p.m. Constitution Class, taught by Michael Badnarik at the University of Texas Arlington campus. Cost \$100 includes copy of his book "Good to be King." Register online at www.ConstitutionPreservation.org.

Jan. 17 (Mon.) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Jan. 18 (Tues.) Deadline for final financial reports with the Texas Ethics Commission. All statewide, state senate and state representative candidates who did not mark an earlier report "final" must file. Visit the TEC online at www.ethics.state.tx.us or call 1-800-325-8506.

Jan. 18 (Tues.) Williamson County LP Meeting, for information contact Dave Howard at dhoward7999@austin.rr.com.

Jan. 18 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting, for information contact James Holland at jamesho81@aol.com.

Jan. 22-24 (Sat.-Mon.) First Citizen Watchdog Leader Seminar. Will include briefings on legislation with a focus on the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. Lobbying on Monday. Details to be announced later. Sponsored by Americans for Prosperity.

Jan. 26-27 (Wed.-Thur.) Third Annual Orientation for the Texas Legislature, Austin. Texas Public Policy Foundation. Various speakers and issues panels. Free to elected officials and staff, \$300 including meals for others. See www.texaspolicy.com for information or call 512-472-2700.

Jan. 26 (Wed.) 8 p.m. LP Meetup in Austin. Triumph Cafe, 3808 Spicewood Springs Rd., Austin. See www.meetup.com.

Feb. 5 (Sat.) Texas Environmental Leadership Conference in Houston at Downtown University of Houston. \$25 includes lunch and materials. See www.texpirg.org for information.

March 12 (Sat.) SLECT Meeting. Time and location to be determined.

April 15-17 (Fri.-Sun.) National Rifle Association Annual Conference, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston. 400+ exhibitors, Institute for Legislative Action grassroots workshops on 2nd Amendment advocacy and winning elections, speakers, and member board meeting and elections. Registration required, some events require tickets or invitation. Information will be posted to www.nraam.org.