

# IDAHO REPUBLICAN PLATFORM

*Adopted June 23, 2012, Twin Falls, Idaho*

## *PREAMBLE*

### **WE ARE REPUBLICANS BECAUSE:**

We believe the strength of our nation lies with our faith and reliance on God our Creator, the individual, and the family, and that each person's dignity, freedom, ability and responsibility must be honored.

We believe the United States Constitution is the greatest and most inspired document to govern a nation, and the republican form of government it gives us is the best guarantor of freedom in history.

We believe in equal rights, equal justice and equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, creed, sex, age or disability.

We believe free enterprise and encouraging individual initiative have brought this nation and state opportunity, economic growth and prosperity.

We believe government must practice fiscal responsibility, and that taxpayers should allow the government only the money necessary to provide appropriate functions.

We believe that our Founding Fathers gave us a government that is a servant of the people not our master and the proper role of government is to provide for the people only those critical functions that cannot be performed by individuals or private organizations.

We believe the most effective, responsible and responsive government is government closest to the people and the sovereignty of the state must be protected. That government is best that governs least.

We believe Idahoans must protect the principles and values that have made us strong.

We believe Idahoans value and should preserve our national and state strength and pride while working to promote peace, freedom and human rights throughout the world.

We believe that the rights of individuals can only be maintained by exercising personal responsibility for behavior.

We believe the Republican Party is the best vehicle for translating these ideals into positive and successful principles of government.

We therefore adopt the following Platform:

## **ARTICLE I. Responsibility in Government**

### **Sec. 1 Fiscal Responsibility**

A. the Idaho Republican Party recognizes that all government is financed by taxing its citizens. We believe the size and cost of government, as well as the national debt, must be reduced.

B. We believe Social Security must be stabilized, diversified, and privatized to allow expansion of individual retirement options.

C. We believe in a balanced budget and support congressional action to pass a balanced budget amendment.

D. We believe the unnecessary growth of government has a negative impact on both the conduct of business and our individual lives. We endorse the review of all government programs and encourage their assumption by private enterprise or local government where appropriate and workable. Programs which are not cost effective or have outlived their usefulness should be terminated.

E. We expect the government entity which mandates a program to provide the funding for its implementation.

### **Sec. 2 Taxation**

A. We support lower federal, state, and local taxes. High taxes are a burden on businesses, families, and individuals.

B. We believe that tax reductions can be achieved by cutting spending on every level: federal, state, and local. We believe that lower taxes will result in increased revenue to the government as the private sector will thrive.

C. We believe Idaho's tax structure should be predictable, fair, and balanced, and that the combination of our income, sales, and property taxes will continue to provide a stable, dependable source of income for governmental needs.

D. We support true government transparency that allows the public to review all local, state, and federal government expenditures, contracts, and audits online. We support uniform accounting systems that allow taxpayers to compare and analyze government spending trends.

E. We believe that Idaho Citizens should not and or shall not be taxed for federally mandated health care.

F. We believe the approval of the voters should be required prior to approval of debt-financed city projects. Municipal laws that allow public dollars to be converted to private use and government entities to compete against the private sector or divert public money to special projects without support of the taxpayer, must be repealed.

G. We support the total abolition of inheritance taxes.

H. We support a comprehensive overhaul of the federal tax system requiring universal participation.

### **Sec. 3 Reform of Congress**

A. We support an overhaul of the legislative process in congress to allow (1) more time for members to study legislation; (2) more opportunity for citizens to testify at hearings; (3) debate on legislation before the members, rather than speeches in empty chambers for the C-span audience; (4) objections to the inclusion of unrelated subject matter in a single bill; (5) more oversight and transparency in the earmark process, and an end to abuse and use of earmarks for financial gain to a member; and, (6) a more orderly process for consideration of legislation, similar to that of the Idaho Legislature.

B. We will continue to lead the fight to reduce the growth of government bureaucracy and promote private enterprise and individual initiative in the marketplace as the solution to our domestic policy challenges.

C. We support restoration of the United States Constitution's checks and balances that protect the rights and sovereignty of the states by repealing the 17th amendment.

### **Sec. 4 Sound Currency**

We recognize the failure of the Federal Reserve System to maintain a sound U.S. dollar and the danger of mercantile banks controlling the issuance of our currency. We believe the Federal Reserve Bank should be abolished and the issuing power restored to the people with the stipulation that the U.S. dollar be backed by gold and silver. We believe Idahoans need to protect their savings from the ravages of inflation, which is hidden taxation, and encourage citizens to participate in a systematic acquisition of precious metals which represent real value as opposed to paper currencies.

### **Sec. 5 State Legislature**

A. We encourage continued strong support for our state legislature, directed by Republicans for more than three decades, as well as our elected constitutional officers, and for the manner in which they work together to balance the budget and improve Idaho's economy.

B. We support the current move to zero-based budgeting or other appropriate budgeting techniques. We believe growth can be attained in a sound, responsible manner by holding taxes down, granting business incentives, and refusing to grant excessive demands for increased spending.

C. We support reduction of Idaho's income tax rates, and encourage a reduction in property taxes whenever possible.

D. We believe the State of Idaho should strongly assert its sovereignty under the 10th amendment to the U. S. Constitution. The accumulated usurpations by the Federal Government of Idaho's state sovereignty has reached a point of complete intolerance. The Idaho Republican Party hereby recommends that the Idaho Legislature and Governor nullify any and all existing and future unconstitutional federal mandates and laws, funded or unfunded, that infringe on Idaho's 10th Amendment sovereignty. We also recommend that the State of Idaho continue to request funding and assistance from the Federal Government which complies with the Constitutional provision of the 10th Amendment, and recommend that the State of Idaho resist the withholding of federal funds as a means of forced compliance with the unconstitutional federal mandates and laws.

E. We support the right of every qualified citizen to seek elective office, affirm the right of voters to vote for the candidate of their choice, recognize the need for experience and institutional memory in elective office, and oppose the imposition of term limits in Idaho.

F. We support amending the Idaho Constitution, Section 2, Article III, as follows: Strike paragraph (2), (3), (4), (5), and (6). These sections refer to reapportionment of the State Legislature by an appointed commission

G. We believe the Legislature should present amendments to the people with the ballot language identical to the language of the amendment.

## **ARTICLE II. Citizen Involvement in Government**

The Idaho Republican Party believes that government works best when its citizens become actively involved. The Party encourages all citizens to engage in healthy debate on all issues that will increase citizen control of government.

**Sec. 1** We encourage all citizens to educate themselves in constitutional government and to be full participants in the political process.

**Sec. 2** We seek to heighten the level of discourse by encouraging all office holders, candidates and citizens to be civil, dignified, honest and forthright in their discussions, actions, statements and political processes. This includes the actions of special interest groups who provide support for or against any Idaho candidate.

**Sec. 3** We believe that Primary elections in the Idaho Republican Party should be open to all people who have registered as Republicans prior to the primary election. To allow those who have no loyalty or allegiance to the Idaho Republican Party or it's platform and Resolutions to select our candidates is simply not proper.

## **ARTICLE III. Education**

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes that the future of this great state lies with our faith and reliance on God our Creator, in our strong efforts to uphold family values, and in the quality of education provided for its citizens. We believe that successful education is a joint responsibility of the individual, the family, and the community. As with government in general, we believe the most effective, responsible and responsive educational system is that system closest to the people.

**Sec. 1** We recognize the importance of early childhood education. We also believe that the needs of early childhood education are best met by individuals, families and private sector. Only in the rarest of situations should government assume the responsibilities reserved to parents.

**Sec. 2** We believe parents have the right to educate their children at home, that court rulings undermining these rights devalue the important role of parents and family in a child's education.

**Sec. 3** We believe in improving the quality of education for every child by maximizing parental choice through expanded support for public charter schools, public virtual charter schools, school choice

programs, and an accountable public school systems. We believe all public school students are entitled to our support, and to fair and equitable funding

**Sec. 4** We support efforts to improve our public school system. We also recognize that more government spending does not necessarily generate improved schools.

**Sec. 5** We strongly support professional technical and continuing education programs that provide career readiness and college preparation.

**Sec. 6** We recognize the importance of Idaho's higher education system in continuing the education of our citizens. The education and research that occurs at our institutions of higher learning contributes substantially to a vigorous economy, heightened competition and a vibrant participatory government.

**Sec. 7** We are proud of our many dedicated, professional teachers and educators who have committed their lives to educating Idaho's children. We value the contribution our teachers make to our society. We support the efforts to reward great teachers for their hard work. We support incentives for teachers, so that our best educators are willing to remain in the classroom and work with our children.

**Sec. 8** We believe that in order for public education to be successful, schools and families should work together with mutual respect and cooperation. We call for responsible management, focused goals and direction, and increased accountability from our public school system.

**Sec. 9** We recognize the increasing role of technology in society. We encourage policymakers and educators to be leaders in promoting such new opportunities.

**Sec. 10** We believe competition produces excellence in education, and that parents have the right to choose which schools their children attend. We support the right of parents to pursue private parochial and home school options. Tax credits for non-use of public schools and other forms of parental choice should be encouraged as competitive options for educating children.

**Sec. 11** We value the important role played by our private, independent, and parochial schools, colleges and universities.

#### **ARTICLE IV. Agriculture**

The Idaho Republican Party believes a strong and viable agricultural industry is one of the most important cornerstones in the foundation of our state, national, and global economy and security.

**Sec. 1** We believe agricultural education and awareness is vital to creating and maintaining a strong and vital agricultural industry.

**Sec. 2** We believe Idaho's farmers and ranchers should be able to compete freely and trade fairly in foreign markets. We recognize that the primary function of government in agriculture should be service, research, and the promotion of markets. We oppose the use of an embargo of agricultural products as an instrument of foreign policy.

**Sec. 3** We recognize that water is vital to Idaho agriculture and other industries. We believe modification of Idaho's historic water laws must be considered with extreme caution. The federal government shall not infringe upon state jurisdiction over Idaho water.

**Sec. 4** We endorse the preservation and strengthening of the family farm unit as the foundation of agriculture and one of the basic strengths of this nation.

## **ARTICLE V. Water**

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes the critical importance of water to this state. We will aggressively defend Idaho's right to appropriate and manage water within its own borders without interference from the federal government.

**Sec. 1** We support continued federal and state legislation to prevent inter-basin transfer of Idaho's water to other areas.

**Sec. 2** We encourage policies that will more fully use and develop our water while supporting the Idaho state law of prior appropriation, based on the principle of "first in time is first in right" for the benefit of all Idahoans.

**Sec. 3** We believe that safeguards exist to protect Idaho's scenic and recreational rivers without creating more restrictions or regulations on Idaho's river system.

**Sec. 4** We call upon the federal government to cease and desist from calling on further water for flow augmentation for fish conservation until the benefit of this use has been proven by unequivocal, thorough scientific research. Further, Idaho waters can only be approved for out-of-state use by legislative action by the State of Idaho from willing sellers through established rental pools.

**Sec. 5** We support increased retention of Idaho water through recharge and the acquisition of new reservoir sites.

**Sec. 6** We support the quality of private life and economic stability of Idaho families, communities, and industries, and oppose removal or breaching of existing dams.

**Sec. 7** We support all legal opposition to any and all efforts to usurp Idaho's sovereignty over water within Idaho borders. Further, we support the Attorney General in defending the state's position on these and all other water issues, and support the State Legislature in continuing to adequately fund the Idaho Constitutional Defense Fund.

## **ARTICLE VI. Natural Resources and Environment**

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes that the beautiful and fruitful land that we have been given by God, our creator, must be properly cared for to ensure that its rich blessings will continue to be enjoyed for generations to come.

**Sec. 1** We believe that it is ultimately the individual's responsibility to act as stewards of their environment. The quality of our natural environment should be protected, and enhanced, while allowing reasonable, orderly growth with emphasis on multiple uses, local control, and minimal government regulation.

**Sec. 2** We believe the administration of federal environmental policy must be modified. These policies must give equal consideration to potential human suffering caused by restriction or elimination of basic human needs such as jobs, energy and overall quality of life. We support federal and state measures to re-establish the primacy of state government for implementation of environmental policy.

**Sec. 3** We discourage international regulations on industry which attempt to halt the production of certain industrial byproducts. Instead, we encourage citizens to adopt buying habits that promote a clean earth.

**Sec. 4** We recognize Idaho's need for the utilization of natural resources for Idaho's economic growth and for the benefit of all Idahoans. The dimensions and boundaries of our wilderness area should be determined by Idahoans. The remaining road less areas should be released for multiple uses.

**Sec. 5** We advocate congressional action to limit presidential authority in creating or expanding national parks and monuments pursuant to the Antiquities Act.

**Sec. 6** We support the concept of forest health because it promotes long-term land use including livestock grazing, timber, wildlife, improved air quality, recreation, mining and all other beneficial forest uses for the people of Idaho.

**Sec. 7** We encourage the State of Idaho to seek authority to oversee the utilization of natural resources on federal lands within the state.

## **ARTICLE VII. Energy**

**Sec. 1** The Idaho Republican Party believes that the United States shall at all time strives to become energy independent.

**Sec. 2** We strongly support energy policies that encourage research and development of our energy resources, including natural gas, hydroelectric power, petroleum, nuclear energy, and new technologies.

**Sec. 3** We support efforts to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. We support efforts to increase American exploration and production of American crude oil and natural gas, and support voluntary efforts to improve efficiencies and promote conservation. Congress must end its ban on American energy exploration on U.S. soil and on the Outer Continental Shelf and provide for additional American refining capacity. We must make America's resources available to U.S. citizens.

**Sec. 4** Idaho has the lowest electrical rates of the fifty states. Nothing should be done in the deregulation process that might raise those rates.

**Sec. 5** The benefits of hydroelectric power should be retained for the citizens of Idaho.

**Sec. 6** We oppose any mandated deregulation that would negatively impact rate payers.

**Sec. 7** We support the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES) and other coordinated efforts in energy research and development, and their applications to the utilities industry within Idaho.

## **ARTICLE VIII. Idaho National Laboratories**

The Idaho Republican Party believes in the great importance of the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) as one of the State's largest private employers, its importance to our nation's defense, and to energy and other technology research and development.

**Sec. 1** We support research and development programs that provide safe, economical nuclear power. We further support new nuclear technology that has greater safety, produces less waste, and resists proliferation.

**Sec. 2** We encourage our congressional delegation, the state, DOE and INL management to assure continued research and development, transfer of technology, new missions, and development of alternative energy treatments and storage methods.

## **ARTICLE IX. Private Property Rights**

The Republican Party believes in the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution: "No person shall be ... deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." We oppose any federal, state or local regulation that would diminish a property owner's right to develop his property.

## **ARTICLE X. State and Federal Lands**

The Idaho Republican Party believes that due to state and federal governments administering the majority of Idaho lands, we need to limit and reduce the amount of land owned or administered by the federal government. We believe Idaho should manage and administer all state and federal lands.

## **ARTICLE XI. Wildlife Management**

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes the value of wildlife resources for the state.

**Sec. 1** We encourage the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to manage fish and wildlife to enhance fishing, hunting and hunting opportunities for Idahoans and the tourist industry, while respecting private property rights of landowners.

**Sec. 2** We oppose federal designations which restrict or eliminate hunting, fishing, and recreational access to lands in Idaho.

**Sec. 3** We oppose the reintroduction of wolves and grizzlies into Idaho. We support managed control of these predators through the Idaho Fish and Game Department.



## **ARTICLE XII. Economy**

The Idaho Republican Party believes that economic growth is the key to enhancing the quality of life our people so richly deserve. Fiscal responsibility in the form of balanced state and federal budgets is essential to achieve this goal. A competitive market, free of undue governmental competition, restriction, coercion, or interference, is critical to Idaho's economic well-being.

### **Sec. 1 Commerce and Industry**

A. We encourage the broadening and strengthening of Idaho's commerce and industry, including but not limited to agriculture, timber, mining, manufacturing, processing, technology, tourism and other industries.

B. We encourage the responsible use of our natural resources to broaden and enhance Idaho's economy. We support innovative and responsible programs by industry to reduce pollution in every practical way. Government should intervene only where such efforts fail or must be supplemented by law.

C. We endorse economic development and expansion in Idaho and pledge to make every effort to provide a business climate that will attract such growth.

### **Sec. 2 Support for Small Business**

A. We recognize the important role of small businesses in Idaho's economy and that we must maintain a regulatory environment where small business is allowed to thrive. Excessive regulatory requirements must be reduced and eliminated.

B. We support a tax code that is simple, fair and equitable.

C. We support a business environment that promotes development and expansion of businesses in Idaho and eliminates all onerous repressive government regulation.

### **Sec. 3 Labor**

A. We believe that both the employer and employee share a joint responsibility for maintaining a safe work environment without excessive regulation.

B. We support education and professional technical education to develop a well trained workforce.

C. We believe that public employees should be hired, retained and promoted based on individual merit, and that they should be fairly and equitably compensated comparable to private industry.

### **Sec. 4 Transportation**

We believe transportation is an integral part of our commerce and industry, and it must meet the unique needs of Idaho. We believe transportation decisions and funds should be managed at the local and state level.

## **ARTICLE XIII. Health and Welfare**

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes the need for effective and accessible health care for all individuals. Regulations that forbid Idahoans from buying insurance across state lines should be eliminated.

### **Sec. 1 Private Enterprise Health Care Delivery System**

We support a private enterprise health care delivery system that provides cost-effective, quality health care with minimal government regulation.

### **Sec. 2 Patient Protection and Affordable Healthcare Act**

- A. We oppose socialized medicine and government mandated health insurance.
- B. We support the repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Healthcare Act in its entirety.
- C. We believe the primary responsibility for the health and welfare of our citizens resides with the individual and their families.
- D. We support freedom of choice and personal responsibility in all medical decisions, including providers and treatments. Medicine should have a “level playing field” for all treatment and branches of medicine.

### **Sec. 3 Health Savings Accounts and Insurance**

- A. We believe that individual responsibility for health care should be encouraged through medical savings accounts and other viable free market alternatives.
- B. We support the rights of individuals to select their health care and insurance provider.
- C. We believe health and welfare programs should be administered with a minimum of bureaucracy and the goal of helping all recipients return to a self-sustaining and productive life.

### **Sec. 4 Child Support**

We support enforcement of child support laws to assure the restoration of parental responsibility and the enhancement of financial security for children.

## **ARTICLE XIV. American Family**

The Idaho Republican Party believes that traditional family values are the foundation of our nation. Families, not government programs, are the best way to properly nurture and protect our children, care for our elderly, preserve and perpetuate our cultural and spiritual heritage, and assure that our traditional values are transmitted to the next generation. Many of the ills of society can be attributed to the breakdown of the family. We believe the traditional family to be the basic unit of society.

### **Sec. 1 Government's Role**

- A. We believe that state and federal social and fiscal programs should reinforce parental responsibility and authority, and not promote or reward the disintegration of the family.
- B. We support a tax system that strengthens a family's economic ability to care for and support its members.

### **Sec. 2 Traditional Marriage**

We call upon government officials and legislators to protect the traditional family and use all means possible to prevent expansion of the definition of marriage beyond that of a bond between one man and one woman.

### **Sec. 3 Right to Life**

- A. We strongly encourage adoption as an alternative to abortion and support legislation that expands opportunities and provides assistance to the adoptive process.
- B. We reaffirm our support for the sanctity of life from conception to natural death, and for the rights of the unborn child. We oppose abortion based on sex selection, convenience, or as a method of birth control.
- C. We oppose partial birth abortion and support legislation to abolish this practice.
- D. We support parental consent for minors to obtain an abortion.
- E. We oppose the use of federal or state tax funds to aid in the destruction of human life.
- F. We oppose the use of Idaho taxpayer funds to finance so called "health" abortions.

## **ARTICLE XV. Older Americans**

**Sec. 1** The Idaho Republican Party has always supported and will continue to support older Americans. The party will work to preserve and promote opportunities in America so that older Americans can provide for themselves. Those unable to care for themselves should have access to all services available in Idaho, whether city, county, state or federal.

**Sec. 2** We oppose policies that penalize older Americans who continue to work.

## **ARTICLE XVI. Law and Order with Justice**

The Idaho Republican Party believes that individuals must be presumed innocent until proven guilty. After a person is convicted of a crime, however, we believe in swift and just punishment for the lawbreaker and timely payment of restitution to victims. Courts and the prosecutors should continue to recognize the substantial rights and interests of crime victims in the judicial process.

### **Sec. 1 Gun Rights**

- A. We support the right of the individual to keep and bear arms, as guaranteed by the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and article one section eleven of the Idaho State Constitution.
- B. We commend efforts of organizations to preserve and foster that right, including Right-to-Carry laws.
- C. We believe the federal government should not regulate intrastate ammunition and firearms sales.
- D. We believe in protection of the American firearms industry against harassing lawsuits that blame them for the acts of criminals.
- E. We call for more enforcement of current laws against violent criminals, not more “gun control” aimed at law-abiding citizens.
- F. We strongly oppose the United States entering into any international agreements or treaties which would undermine, limit or interfere with the individual right to own and bear arms and ammunition.

### **Sec. 2 Death Penalty**

We believe the death penalty is an appropriate consequence for the most heinous crimes, and that further reform should be made to the appellate process so the penalty can be carried out in a timely process.

### **Sec. 3 Drug Use**

- A. We recognize the dreadful consequences of drug and substance abuse in our society, and we call upon our national, state and local leaders to refocus efforts to discourage drug use and rehabilitate drug users. We encourage all Idaho citizens, and their religious, civic, and community organizations, to be actively engaged in this effort.
- C. We support creative alternative sentencing, such as drug courts, and treatment for nonviolent drug offenders.

### **Sec. 4 Incarceration of Criminals**

- A. We recognize the enormous financial burden placed upon society by criminals. Therefore, we support requiring inmates, to the extent they are capable, to perform labor or otherwise contribute to the cost of their incarceration.
- B. We support programming and education in the corrections system to rehabilitate offenders.

## **Sec. 5 Juvenile Justice**

A. We support accountability for and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.

B. We support dealing with youthful offenders early to reduce future impact to the welfare and correction systems.

## **ARTICLE XVII. National Defense**

The Idaho Republican Party believes in peace through strength, and that having and keeping the strongest military in the world is essential to preserving our liberties. We believe we should never sacrifice liberty for security and oppose any limitations or incursions on the constitutional freedoms, rights, and liberties of American citizens. We strongly support the Idaho National Guard under the command of Idaho's governor.

### **Sec. 1 Veterans**

We believe that America owes her continued freedom to the service of military veterans. We reinforce our commitment to providing their needs and honoring them with the highest degree of respect and appreciation.

### **Sec. 2 National Missile Defense**

We support an effective National Missile Defense System to protect American citizens. We oppose efforts to re-enter the ABM Treaty or any other treaty restricting America's ability to protect itself from attack.

### **Sec. 3 Mountain Home Air Force Base**

We support the Mountain Home Air Force Base in its vital mission in protecting Idaho and the nation. We recognize and value the economic contribution that the base makes to our State.

### **Sec. 4 Securing the Border**

We believe that securing the national border must be a priority for our country.

### **Sec. 5 Combating Terrorism**

We support efforts to combat terrorism within the scope of the constitution, including the use of military force.

### **Sec. 6 Command of Forces**

We believe American combat troops should not be used as "world policemen." UN combat operations should be supported by a multi-national coalition, and when U. S. forces are committed in UN combat operations, the United States should retain ultimate command of its forces.

**ARTICLE XVIII. Election of Idaho Supreme Court Justices**

The Idaho Republican Party opposes any attempt to undermine the constitutional rights of the people to select justices in an open and competitive election process.