



INTRODUCTION TO THE EXTENDED PLATFORM OF THE INDEPENDENT PARTY OF OREGON

The Independent Party of Oregon (IPO) was formed ten years ago to give voice in Oregon to candidates and ideas stifled by the dominant two parties but popular among voters. The IPO initially did not adopt a rigid “platform” but instead focused on common sense issues that Oregonians from across the political spectrum supported - reforming elections to make them more responsive and less dominated by big money, protecting Oregon consumers, reducing government waste, and creating a business climate where small businesses and working families can thrive.

This approach led to great membership growth (now up to over 121,000). IPO has just completed its first election cycle as a major party. In November 2016, IPO ran several candidates for the Oregon Legislature and statewide offices.

We learned many lessons from this first cycle as a major party, chief among them is that voters want more information about what it means to vote for an Independent Party candidate. Our officers have recognized the need to expand our platform to to help voters and potential candidates know what the Independent Party stands for.

The expanded platform is based on the following criteria:

- Responses to the many member surveys the IPO has completed over the years, including the last survey in June 2016
- Feedback we’ve personally received from party activists.
- The positions of our various candidates who performed well.

In order to remain true to founding principles to promote a strong middle class against special interests, the planks we are advancing balance these considerations:

- fiscal responsibility
- fundamental fairness and equity
- recognition of Oregonians’ unique relationship to the environment and natural resources
- evidence-based, Scientific realism
- supporting small business

- respect for all who contribute to Oregon's welfare and compassion for those in need.

From this foundation we look forward to emphasizing the issues and solutions our members want to advocate in the coming election cycle.

We realize that some members and some IPO candidates will not agree with all of these priorities or remedies. We respect that and invite those members to consider whether, on balance, IPO still more closely represents their views better than another political party.

We are also hoping that many non-affiliated voters, and many Democrats and Republicans, will see in this platform planks that they can support and will want to join a party that is fiscally responsible, environmentally aware, socially tolerant, and dedicated to clean elections and government.

Our New Extended Platform identifies our party's important policy principles. Under each area of policy we've included a list of objectives and goals and some specific recommendations. We provide these as examples or starting points for further development of the platform, and welcome ideas for additional specific proposals.

The first platform planks we are releasing are on education and health care. In the coming weeks will be releasing planks on clean elections, civil rights, fiscal responsibility, the environment, small business and local communities, labor and the free market, government transparency and reform, and consumer protection.

We appreciate the work, input, and interest so many Oregonians have contributed to the growth of the Independent Party and look forward to this new chapter in its growth.

Signed

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