REPUBLICAN PLATFORM

2016
the states and the people retain authority over all unenumerated powers. In obedience to that principle, we condemn the current Administration's unconstitutional expansion into areas beyond those specifically enumerated, including bullying of state and local governments in matters ranging from voter identification (ID) laws to immigration, from healthcare programs to land use decisions, and from forced education curricula to school restroom policies. We pledge to restore the proper balance and vertical separation of powers between the federal government and state governments — the governments closest to, and most reflective of, the American people. We encourage states to reinvigorate their traditional role as the laboratories of democracy, propelling the nation forward through local and state innovation.

Big government undermines federalism through more than 1,000 grants-in-aid programs that consume more than one-sixth of the federal budget for matters that should be the exclusive responsibility of the states. Through these programs, money originating from state taxpayers is returned to the states, usually greatly reduced, with myriad strings attached. These grants turn state and local elected officials into agents of the federal government. The web of conditions and regulations — especially the requirement of matching funds that comes with federal grants — transforms recipients into appendages of the Washington bureaucracy. We call upon Congress to help a Republican president to reduce and ultimately eliminate this system of conditioned grants so that state and local taxpayers can decide for themselves what is best for their own communities.

Honest Elections and the Right to Vote

Honest elections are the foundation of representative government. We pledge to protect the voting rights of every citizen, as well as their rights of conscience when they are harassed or denied a job because of their contributions to a candidate or a cause. We support state efforts to ensure ballot access for the elderly, the handicapped, military personnel, and all legitimate voters. We urge state and local officials to take all appropriate steps to allow voters to cast their ballots in a timely manner. We are concerned, however, that some voting procedures may be open to abuse. For this reason, we support legislation to require proof of citizenship when registering to vote and secure photo ID when voting. We strongly oppose litigation against states exercising their sovereign authority to enact such laws. In addition, to guarantee that everyone’s vote is counted, we urge that electronic voting systems have a voter-verified paper audit trail. We urge every state to join the Interstate Voter Registration Cross Check Program to keep voter rolls accurate and to prevent people from voting in more than one state in the same election. To guard against foreign involvement in our elections, we call for vigilance regarding online credit card contributions to candidates and campaigns.

The members of our Armed Forces must not be denied the basic rights that they are defending for others. Our troops, wherever stationed, must be allowed to vote in a timely manner. We call upon the entire military chain of command to ensure the voting rights of our citizen soldiers.

The Constitution gives Congress authority to conduct the decennial census "in such Manner as they shall by Law direct." In order to preserve the principle of one person, one vote, we urge our elected representatives to ensure that citizenship, rather than mere residency, be made the basis for the apportionment of representatives among the states.