Kristen Dodd, W. Priest River Valley Precinct Committeeman –

Responses to the Idaho GOP Platform adopted on 6/15/2024

October 25, 2024

I agree with the vast majority of the Platform. There are parts where I would take it a step further in the direction of liberty and conservatism. I have highlighted my suggested changes or additions, by section below.

PREAMBLE –

Regarding "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, (U.S. Const. Art. IV §4), is the best guarantor of freedom in history." – I actually believe our US Constitution was watered down from the original intent of our founders, but it is better than any other governing document that I am aware of in the world. I also believe the best guarantor of freedom is having a moral people who play an active role in their government. I am under no illusion that our Constitution guarantees freedom, as we have seen the lines of freedom blurred and infringed upon little by little over time. However, I do believe we must protect the law of our land, the US Constitution, which was ultimately inspired by Christian principles and values.

Regarding "We believe Idahoans value and should preserve our national strength and pride while working to promote peace, freedom and human rights throughout the world." – I would remove the word 'pride', as I believe pride is at the root of all evil. I would replace it with 'principles or values'. I would also replace 'human rights' with God given rights, mainly because globalists have a separate set of "rights" that they call human rights. I would like to differentiate the two.

Regarding "We believe the Republican Party is the best vehicle for translating these ideals into positive and successful principles of government." – Any party is only as good as its platform and efforts to uphold it. I believe the Republican Party can be a great vehicle for translating these ideals IF we understand and defend what it means to be "Republican".

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Regarding Section 1. Fiscal Responsibility

"B. We believe Social Security must be stabilized, diversified, and privatized to allow expansion of individual retirement options." – This statement seems a bit conflicting to me. Privatizing, to me, would mean removing it as a responsibility in government. I actually would like to see that, but I also think that people who paid into that fund their entire lives, expecting to receive the benefits at retirement, should receive that. This is a convoluted mess that was created and continues to be further convoluted. For example, the DHW uses SS money to fund CPS/foster cases. This should not be happening. At minimum, I think this statement is oversimplified and could be better worded.

"E. We expect the government entity which mandates a program to provide the funding for its implementation." – I would rather this say that no new programs should be mandated or created that are outside of or beyond what the Constitution specifically authorizes, which is what F talks about. So, I suppose E could just be removed. If F were followed, E wouldn't really be necessary.

Regarding Section 2. Taxation

"H. We support a comprehensive overhaul of the federal tax system requiring universal participation." - I would like to see federal income taxes go away. The only real way to shrink the federal government is to stop funding programs and agencies that are outside of their Constitutional authority. I would like to see a portion of our state income taxes allocated to the federal government for the bare minimum of services, such as military, instead of the states being forced to agree to terrible MOU's in exchange for some of our tax dollars back. The states should be in control of the money flow instead of the federal government.

Regarding Section 5. State Legislature

"C. We support reduction of Idaho's income tax rates, and encourage a reduction in property taxes whenever possible." – I would change this to encourage a removal of indefinite property taxes that taxes owners on unrealized gains; and replace it with a tax that is definite and is only based on the price at the time of purchase.

F. This is long, so I won't copy/paste. This is about amending Art III, paragraph 2 of the ID Constitution - I would need to understand this one better to be able to support or disagree with it. I do not understand the consequences of it.

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT – no comments/changes

ARTICLE III. EDUCATION

Regarding Section 7: "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." – I would remove this from our Platform. I don't think this has anything to do with a Republican form of government or individual liberty. I find much of the higher education system to be a racket, and unnecessary for a large number of career paths. It serves a purpose, but I don't see any reason to include this in our Platform. And while this does not advocate for it, I would be clear that I do not support any of our tax dollars going towards higher education programs. I appreciate that this is mentioned later in the platform under Art XII, Labor.

ARTICLE IV. AGRICULTURE – no comments/changes

ARTICLE V. WATER

Regarding Section 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." – I would need to learn more about how much funding has gone towards the ID Constitutional Defense Fund and how it has been used. I'm not generally comfortable with ambiguous and subjective language like "adequately". I think this should be better defined.

ARTICLE VI. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT – no comments/changes

ARTICLE VII. ENERGY

Regarding Section 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." - I would need to learn more about CAES, how much of our tax dollars have been allocated to this agency and how it is spent before I determine if this is a proper role of government and if I agree with this.

ARTICLE VIII. IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORIES – no comments/changes

ARTICLE IX. PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS – no changes, although I might mention that more Republicans should read this one.

ARTICLE X. STATE AND FEDERAL LANDS – no comments/changes

ARTICLE XI. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT – no comments/changes

ARTICLE XII. ECONOMY

Regarding Section 3: Labor -
"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." – I am generally of the mindset that if the private sector can do it, let them, for most things. Government is WAY too big. So, I'm not a huge fan of this being in the Platform, unless the intent is to limit the pay of govt employees to NO MORE THAN what private sector employers pay. I also think something should be added to oppose the pensions that public employees receive at the tax payers' expense. Most private sector jobs do not offer comparable pensions.

ARTICLE XIII. HEALTH AND WELFARE – Additions: 1.) I think we should advocate for and encourage the end of welfare for anyone able to work. This would also greatly help solve our border/illegal alien issues, as many of them come here to receive handouts. 2.) I think we should work on doing a major overhaul on the CPS side of DHW. We should oppose Title IV-E Social Security funding of foster care. More should be done to protect families from medical kidnapping and mandatory reporting laws. There needs to be due process all of the time. Gag orders should be forbidden in family/CPS court. There needs to be more done to keep children with their families, with the exception of legitimate abuse and serious neglect situations…and those should still go through due process.

ARTICLE XIV. AMERICAN FAMILY – no comments/changes

ARTICLE XV. OLDER AMERICANS

Regarding "Section 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." – This is too vague for me. I would like for this to define "support" and what this means by having access to all services available. Which services? Access how? Is there a reason they wouldn't have access to the same services as anyone else? Are we talking about taxpayer funded services? Are those an appropriate role of the government or should they be handled privately?

ARTICLE XVI. LAW AND ORDER WITH JUSTICE

Regarding Section 1: Gun Rights – I would like to see something added opposing Red flag laws and the support of due process.

Regarding Section 3: Drug Use – "we call upon our national, state and local leaders to refocus efforts to discourage drug use and rehabilitate drug users." – I disagree that this should be a national issue. I believe this should be a state issue, if that.

Regarding Section 4: Incarceration of Criminals - I would like to see something added that states that no person should be incarcerated for a victimless crime.

ARTICLE XVII. NATIONAL DEFENSE

Regarding Securing the Border – "oppose any limitations or incursions on the constitutional freedoms, rights, and liberties of American citizens." – I would rephrase this to say "on our 'God given' freedoms, rights, and liberties that are protected by the Constitution". The Constitution does not grant us our rights. It only defends/protects.

Regarding Section 6: Combating Terrorism – "We support efforts to combat terrorism within the scope of the constitution, including the use of military force when authorized by Congress." – This should be better defined. It is too vague. Terrorism has been redefined in recent years, and this could be easily used against our own US Citizens, as a political attack.

Regarding Section 7: Command of Forces – "We believe American troops should not be used as "world policemen." UN operations should be supported by a multi-national coalition, and if U. S. forces are committed to UN operations by Congress, the United States should retain command and control of its forces." – While I agree that we should retain our command and control, I think we should support the separation from the UN, all together. I see more harm than benefit when it comes to the UN. The UN has influenced many of the Marxist, socialist, woke, and tyrannical ideals, organizations, taxpayer funded agencies, and agendas that we see negatively affecting our communities. The UN is a globalist entity that does not have our best interest in mind.

ARTICLE XVIII. ELECTION OF JUDGES AND IDAHO SUPREME COURT JUSTICES – I would like to see something added that supports the removal of judicial immunity for judges.

ARTICLE XIX. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY – no comments/changes

by Kristen Dodd, October 25, 2024