

Libertarian Party of Maryland Program

First Steps Towards Freeing the Citizens of the Free State

The purpose of the Libertarian Party of Maryland is to use the political process to promote freedom as the primary value in the organization of a healthy society. To that end, it seeks to elect Libertarians to public office, influence other elected and appointed officials, and move public opinion toward supporting increased liberty in our daily affairs. Our liberties were not curtailed overnight and we do not expect them to be restored overnight. This program represents our first steps toward restoring our freedoms.

Education

Encourage variety in education through local control, including:

- Allowing for increased parental choice within the government public school system (e.g. tax credits, vouchers, school district selection, etc.);
- Supporting small autonomous schools within the larger school buildings;
- Allowing K-12 neighborhood schools (reducing busing costs);
- Encouraging privately funded K-12 scholarships for non-government educational activities;
- Discouraging government interference and control with home schooling;
- Encourage counties to elect school boards.

Open and Responsible Government

- Create or maintain small, single member legislative districts at the state and local levels. This will encourage politicians to be accountable to their constituents for their actions.
- Take steps to create a nonpartisan redistricting process. Politicians should not be able to choose who votes for them.
- Work to decentralize the governmental bodies in Maryland. Politicians should respect the right of local communities to govern themselves and not micro-manage every aspect of peoples' lives. Political decisions should be made at the lowest feasible level in order to encourage civic participation.

Job and Wealth Creation without Corporate Welfare

Reduce government spending and lower the tax burden by:

- Ending public funding for stadiums, hotels, concert halls, etc., and stopping unfunded mandates;
- Promoting economic growth by restructuring the tax system in order to eliminate subsidies or special tax breaks to businesses;
- Reforming licensing laws that unfairly restrict competition, thus allowing the creation of more jobs and business opportunities.

Secure Property Rights

- Forbid government entities from abusing the power of eminent domain in order to transfer private property to privileged individuals.
- Phase out government entities that compete against the private sector, such as the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO).

Land Use, Transportation, and the Environment

Encourage private redevelopment of vacant and underused urban land and remove developmental pressure on farms and wilderness lands by:

- Removing subsidies to developers, such as publicly funded infrastructure for new developments;
- Encouraging efficient land use by reducing the tax on buildings and property improvements, leaving only assessments on land itself;
- Revising zoning laws to allow the development of self-sufficient communities.

Transportation systems in the compact communities resulting from the above policies would increase pedestrian, rail, and mass transportation relative to automobile traffic.

Prevent pollution and increase environmental awareness by making polluters pay for their irresponsibility by facing strict civil liability. Promote free market environmentalism to solve problems.

Crime and Public Safety

- Free up our law enforcement resources by concentrating efforts on crimes against persons and property, rather than non-violent offenders.
- Stop any use of "asset forfeiture" until the property owner has been properly convicted of a crime in the judicial system. Seizure of property before a conviction is an un-American policy of "guilty until proven innocent."
- Promote medical treatment, rather than prison sentences, for those who abuse alcohol or drugs.
- Stopping the national War on Drugs will reduce profit of the drug trade, resulting in a decrease in crime.
- Permit the carrying of firearms with training and a background check (shall-issue). This will allow law-abiding citizens the constitutional right to arm themselves to protect their homes and liberties. Waiting periods, bans, and registration may actually increase crime.