

Massachusetts Republican Party

2010 Platform

*Respectfully Submitted, March 24, 2010 by the
Massachusetts Republican Party Platform Committee*

Paul Adams
Jim Aldred
Christina Bain
Greg Casey
Nick Connors
Brock N. Cordeiro
Rob Eno
Helen Hatch
Stephen B. Jeffries
Linda Jewell
Kevin Jourdain
Nancy Luther
Sandi Martinez
Monica Medeiros
Mike Potaski
Matthew R. Sisk
Susan Slade
Sen. Bruce Tarr
Jeff Wilson
Shari Worthington
Stephen Zykofsky

John Sivoletta, Advisor to the Chairman
Jennifer Nassour, Chairman, Massachusetts Republican Party
Matt Kinnaman, Chairman, 2010 Platform Committee

PREAMBLE

The Massachusetts Republican Party believes in the power of the individual over the power of government and that government must at all times be held accountable to the people.

We believe that Massachusetts—the cradle of the American Republic— can once again be a national leader in prosperity and opportunity for all families and individuals. In pursuit of this promise, we support the following priorities, principles and positions.

Accountability

Massachusetts Republicans stand for more control by the people over their government. We advocate smaller government that is honest and better serves the citizens. Recent misguided actions by some in the majority on Beacon Hill encourage the opposite – more government control over the lives and earnings of the people of the Commonwealth and the creation of massive fiscal problems through the expansion of ineffective government programs. Massachusetts Republicans reject the climate of public corruption perpetuated by some on Beacon Hill that has produced no fewer than three former Speakers of the House who have been indicted on felony corruption charges. We stand side by side with those citizens of the Commonwealth who believe that this must now end.

Recent elections, both nationwide and in Massachusetts, demonstrate that the public believes that incumbent Democrats must be held accountable for these types of deceptions and failures. Massachusetts Republicans believe that the only way for citizens to assess the performance of their government and make informed decisions to hold their representatives and government bureaucrats accountable is through transparency. Internet search technology has made information easy to access and analyze. Indeed, Massachusetts has a burgeoning technology industry, and yet, the state government lags behind the national curve in making information available to its citizens via the Internet. We commend the work of private entities like the Pioneer Institute, which is promoting transparency, and recognize that these private actors need strong allies in the public sector.

At least eighteen other states have instituted measures such as one-click access to easy-to-analyze state budget data through the Internet. Our citizens should have access to a well-maintained online database of government expenditures, budget data, government contracts, public employee salaries, and any other relevant information so that they know how the government is spending their money.

Massachusetts Republicans also support the aggressive use of the public ballot initiative and encourage its continued use to strive for tax repeals, term limits, and similar measures to control the unbridled growth of government.

We will continue to find sensible ways to make government more transparent and accountable with the aim of improving the quality of life for all citizens of the Commonwealth.

Be it hereby resolved, The Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Supports the selection of independent auditing firms to conduct comprehensive audits of the executive offices, legislature and Judiciary to weed out waste, fraud and abuse.
- Supports term limits for legislators in the short-term and a study of the feasibility and benefits of a part-time legislature over the long-term.
- Urges the creation of a single robust, comprehensive and independent state auditing function.
- Opposes the passage of any unfunded mandate by the legislature that affects our Commonwealth's municipalities and demands the removal of existing unfunded mandates on those municipalities.
- Demands a transparent state budget process that includes both the creation and maintenance of a web site that is easily searchable by our citizens and that details every cost, recipient, and purpose of every appropriation funded by the state as well as a requirement that the budget legislation be posted online well in advance of the date of the vote. Our state checkbook should be open for inspection by our citizens, not depletion by the Democratic majority on Beacon Hill.
- Demands that all legislation and amendments be posted online well in advance of the date of the vote and that each member of the legislature has a reasonable opportunity to read a bill before he or she must vote on it. This addresses the common, scurrilous practice of the leadership of the other party in the legislature of holding closed-door meetings on legislation prior to a vote to deny members the ability to read the legislation. It also addresses the disrespectful practice of denying our citizens the ability to testify in public about legislation.
- Supports a Truth in Testimony mandate that requires all committee witnesses to detail the amount of state funding they and their employers currently receive and, in the case of associations, how much state money their members would receive from the proposed legislation. This is supported on the federal level by the Republican Party.

- Encourages the study of the benefits of the introduction of pay-for-improved performance incentives for state and local government.
- Supports subjecting state programs to yearly performance reviews to justify their continued existence and encourages the consideration of zero-based budgeting. We support the concept of a Sunset Review Commission to ensure that state government programs do not outlive their usefulness.
- Supports a law requiring the General Court to enact a balanced budget at the beginning of each fiscal year and to suspend, without reimbursement, legislative salaries at any time the Commonwealth is operating without a full-year fiscal spending plan.

Economic Opportunity

At a time when the Commonwealth's unemployment rate has soared close to 10% (with local rates hovering near a staggering 20% in some areas), reaching heights not seen since the tail end of the era of oil embargoes and recession in 1976, the other party seeks ever-larger roles for government in regulating the private sector in areas such as finance and small business. Massachusetts Republicans, however, are steadfast in their conviction that reducing the role of government in the lives of our citizens by means such as cutting taxes and eliminating burdensome regulations are essential prerequisites to economic development.

We have stated repeatedly that economic growth benefits everyone in the Commonwealth because it translates into good jobs that lead to healthy, self-sufficient individuals and communities. While previous Republican governors have been committed to economic development, the current Democratic administration has lost sight, focusing instead on producing the next tax increase or big government program.

Massachusetts Republicans recognize the pain and frustration that job loss engenders and want to stop that cycle immediately. We have lost over 136,000 jobs since March 2008. As Scott Brown's victory – the first by a Republican in the Commonwealth in a campaign for the U.S. Senate since 1972 – shows beyond a doubt, the people have said, "enough!" We believe it is now incumbent upon us to work to continue the change that this electoral victory has started rather than return to the failed policies that have brought parts of the nation to its knees in this recession.

The Commonwealth enjoys enormously valuable assets that have historically been the source of growth, income and opportunity for its residents and businesses. Our highly educated work force, tradition of innovation, technological base, and availability of capital have been key drivers of economic development for our citizens. The Commonwealth's ability to leverage these assets to unleash the productive energies and economic opportunity that only a free market can provide is adversely affected by chronically high costs of doing business, excessive tax rates and regulatory burdens.

Massachusetts Republicans believe that economic freedom expands prosperity and optimism for all persons and, in so doing, creates jobs and a better quality of life. And as our national party has observed, this freedom is also the means through which families and individuals can maintain their independence from government, raise their children by their own rules, and build healthy communities of self-reliant neighbors.

Be it hereby resolved, The Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Affirms that we are the party of small business, which is the single greatest engine of economic growth and employment in our state.
- Supports a multi-year moratorium on new state regulations, with reasonable exceptions in cases of emergency. We support, in conjunction with this moratorium, a review of all currently pending regulations by state agencies that would require them to amend or rescind rules that are ineffective, contradictory, redundant, needlessly burdensome, that unnecessarily impede economic growth, or that have had unintended negative consequences.
- Supports a requirement that state agencies focus on the needs of those that they serve, as opposed to their own self-interests, and that those served be treated with efficiency, dignity and respect.
- Supports a requirement that all regulations, certifications and licensing documents be placed in one online web portal for easy access and that all regulations and permits must be adjudicated via objective applications and not through case-by-case negotiations which often favor politically connected insiders. This objective process would reduce corruption and foster predictability and consistency in the regulatory and permitting process.
- Supports a requirement for 90-day permitting and a streamlining of the permitting and zoning processes so that municipalities in the Commonwealth have a single set of requirements that cover a core set of key neighborhood businesses.
- Supports a multi-year state moratorium on increases in fees.
- Supports a multi-year state moratorium on any new business taxes.
- Supports efforts to diversify our economic base to mitigate the impact of any future economic downturns and provide employment options for those of our citizens who lose their jobs during such downturns.
- Supports investing in our citizens to make the Commonwealth more globally competitive by helping fulfill our promise of world-class learning. This would not be done by simply providing money to failing school systems that have no accountability, but by things such as strengthening our math and science

curricula, using state incentives to match teacher performance with pay, and lifting charter school caps.

Education

The Massachusetts Republican Party has high hopes for students and our education system. We look to maximize human potential; fine-tune the skills, capabilities, and attitudes of our students in order to help our economy remain prosperous and competitive; and facilitate a vibrant, participative democracy in which an informed electorate is capable of thinking independently.

Massachusetts is the birthplace of public education. According to the United States Department of Education, in 2007 Massachusetts ranked first in the country in 4th Grade Mathematics, first in 4th Grade Reading, first in 8th Grade Mathematics, and first in 8th Grade Reading. While these statistics are promising, there is little else to brag about. The US public education system spends more per student than all but a few countries. Yet, on average, our students perform at or below the level of those in other economically advanced countries.

A vast majority of schools in Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Fall River, New Bedford, Lowell, Lawrence, Holyoke, and Brockton have been placed on the federal 'In Need of Improvement' list, as mandated under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Today, in these urban districts, nearly 70% of the students score in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories on the MCAS test. This is unacceptable and points to glaring inconsistencies in the quality of education afforded to our children, an inconsistency which often influences those with financial means to abandon their local public schools for more promising private options.

- Nationally, Massachusetts has been in the top 10 in per-pupil spending for the past 30 years. Since Proposition 2 ½ was enacted in 1980, the growth of per-pupil spending in Massachusetts has averaged 6.4%, well above the national average. But in the latest international student comparisons, average math achievement in Massachusetts was lower than in the leading Asian nations and Belgium. Singapore, which topped the international student achievement charts in 2007, spent \$9,185 per student, 26.7% less than Massachusetts, while outperforming Massachusetts in measurements of math proficiency.
- In 2007, Massachusetts spent \$11,858 per student, up 20% from 2002. Yet, enrollment in public schools in Massachusetts has fallen by 24,000 students, or 2.5%, over the past five years. The total number of students in Massachusetts public schools is 936,000. The decline started several years ago. But spending doesn't guarantee a quality education. If we do not successfully address the failings of our public school system, the decline is likely to accelerate over the next decade.

The archaic education system in the U.S. is under pressure from the market and from new technology. It is vital that we increase student achievement in science and mathematics to the level attained by high-performing nations such as Finland, Korea and Japan. Doing so would result in increased U.S. economic growth and greater individual opportunity across the American population.

While change is often disruptive, much can be accomplished with strategic prodding of the education system at crucial points.

Be it hereby resolved, the Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Seeks to empower parents with a choice regarding the education of their children, in whatever school setting the parent chooses: public school, private institution, charter school, or home school.
- Supports the revision of metrics and rewards so that schools place their primary emphasis on teaching math, science, reading and social studies (especially US history and civics), and that they must answer to parents and students when they stray from this curriculum.
- Encourages rigorous academic screening for qualified instructors and students.
- Supports rewarding teachers, both individually and collectively, for improved student performance. A performance-based approach will encourage the best teachers to remain active and to innovate. This approach will also help individual students in the Commonwealth maximize their own potential and produce better results, our primary goal.
- Recognizes that public K-12 and higher education are among the Commonwealth's most important endeavors, providing unlimited potential for the advancement of prosperity and the quality of life of all our citizens. Accordingly, it is essential that public education focus not on bureaucracy or spending but on maximizing the learning opportunities of each and every student. Our institutions of higher learning are critical to the fulfillment of individual potential and increased statewide economic growth and opportunity, and they must be supported and strengthened.

Energy

The Massachusetts Republican Party promotes a policy of private, free market-driven development of diverse, clean, efficient, renewable, and alternative green energies. Massachusetts Republicans embrace technology as a means of improving our environment, enhancing our economic strength, increasing employment and income opportunities, and lowering the cost of energy for working families.

Massachusetts has a more diverse power generation portfolio than many other states. The mix includes natural gas (40 percent of generation), coal (25 percent), nuclear (15 percent), and renewables (4 percent), with oil making up less than 1 percent. Increasing renewables' share of power generation would reduce energy costs, stimulate the growth of in-state energy industries, and reduce air pollution from coal combustion.

Massachusetts Republicans call upon the Commonwealth to become a national leader in the development of various domestic energy resources by removing economic and regulatory obstacles that inhibit private-sector innovation and investment. Accordingly, Massachusetts Republicans reject quotas for particular modes of energy generation and the bureaucracy required to supervise them, such as are embodied in the "Green Communities Act" of 2008.

Likewise, subsidizing some energy generation modes while penalizing others exemplifies not only unfair application of government power, but also inefficient use of the taxpayers' money. A diverse and affordable energy supply is possible only when private interests invest. They invest when rules are stable, consistent, simple and applied uniformly.

Be it hereby resolved, the Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Favors an expedited permitting process that promptly approves, modifies, or rejects energy projects.
- Supports local control over the permitting of energy-related projects.
- Supports prompt update of state building codes to allow rapid adoption of more cost-effective, more energy-efficient and less toxic construction materials and techniques. Let Massachusetts become known again as a market in which innovation flourishes, where it makes sense to start and operate construction-related businesses.
- Supports all reasonable efforts to achieve state and national energy independence, including traditional and alternative energies, in a manner that does not increase public expenditures and subsidies. We desire domestic exploration, drilling, nuclear power, refining of oil and the increased production of natural gas energy resources as a means of increasing the economic viability of the Commonwealth and the nation.
- Demands the breaking of the monopoly that currently controls electricity generation and distribution in the Commonwealth. We believe that such monopoly busting will lead to a decrease in energy expenses as well as an increase in customer service.
- Rejects any attempt to raise taxes on gasoline or other sources of fuel.
- Rejects any attempt to enact a windfall profits tax.

The Environment

The Massachusetts Republican Party has the utmost respect for both our environment and natural resources. We embrace the conservation legacy of one of our great Republican presidents, Theodore Roosevelt. We believe that protecting, preserving, and conserving our environment is critically important to the personal health and wealth of our citizens and our posterity.

Our actions are informed by traditional conservative values. Edmund Burke, the founder of modern conservatism, taught us that we are obligated to be good stewards of what we have inherited and pass it on to future generations. The 20th century conservative writer Russell Kirk, a favorite author of Ronald Reagan's, put it succinctly: "Nothing is more conservative than conservation."

As the original conservationists, Republicans pioneered protection of lands and waters with outstanding scenic, recreation, and ecological value for the benefit of future generations. As population and demand for resources grows, land and water conservation is timely for protecting Massachusetts's high quality of life and ensuring the Commonwealth's competitiveness for attracting new businesses and economic development.

We believe that land and water protection is most effective when private property owners are treated as partners for finding solutions, rather than obstacles for government agencies to browbeat.

While open spaces protected by private organizations and by state and local governments are important, it is equally important to guard against premature conversion of working forests and farms, which have significant scenic and ecological value.

From Cape Cod to the Berkshires and everywhere in between, the Massachusetts Republican Party cherishes the great diversity of ecosystems and wildlife that comprise our great Commonwealth.

Be it hereby resolved, the Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Supports the protection of our wildlife and their habitats through the strict enforcement of existing environmental law pursuant to the principle of local municipal control.
- Recognizes the importance of proper stewardship of our land, its management and protection. We support the initiative of municipalities to decide for themselves how best to zone their property as well as which parcels shall be preserved as either historical or open spaces for farming or recreational usage.
- Recognizes the vital importance of our oceans and calls for public and private collaboration on the crucial matter of protecting our fisheries while promoting the

current and future viability of the fishing industry.

- Supports all reasonable and economically viable solutions to address scientifically or medically proven sources of pollution. Massachusetts Republicans support public and private cooperation to reduce the production and proliferation of such contamination.
- We believe that all citizens should have equal and fair access to sound, sustainable, safe, and efficient public transportation, and that state investment in transportation infrastructure should be made with prudence. Thus, no project should be funded unless it is evaluated in terms of its costs, benefits, liabilities, and contributions to the economic health and quality of life of our state.
- Takes great pride in our system of state parks and zoos. We support adequate funding for these institutions within our annual budgets.
- Observes that there is no scientific consensus on the issue of man-made global climate change. We therefore insist that the burden of proof is upon those who would take draconian measures to radically alter our economy at the expense of the jobs of working families to demonstrate that such measures would provide a reasonable solution to climate change.
- Supports legislation to prohibit local governments from using eminent domain to foster private development.
- Supports an expansion of a property tax reduction and other incentives for working forests and farmlands to remain in production.
- Believes the Commonwealth should expand assistance for working landowners to protect and maintain wildlife habitat on their property.
- Supports a review of the land donation income tax credit and its expansion as appropriate.
- Believes that the Commonwealth should provide grants to local governments to experiment with new zoning concepts, such as low-impact development.

Healthcare

The Massachusetts Republican Party believes that everyone should have access to affordable health insurance and be allowed to grow old gracefully and with dignity. Massachusetts is fortunate to have one of the most advanced healthcare systems in the world. Patients come here from every state and nation to receive care from our renowned teaching hospitals and healthcare facilities. The Romney administration passed first-in-the-nation health insurance legislation, which requires every Massachusetts citizen to

purchase health insurance. We recognize that the Democratic implementation of this legislation is causing many problems, primarily in the cost to the Commonwealth, and is thereby distorting some of the worthy goals of this program. Therefore, we are recommending a series of reforms be enacted in a timely manner to ensure the success of the Massachusetts model along the lines of its original intent.

Be it hereby resolved, the Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Recognizes that because there is a lack of adequate health facility alternatives, many people are using costly emergency rooms for treatment that could be provided at the same level for a much lower cost by another means. We have seen success in the use of the day surgery model and facilities. We recommend this model be duplicated for the expansion of walk-in clinics for the diagnosis and treatment of minor conditions to offset the overcrowding of emergency rooms at hospitals.
- Believes that the American Medical Association, medical schools and healthcare providers need to increase the availability of general practitioners and nurse practitioners in the Commonwealth. Following the law of supply and demand, an increased supply of trained MD's, NP's and PA's would decrease the cost to our citizens as it has in other professions. We must increase the number of medical school seats.
- Supports a requirement that non-resident students, who receive the benefits of the finest medical training in the world as offered by our universities, practice in the United States for a certain number of years in order to share those benefits with the citizens of the Commonwealth. This would eliminate some of the supply stresses and ease some of the overwork that many face in medical school, residency and beyond, which often results in burnout and errors.
- Believes that, just as the Board of Bar Overseers regulates and controls lawyers and provides a process for recording and investigating complaints, the medical profession should begin serious policing of the medical profession. This would help protect doctors and patients and provide a mechanism to control the filing of lawsuits.
- Generally supports tort reform concepts that limit malpractice awards, with certain exceptions.
- Believes prescription drug prices need to be set through free market mechanisms. We can no longer bear the cost of financing new and innovative drugs which are then used by the rest of the world at a fraction of the cost that we pay in the Commonwealth. And with the passing of NAFTA, Americans should be allowed to purchase prescription drugs from Canada or across state lines.

- Recognizes that the tax code needs to be fair and equitable to all. Offering tax incentives to one group while excluding another typically engenders inter-group conflict, which is unhealthy for our nation and Commonwealth. We Republicans reject this behavior. All taxpayers should be extended the ability to deduct any and all healthcare and medical drug costs on their MASS TAX FORM 1 – this benefit should not be limited solely to those groups currently favored by the tax code.
- Support the development of a universally recognized system for digitizing health records which would end the need for each health facility to develop its own record-keeping system. This would generate huge savings in the industry by streamlining record processing thereby lowering administrative costs. We also recognize the critical importance of maintaining patient privacy in such a system.
- Advocates that the cost of health insurance should be based upon competitive market forces. The consumers who purchase directly from the Commonwealth Connector or from an insurance company directly should be priced under a group rate – the self-insured group.
- Advocates that performance data for hospitals be put online so that patients can make informed decisions about their health care choices. In the interest of increasing the efficiency of the healthcare market, this data will assist consumers in making well-informed decisions.

Taxes and Spending

The Massachusetts Republican Party believes that excessive taxing and spending by state government adversely affects economic prosperity and that smaller, less intrusive government is the preferred path for the Commonwealth. We are distressed that our Government tends to increase spending over time at an unsustainable rate so that every economic downturn, such as the current recession, is met with increased taxes that seldom if ever get repealed or lowered once prosperity returns. Since 2001, “on-budget” government spending in the Commonwealth grew from \$22 billion to \$33 billion, a compounded annual rate of 4%, even in the midst of the current economic crisis. This approach, fueled by the Democratic Party, is unsustainable and reckless.

When assessing the size and scope of state government, it is necessary to remember that many billions of dollars have been moved “off-budget.” The two most well-known examples are \$8.5 billion in debt transferred to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and \$2.5 billion in debt transferred to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. The total annual spending by all Commonwealth activities approximates \$51 billion. Servicing the debt alone on the Commonwealth’s existing obligations requires that other forms of spending be reduced lest the Commonwealth experience a reduction in our credit rating. Simply put, state government is too big and too inefficient!

Be it hereby resolved, the Massachusetts Republican Party:

- Urges fiscal restraint and supports lowering taxes to encourage economic growth.
- Supports a rollback of the state sales tax to 5%.
- Supports a rollback of the state income tax to 5%. This would lower the income tax back to the level that existed prior to the Dukakis economic debacle. We recall that then-Governor Dukakis promised that the income tax increase would be temporary. Notwithstanding an initiative petition adopted by the citizens to return it to 5%, it remains above that percentage rate today.
- Believes that our state government should not be so profligate in spending during economic periods of growth that it must resort to raising taxes during recessions.
- Believes that government should be reduced in size, scope and intrusiveness to promote a business friendly environment that provides for full employment for the citizens of Massachusetts.
- Supports a constitutional amendment requiring a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate in order to increase Massachusetts taxes of any kind.

Values

Ensuring Equal Treatment for All

True to the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, Republicans believe that unalienable individual rights and the responsibilities that go with them are the foundation of freedom. Informed by the essential guarantees of the Declaration of Independence, we affirm the inherent dignity and sanctity of human life. We consider discrimination based on sex, race, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, or national origin to be immoral, and we reject hatred, racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic prejudice, and religious intolerance. Precisely because we oppose discrimination, we reject preferences, quotas, and set-asides as the basis for any contractual or legal provision. We affirm the commonsense approach of the Chief Justice of the United States, John G. Roberts: the way to stop discriminating on the basis of race is stop discriminating, period. We also are opposed to modern-day slavery and human trafficking and respect the inherent dignity of all human beings and their right to freedom.

Freedom of Speech and of the Press

We support freedom of speech and freedom of the press as essential to a free society. We oppose reinstatement of the so-called Fairness Doctrine.

Preserving Private Property Rights

We believe that at the heart of liberty is the individual right to acquire, own, possess, enjoy, and dispose of private property, and we maintain that the presumption of all

judicial and legislative decisions must respect and protect this fundamental unalienable guarantee. We oppose the reasoning of the Supreme Court's *Kelo* decision, which undermined the foundation of property rights by allowing local governments to seize a person's home or land for arbitrary purposes. We call on the Massachusetts legislature to protect its citizens from the effects of the *Kelo* decision by passing appropriate legislation.

The Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms

We support and pledge to uphold the individual right of all law-abiding Americans to own and use firearms, in accordance with the guarantee of the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and Article XVII of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Religious Liberty

We support the Constitutional guarantee of individual religious freedom, and we oppose judicial and legislative attempts to eradicate faith, whether in symbol or practice, from public life.

We affirm every citizen's right to apply religious values to public policy and we support the right of faith-based organizations to participate fully in public programs without renouncing their beliefs, symbols, or hiring practices.

We support the First Amendment right of freedom of association for religious organizations, including the right of religious organizations to refrain from participation in public policies that violate their religious conviction.

Keeping Our Families and Communities Safe

We embrace a deep and profound respect for the law enforcement professionals who risk their lives to keep us safe, and we are committed to supporting them in vigorous action against crime.

We support mandatory sentencing provisions for gang conspiracy crimes, violent or sexual offenses against children, rape, and assault resulting in serious bodily injury. We oppose the granting of parole to dangerous or repeat felons. We support the court's option of imposing the death penalty, with strict safeguards, in first degree murder cases and accordingly we support the reinstatement of the death penalty in Massachusetts. We also support strengthening the registration and monitoring of sexual predators in our communities.

Respecting our Nation's Standing

The symbol of national unity to which we pledge allegiance is the American flag. By whatever legislative method feasible, the American flag and Massachusetts flag should be given legal protection against desecration. We condemn judicial decisions that deny children the opportunity to say the Pledge of Allegiance in public school.

Preserving Our Borders and Upholding the Rule of Law

We recognize the important contributions that immigrants have made to our state and our nation throughout history and we support all those who seek to enter our country legally and join their destiny with our common success.

Because of the respect we have for those who have worked hard to observe the law and become citizens, we oppose enfranchising those who break the law to enter our country with the rights and benefits to which lawful citizens are entitled. Such benefits funded by government include, but are not limited to, housing, education, fuel assistance and health insurance.

We have concern for every human being, however, and believe that assistance should always be offered to meet health, safety and medical needs.

National legislation and enforcement are vital for a coherent and strong immigration policy and we recognize Massachusetts must also assist in this effort. In this light, we denounce decisions by communities to declare themselves “sanctuary cities” for illegal aliens in open defiance of federal and state statutes that expressly prohibit such policies. We oppose the issuance of driver’s licenses to illegal aliens and the granting of in-state college tuition rates to illegal aliens.

The Right of Citizens to Redress Government

We support the right of the people of Massachusetts to redress their government through the initiative petition process. We oppose recent actions of the Massachusetts legislature to block constitutionally provided measures for citizen amendment of the state’s constitution.

Philosophy of Liberty

As Massachusetts Republicans, we favor civic virtue and oppose corrupt practices and aristocratic posturing on Beacon Hill. We understand, as John Locke explained over three-hundred years ago, that liberty is not license. It is, rather, an individual’s “freedom to do whatever he has a moral right to do.”¹

Liberty’s successful application depends upon a moral foundation laid down in families and advanced through education. According to John Adams, “Wisdom and knowledge, as well as virtue, diffused generally among the body of the people, [are] necessary for the preservation of their rights and liberties.” Said James Wilson, “Law and liberty cannot become the objects of our love, unless they first become the objects of our knowledge.”

Through our elected representatives and the courts, we agree to forego some measure of liberty in return for security in our persons and property and consistency in settling disputes. We further agree to share in funding certain public projects and programs, such as national defense, which are essential to our civil society. We empower government to

1 Rev. Robert L. Dabney, *A Defence of Virginia*, Google Books, page 252.

discourage monopoly and to police and settle neighborhood effects such as environmental pollution. Most else infringes upon liberty, and so we Republicans argue for private, voluntary alternatives to big government at every opportunity.

We Massachusetts Republicans rely on the Constitutions of the United States and Massachusetts to limit government's scope and separate its powers. Where government action is warranted, we favor a key principle of federalism, subsidiarity, that maintains government's funding and exertion of authority be as close as possible to the people affected. We expressly deny that government confers rights upon the citizen; it is the reverse.

Massachusetts Republicans, the party of Lincoln, insist that certain rights not only naturally belong to the people, but also that they cannot be sold, bartered, mortgaged or even voluntarily renounced. As the Declaration of Independence states, they are unalienable.

We Massachusetts Republicans understand that the advantages of liberty over a favor-dispensing group of incumbents from the other party on Beacon Hill may be unclear to the beneficiaries of those favors. Liberty is quiet, not proud, boastful or triumphal. It can be easily overlooked in a world of chaos and want. It falls to us to remind our fellows from time to time of liberty's immense benefits.