



Republican Party of Minnesota

2006 Standing Platform

Section 1 – Creating Jobs and Economic Prosperity: Controlling Taxes, Spending, and Regulation

Republicans believe that limited government is the best government and that free enterprise is the best path to prosperity for all Minnesotans. We support reducing taxes, spending and regulation to create business opportunities for our hard-working families and businesses. Therefore, we support:

- A. Reducing the burden of existing taxation on our economy, supporting President Bush's tax cuts and making those cuts permanent; abolishing federal and state capital gains taxes as well as taxes on marriage, sickness, death, or inheritance; and keeping Internet access and sales free of taxation.
- B. Limiting the ability of Congress and the Legislature to use tax increases as the first solution to every problem by requiring a supermajority vote in Congress or the Minnesota Legislature to enact such increases; by a state Constitutional amendment limiting growth in state spending to inflation plus population growth; by requiring that all state surpluses be returned to the taxpayers in proportion to the taxes paid; and adopting a United States Constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget.
- C. Reforming our tax systems, including our complex state property tax system, abolishing the current IRS tax code and replacing it with a simpler, fairer tax system that favors a national sales tax or a flat tax.
- D. Dedicating all taxes, fees, and licenses from their revenue streams to their appropriate program funding.
- E. Maintaining the principle that sports, public broadcasting, entertainment and the arts should be funded by users and voluntary donors and

requiring a voter referendum before increasing local sales taxes to subsidize any professional sports stadium or ballpark.

- F. A fair and honest competitive business environment and therefore we oppose corporate welfare.
- G. Allowing all Americans to invest some or all of their Social Security payments, continuing to fulfill our obligations to older Americans, and prohibiting Congress from using Social Security funds for any other purpose.
- H. Requiring that before any new government project or program is initiated, that its purpose, cost and anticipated life be set forth and that performance measurements and dismantling plans be established in case the project or program does not meet expectations.
- I. Adequately funding highway and bridge construction in Minnesota, including constitutionally dedicating 100% of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) to the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund and increasing the use of general obligation bonds to fund highway projects; and opposing any public funding of commuter rail or new light rail projects.
- J. Equal access for non-union contractors to government and school district projects, without mandating that contractors sign project labor agreements.
- K. The repeal of state and federal legislation that imposes mandated wage rates on government and school district projects.
- L. Requiring all school district elections, including, but not limited to board elections and referenda, to be held in November on regular election days.
- M. No mandate imposed by any branch of government on any other unless it includes the funds necessary to implement that mandate.
- N. Public employee retirement fund deficits not be funded by taxes, fees or borrowing from the public.
- O. Legislation that abolishes government mandated employee benefits, and enables small businesses to assemble and pool assets for the purpose of funding employee health care insurance programs.
- P. The right of clergy and houses of worship to support principles and candidates without the threat of losing their tax-exempt status.

Section 2 – Preserving Civil Rights

The Republican Party, the Party that abolished slavery, believes that the government should treat all of its citizens equally under the law. Therefore, we advocate:

- A. Adopting policies that reflect that every innocent human being, born and unborn, has an inalienable right to life from conception to natural death.
- B. Abortion without exception is wrong and should be opposed. We oppose partial birth abortions and forced taxpayer funding of abortions or

abortion providers. Abortions performed on minors without parental consent are wrong and should not be forced on the people of Minnesota by their government.

- C. Providing women considering abortions with information on alternatives to abortion as well as on the emotional and physical repercussions of abortion, including information on the pain felt by unborn babies, even at early stages in pregnancy.
- D. The U.S. and Minnesota Constitutions should be amended to restore legal protection to the lives of innocent human beings from conception to natural death.
- E. The Republican Party of Minnesota should urge members of the Minnesota House and Senate to introduce and support 'right to life' legislation that establishes 'personhood' at the time of conception.
- F. Action should be taken leading to legislative guarantees and protection of the father's inalienable right to decide against any unilateral or preemptive decision to terminate his child's developing life.
- G. Submitting to the people a vote on a Constitutional amendment to overturn the Minnesota Supreme Court's decision to force taxpayers to pay for elective abortions.
- H. Prohibiting U.S. promotion or funding of abortion in any nation.
- I. Research and experimentation on fetal tissue or body parts obtained through abortion must be banned, including the sale of such tissue or body parts for any purpose.
- J. Prohibition of all human cloning, whether reproductive or so-called 'therapeutic' cloning, and the use of human embryos or embryonic stem cells should be prohibited.
- K. Encouraging respect for our American heritage and our status as American citizens rather than as members of any group; prohibiting any forms of discrimination by government including preferences or quotas for employment, student admissions and faculty hiring, or set-asides in the awarding of government contracts; repealing all statutes which require unequal treatment or special preferences for such groups; and prohibiting the collection or storage of data on any person by any government agency for the purpose of identifying and discriminating among such groups.
- L. Protecting charities, school, and hospitals run by religious organizations from being compelled to provide services or information in conflict with their beliefs and teachings.
- M. Protecting the right to religious expression, including the display of the Ten Commandments, in any public setting in which the freedom of speech is protected.
- N. Protecting personal privacy by prohibiting the use of Social Security numbers for any purpose other than Social Security identification and prohibiting the collection or release of any personal, financial, or other

private information by anyone without the express consent of the person involved.

- O. Legislation protecting the First Amendment right of private organizations to set their own standards for membership and the right to maintain in their policies those aspects that support their fundamental and legal beliefs.
- P. Amending the Minnesota Constitution to guarantee a citizen's right to keep and bear arms.
- Q. Recognizing a responsible, competent citizen's right to self-defense through gun ownership and a 'must issue' carry permit system, while removing the 'duty to retreat' in the face of attack, and that no law or rule shall be enacted requiring the registration of firearms.
- R. That all workers in Minnesota have the right to work without being forced to join a union.
- S. Supporting the right of employees to organize, to join a union or other association, and to not have dues used to support political candidates, and requiring unions to receive written permission from their members before collecting funds for any political purpose.
- T. Condemning religious, political, and ethnic persecution in any country, specifically the oppression, slave labor, torture and murder of religious believers.
- U. In cases where public prayer is offered at government events, chaplains and lay people be allowed to pray in the name of a specific deity.
- V. Legislation prohibiting Federal, State, and local governments from taking private property for commercial or recreational use by eminent domain.
- W. Requiring informed opt-in consent of parents for newborn genetic testing and for the Minnesota Department of Health to retain their children's DNA.
- X. Legislation prohibiting the USDA, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture from requiring federal and state premise and individual identification on all livestock animals used for small farm market, private, or individual use.
- Y. That the lawful definition of a 'Human Being' shall be: 'When the DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) of Mankind is joined.'

Section 3 – Educating our Children

Republicans believe that parents are responsible for their children's education and that parents, teachers and local school boards can best make decisions about our children's education. Therefore, we support:

- A. A well-rounded knowledge-based curriculum to prepare our children to be good citizens and to compete in the rapidly evolving economy of the 21st century, and emphasizing traditional values of hard work, honesty,

- home and family, and respect for America's religious and civic heritage, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
- B. Making Minnesota's education system more effective and efficient by reducing the federal and state bureaucracies' control.
 - C. A statewide testing system that emphasizes basic skills in an academic curriculum.
 - D. Improving the quality of education by maximizing parental choice through expanded support for charter schools, school choice programs, parental rights to home school their children and more competitive and accountable public school systems, and by preserving and expanding tax credits, deductions, and school voucher programs.
 - E. Reforming tenure, limiting public school teachers' right to strike and restoring balance to the Public Employment Labor Relations Act. We would institute pay for performance and periodic competency testing for public school teachers in both the academic curriculum and the subjects they teach.
 - F. Requiring sexual abstinence to be taught in public schools, that premarital sex and extramarital sex is wrong, and that the use of contraceptives is not safe sex. We oppose the dispensing of or referral for birth control drugs and devices in schools. We oppose dispensing any prescription drugs in schools without written consent of the parents.
 - G. Requiring the presence of the United States flag in all classrooms, the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and encouraging the voluntary expression of religious beliefs and traditions by students.
 - H. Devoting the same emphasis to educating Minnesota's gifted and talented children that is now devoted to special education.
 - I. Protecting educators from disciplinary action for including discussion of creation science, and adopting science standards that acknowledge the scientific controversies pertaining to the theory of evolution.
 - J. State requirements for schools to notify parents in advance of administering non-academic tests, and that notification must include an accurate description of the content of the survey.
 - K. Retaining the current governance system for Minnesota Independent School Districts rather than aligning school district boundaries with county boundaries.
 - L. Eliminating education funding or discounts based on the number of children who receive free or reduced meals.
 - M. Abolishing the U.S. Department of Education and all its unfunded mandates and opposing any new state or federal laws which seek to centralize educational authority at the expense of local school boards.
 - N. Mastery of the English language for all students and encouraging English immersion instruction as a method to quickly achieve this.
 - O. Repealing teacher licensure rules based on the Profile of Learning and replacing them with new licensure rules to be adopted based on new state standards.

- P. Holding all public schools, colleges and universities accountable to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for all funds received and spent.
- Q. Making the Eddie Eagle Gun Safety Program be made available annually in every Minnesota elementary and middle school.
- R. Prohibiting public universities from imposing fees that support student clubs and organizations without student consent.
- S. Enacting Governor Pawlenty's proposal that at least 70 percent of school spending go to teachers and students and not to administration.
- T. Requiring public universities to protect academic and intellectual freedom of both professors and students.
- U. The prohibition of universal mental health screening of students in K-12 schools, pre-schools, and in early infancy. We also oppose social and emotional outcomes being incorporated into the school curricula.
- V. Prohibiting the establishment of universal (mandatory for all children) pre-school programs in the State of Minnesota.
- W. Prohibiting state and federal support of International Baccalaureate (IB) and the adoption of IB by local school districts.
- X. Enforcement of existing laws prohibiting promotion of acceptance of homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgenderism when they are discussed in Minnesota public school classrooms.
- Y. School districts and teachers including original sources showing the important role of religion in our Nation's founding when teaching history.
- Z. Parents having the right to observe their child in the classroom.

Section 4 – Strengthening Families and Communities

The Republican Party recognizes the blessings that God has bestowed on this great Nation. We declare our faith in Him and ask His continued guidance as we work to preserve this government of "One Nation Under God". We also recognize the sanctity of human life and marriage, and the central role of the traditional family in our society. Therefore, we believe that:

- A. We need to change laws regarding marriage, divorce, adoption, child support, welfare, taxes, and others, to encourage families to stay together. Minnesota's laws governing marriage should be amended to offer a 'Covenant Marriage' option, entailing extensive pre-marital counseling and limits on divorce. Parental privileges of fathers in child custody issues should be restored to comply with the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Grandparents and other relatives should be considered as the first option and the logical choice when children cannot live with their parents.
- B. We should amend the U.S. Constitution and the Minnesota constitution to define marriage as the legal union between a man and a woman. We oppose civil unions or their legal equivalents between same-sex couples.

- C. Domestic partner benefits should not be publicly funded.
- D. Racial preferences in adoption are wrong, and Minnesota should make it easier and less costly for traditional married couples to adopt a child of any race.
- E. We should eliminate all state-sponsored gambling and oppose any expansion of gambling in Minnesota.
- F. Laws and regulations restricting the production, sale and promotion of vulgarity, obscene material, especially to children, should be strengthened, and pornography-blocking software should be installed on all computers having internet access in publicly financed institutions.
- G. Programs that reduce health care costs by introducing genuine market competition into the system and eliminating state mandated coverage of various illnesses and conditions. We oppose all proposals for socialized (i.e., 'single payer') medicine, and support the repeal of MinnesotaCare, and opposing programs that ration health care.
- H. Parents have the right to all of their minor children's health records, including sexual health records without requiring their minor children's consent.
- I. We should provide assistance to people in need primarily through private charity, including faith-based programs, rather than government welfare programs. Such programs should be encouraged through tax credits at the federal and state levels with the objective of replacing as much government-sponsored welfare with private incentives as possible.
- J. We should adopt real welfare reform in Minnesota by requiring all able-bodied welfare recipients to work as a condition of receiving benefits, by stopping the practice of offering cash incentives for unmarried welfare recipients to bear children, and by requiring proof of legal in-state residency as a condition of receiving aid.
- K. Medicare reimbursement should not be determined by the location of the provider.
- L. Governmental interference with the practice of medicine should be minimized, including not allowing any government 'best practices' legislation.
- M. Minnesota should prohibit any medical procedure or therapy that would deliberately cause or hasten death, including physician-assisted suicide and deprivation of food and water.
- N. The federal government not establish a national identification system for U.S. citizens.
- O. The Minnesota legislature should pass legislation increasing the legal age for gambling in Minnesota to 21 years of age.
- P. All health care expenses should be fully tax deductible and expand health savings accounts so that individuals can purchase and control their own healthcare without going through a third-party payer.
- Q. We should amend current gambling laws so that the State of Minnesota be allowed to tax profits/revenue of tribal casino gambling in Minnesota.

- R. The legal age to purchase tobacco in Minnesota should be raised to 21 years of age.

Section 5 – Protecting the Public’s Safety

Republicans believe that getting tough with violent and repeat criminals can best reduce crime in Minnesota. Therefore, we support:

- A. Establishing mandatory minimum prison sentences and substantially higher sentences for repeat offenders, ending probation for violent criminals, and establishing life sentences without the possibility of parole for the state’s most dangerous sex offenders.
- B. Building whatever new prisons are necessary to protect the public by incarcerating violent criminals. Prisons are for the protection of the public and the punishment of criminals and should not be designed for recreation.
- C. Re-instituting capital punishment for the most serious crimes.
- D. Requiring criminals to provide complete restitution to victims and the state for crimes committed, supporting victim’s rights and requiring offenders to be held personally responsible, including juveniles.
- E. Enforcing existing firearm laws, particularly those relating to violent offenders, rather than creating new and unnecessary laws restricting the use of firearms.
- F. Crime legislation that applies to all offenders of a specific crime; and oppose any legislation that would designate ‘hate crimes’ against specific ‘protected class’ groups.
- G. The passage of Jessica’s Law in Minnesota to ensure that a child sex offender be given a minimum sentence of 25 years without parole.
- H. Police, in the course of their regular duties, will be instructed not to ignore immigration status of non-citizens when said status is not in good standing with relevant requirements as required by law.
- I. That as a condition of parole, an inmate must have participated in Adult Basic Education.

Section 6 – Strengthening the Rule of Law

Republicans believe that our legal system has been subject to abuse in the form of frivolous lawsuits; excessive numbers of lawsuits; and lawsuits that are intended to advance a political agenda, rather than adjudicate real controversies. Therefore, we support:

- A. Appointing judges who will exercise their authority to review, and when necessary limit, excessive awards of damages and attorneys’ fees.

- B. Limiting Attorneys' fees in class action lawsuits and other cases where plaintiffs receive insignificant damages, so that fees are not disproportionate to any recovery obtained in the litigation.
- C. Enacting federal legislation limiting any party's liability in a civil case to its fair share of the damages, as determined by the percentage of fault assessed by the jury.
- D. Empowering juries to determine that a suit was without merit, and in such case requiring the plaintiff and his attorney to pay the defendant's attorneys' fees and court costs.
- E. Limiting prisoners' ability to file frivolous lawsuits.

Section 7 – Enjoying and Protecting Our Natural Resources

The Republican Party believes that proper stewardship of our natural resources and agricultural lands will best be achieved through sound science and adherence to Constitutionally guaranteed property rights. Therefore, we support:

- A. Maintaining clean air, water and land by addressing only those threats proven by peer-reviewed scientific research, using sensible and economically reasonable solutions. We oppose radical environmental proposals such as the Kyoto global warming treaty; we reject the imposition of the United Nations environmental regulations, such as the Rio biodiversity treaty, by any state or federal government agency unless ratified by Congress.
- B. Imposing the cost of environmental clean up on those who cause pollution.
- C. Following commonsense practices in forest, wetlands and wildlife management and promoting multiple uses of natural resources in most circumstances.
- D. Free enterprise in the agricultural economy.
- E. Encouraging technological advances in the creation, processing and use of agricultural products and natural resources.
- F. Opposing legislation that places statewide moratorium on feedlots and logging roads since townships and counties should decide these matters.
- G. Opposing federal 'heritage area' acts that would generically provide funding and other opportunities for bureaucracies and other non-governmental organizations to use tax dollars to lobby and prepare for regulation of our land and resources.
- H. Adhering to the original intent of the 1978 BWCAW law and Public Law 91-661 in managing the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Voyageurs National Park and opposing all attempts by the judiciary or federal government to usurp constitutionally protected states' rights.
- I. Opposing cities annexing by ordinance without the approval of the affective township residents.

- J. That the federal government should be required to meet its obligations to store spent nuclear waste.
- K. That any form of municipal government be prohibited in condemning a business or property through the process of eminent domain for the sole purpose of increasing tax revenues rather than the general public good or to take private property from one owner in order to favor another private entity.
- L. Compensating owners for property devaluation when government regulations or other governmental actions cause a decline in property values, and support reducing or restricting government ownership of our land to no more than 40%.
- M. That there be no net gain of land by the Minnesota DNR or nonprofit land trusts and that all conservation easements should be limited to a maximum of 21 years.
- N. Support for the right of all commercial property owners to govern the legal consumption of tobacco within their properties.
- O. Adoption of an energy policy that encourages Research and Development of alternative forms of energy by private initiative.
- P. Expanding the use of nuclear power in Minnesota as a safe, cost-effective and environmentally sound solution to our growing energy demands.

Section 8 – Making Government Better, Not Larger

Republicans want government to be honest, efficient and responsive to individual concerns. Therefore, we advocate:

- A. Returning governmental functions from the federal level to the state and local governments wherever possible, consistent with the intent of the Constitution. We believe that most government functions are carried out more efficiently and with greater accountability at the state and local level.
- B. Reinstating a citizen legislature in Minnesota by holding legislative sessions in alternative years unless the governor calls a special session.
- C. Maintaining Minnesota's two-house legislature, rather than adopting a unicameral system.
- D. Adopting codes of conduct for all Minnesota elected officials that require resignation and loss of pension and benefits upon conviction of a felony or any crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude.
- E. Ending Congress' practice of coercing state and local governments by withholding funds if states do not enact specific legislation, in all areas where the Constitution does not give the federal government jurisdiction.

- F. Returning the Metropolitan Council to its original purposes of regional planning and support, while eliminating, privatizing, or returning to state and local governments all other Metropolitan Council functions.
- G. Adopting an amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting the desecration of the United States flag.
- H. Reforming campaign finance laws so as to uphold all Americans' rights to free speech by allowing American citizens to donate their time or money to political campaigns without limitation; requiring immediate and full disclosure of all sources of campaign funding and repealing the Bi-Partisan Campaign Reform Act (McCain-Feingold).
- I. Fair redistricting without gerrymandering and with Senate districts that do not cross Congressional district boundaries.
- J. Reinstating the constitutional separation of powers and opposing legislation by executive order, judicial rulings, or unelected regulatory agencies. We support the election and appointment of strict constructionist judges, who adhere to the principles expressed in the U.S. and Minnesota Constitutions.
- K. Submitting to the people federal and state Constitutional amendments for an effective recall procedure for all elected officials.
- L. Adopting an initiative and referendum law that would allow the citizens of Minnesota to vote on important issues.
- M. Making English the official language in Minnesota and the United States of America.
- N. Eliminating the practice of vouching for individuals at polling places, requiring that voters be registered at least 30 days prior to an election and requiring that voters present a valid proof of U.S. citizenship and state residency at the time of registration.
- O. Enacting a system of open and competitive judicial elections and opposing the replacement of the election system with an appointment system or the 'Missouri Plan' (appointment followed by retention election).

Section 9 — Defending America at Home and Abroad

Republicans believe that peace is best maintained through strong national defense. Therefore, we support:

- A. Continuing to rebuild America's military forces to ensure that they are well prepared, well armed, and adequate to protect our national security.
- B. Reaffirming our commitment to free market economics, including free and fair international trade. We support maintaining commercial, cultural, and diplomatic ties with a multitude of nations while promoting American industry and commerce. We support trade policies

that will encourage nations to seek democracy, capitalism, and individual freedoms for their citizens.

- C. Developing and deploying defense systems, including Strategic Missile Defense, to protect American from the dangers of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.
- D. Deploying American forces overseas only to further American interests or defend a faithful ally, and only under the command of American officers. The United States does not surrender its sovereignty to the United Nations or to any other international organization.
- E. Strengthening our borders against the threat of terrorism and stopping the flow of illegal immigrants, and deporting illegal aliens. We are against amnesty for illegal aliens. We oppose any program that will allow illegal aliens to remain in the United States.
- F. That illegal aliens shall not be issued state driver's licenses, permits, or identification cards and that legal aliens shall not be issued these documents for a period beyond their admission authorization time.
- G. The reduction of legal immigrants to facilitate assimilation and requiring extensive background checks before issuing visas.
- H. Reaffirming our support of and commitment to our active duty military members, Reserves, National Guard and veterans, including exempting active duty military personnel from paying state income tax. Minnesota law should recognize retired military persons as veterans.
- I. An amendment to the Minnesota Constitution authorizing the payment of bonuses to veterans of the global war on terrorism.
- J. Opposing the Law of the Seas Treaty (L.O.S.T.)
- K. Efforts to become less dependent on foreign oil including the development, promotion, and conservation of all available fuel sources including nuclear power and such as opening the Artic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling.
- L. Foreign aid to be in the form of American goods, commodities, and services whenever possible.
- M. Rescinding the permanent most favored nation status for China and urging its expulsion from the WTO until it ceases its abuse of human, civil, and religious rights, including its persecution of religious believers.
- N. The right of the State of Israel to exist and defend itself.
- O. Children born to illegal aliens inside the U.S. do not obtain automatic citizenship.
- P. Denying foreign aid to any country that protects and supports terrorists.
- Q. President Bush's efforts to keep Americans safe and fight the Global War on Terror. We support our troops and their mission. We oppose calls to "cut and run" until the job has been completed.

- R. Continuing to support our Nation's effort to assist the Iraqi people and the people of Afghanistan to develop democratic institutions in their countries.

Commendatory

Since its inception, our party has embraced core American principles and chosen extraordinary leaders. Those leaders – like Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan – not only embodied the very best in Republican values, but also led America to new triumphs of peace, prosperity, achievement and spirituality. Today we are blessed with a new generation of American and Minnesota leaders who proudly carry on those Republican traditions. Therefore, we commend:

- A. President Ronald Reagan was a man of great and unabashed faith. He believed God had put this nation between these two oceans for a very specific purpose. And that purpose was to be a beacon of freedom at home and around the world. President Reagan's optimism and values were an inspiration to all Americans. We will forever remember his confidence, his smile, his disarming wit, and the way he would lift people's spirits with just a wink. We owe eternal gratitude for his vision and determination;
- B. President George W. Bush, whose principled leadership in time of war ensures that America at home is free and prosperous, and abroad remains the beacon of hope and freedom for the rest of the world;
- C. Governor Tim Pawlenty, whose visionary, energetic leadership has set the course for hard-working Minnesotans to enjoy economic growth, better schools, and a richer quality of life for generations to come;
- D. United States Senator Norm Coleman and United States Representatives Jim Ramstad, Gil Gutknecht, Mark Kennedy, and John Kline for their outstanding leadership and work in the Republican majorities in the United States Congress;
- E. Lieutenant Governor Carol Molnau;
- F. Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer;
- G. State Auditor Patricia Anderson;
- H. Speaker Sviggum, Majority Leader Erik Paulsen, and the Republican majority in the Minnesota House of Representatives; and
- I. Senate Minority Leader Dick Day and the growing Republican caucus in the Minnesota Senate.