

## 09 – Government and Political Reform

Our government derives its legitimacy solely from, and is answerable to, the people. We are committed to a representative democracy that encourages maximum active participation, a voting process that is legitimate, fair, transparent, and open to all citizens, and a principle that requires responsibility from voters and accountability from those they elect.

### **We believe:**

- We must restore the balance of power among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of our Federal government and completely restore Constitutional rights;
- We must restore and preserve the integrity of our electoral processes throughout the nation;
- The commonwealth should be used to support the common good, taxes should be levied fairly and spent frugally, and a balanced budget should be a high priority;
- Government is unique and not a business, with very different functions and purposes, and the need for its services increases during economic downturns; to provide essential services and safety for its citizens, government must levy taxes and enforce laws and regulations for the good of all;
- Government should be conducted honestly, transparently, fairly, and compassionately for the benefit of all, and protected from undue influence by corporate and special interests;
- Government officials must be held to the highest standards of ethical conduct;
- No American citizen should be removed from the voting rolls or otherwise constrained from participating in an election for which they are eligible;
- Political activities must be non-violent.

### **We call for:**

- Curtailing the influence of special interests on our political processes, including contribution and spending limits, as an integral part of campaign finance reforms, and legislation remedying the deleterious effects of *Citizens United v. FEC*;
- Public financing of campaigns and full disclosure of sources of all campaign funds;
- Legislation to reverse the protected status of monetary contributions as “free speech”;
- Conducting all elections either with carefully supervised paper ballots or open-source software, with a verifiable record of all votes;

- 42 • Significantly shortening the process of selecting Presidential nominees, to  
43 avoid protracted distractions from the business of governing and to allow for  
44 accessible and meaningful citizen participation;
- 45 • Campaign and debate processes that include third-party and so-called  
46 second-tier candidates;
- 47 • Guaranteed access to voting in all elections for military service members and  
48 American government workers overseas;
- 49 • Immediate restoration of voting rights of felons upon completion of their  
50 prison sentences;
- 51 • Full Congressional representation for residents of the District of Columbia  
52 and statehood for any United States Territory that votes for it;
- 53 • A Constitutional amendment providing for direct election of the United  
54 States President or de facto abolition of the Electoral College so that the role  
55 of small states and narrow pluralities in larger states is not unduly magnified;
- 56 • Restrictions on former state and federal elected officials from lobbying for  
57 four years after leaving office;
- 58 • Rescinding those sections of the Patriot Act that abrogate rights guaranteed in  
59 the Constitution and the Bill of Rights;
- 60 • Reinstatement of laws requiring broadcast license holders to provide equal  
61 airtime to political candidates as a condition of their FCC license, and  
62 reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine;
- 63 • The use of taxpayer-funded scientific research to produce the best available  
64 science to inform policy decisions affecting our health, safety, and  
65 environment;
- 66 • Strengthening the wall of separation between church and state by eliminating  
67 taxpayer funding for religious institutions or "faith-based" initiatives, and  
68 protecting full freedom for all religions and personal belief systems, including  
69 freedom from government interference;
- 70 • A federal legislative process that curtails filibusters, and ends anonymous  
71 holds on appointments and other dilatory tactics;
- 72 • Establishing a cabinet-level Department of Peace and Nonviolence whose  
73 Secretary will advise the President on issues both domestic and international  
74 in scope, giving peace a place, voice, and budget at the highest levels of the  
75 United States government;
- 76 • All United States Territories and protectorates, including the Mariana Islands,  
77 as well as Guantanamo Bay, to be subject to U. S. law including labor laws,  
78 due process, habeas corpus, and laws against illegal detention;
- 79 • Adequate and equitable funding of public service options for all young adults  
80 when they complete their secondary education or reach maturity, including  
81 military, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Vista, and other avenues of service;
- 82 • The complete and uncompromised restoration of habeas corpus for all  
83 citizens and non-citizens alike;

- 84 • Increased funding for human and social services and reduced defense  
85 spending;
- 86 • The restoration and strict enforcement of the pre-Bush Administration  
87 version of the Freedom of Information Act;
- 88 • Adherence to all open meeting laws;
- 89 • All regulatory agencies to be fully funded and fully accountable;
- 90 • A review of all Washington laws on “eminent domain” to ensure that no  
91 private property is taken for private purposes and that all seizures are  
92 compensated in a fair and equitable manner, and enforcement of these laws;
- 93 • Extending elective-office contribution limits to include contributions made to  
94 support or oppose ballot measures;
- 95 • Accounting for tax exemptions as expenditures in the state budget;
- 96 • The automatic sunseting of non-performing state tax exemptions after 5  
97 years.

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99 **We oppose:**

- 100 • Outsourcing, privatizing, or handling by any non-public entity of any part of  
101 the voting process;
- 102 • Privatizing, outsourcing or off-shoring of governmental public services,  
103 including prisons;
- 104 • The privatization of public infrastructure, including water;
- 105 • Suppression, manipulation and distortion of scientific research and findings  
106 for partisan political ends;
- 107 • The use of secrecy, psychological operations and disinformation/  
108 manipulation campaigns that leave the United States citizenry uninformed or  
109 misinformed;
- 110 • Adding projects to bills by “earmarking funds” without the knowledge of  
111 other legislators and the public;
- 112 • Executive branch secrecy beyond legitimate national security needs or  
113 personnel matters;
- 114 • Presidential “signing statements” being used to countermand the will of  
115 Congress;
- 116 • Unfunded mandates.