



Montana Republican Party Platform
Adopted June 25, 2016

Preamble

Why is this Platform important?

This Platform sets forth the Montana Republican Party's positions on major issues facing the citizens of the Treasure State. It is meant to communicate what the Party stands for; to instruct local, state, and federal GOP officeholders; and to serve as a basis for crafting strategies for both legislative and civic action.

What do Republicans believe?

The Montana Republican Party subscribes to a set of principles that transcend specific policy issues while guiding the positions the Party takes on those issues. These principles derive directly from the wisdom of America's Founders, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America.

Republicans believe "these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Republicans believe that to secure these God-given rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Republicans believe that the Constitution of the United States of America is a unique and binding compact, which defines a republican form of government designed to protect the rights of citizens by limiting the power of their government.

Republicans believe that the Constitution is as relevant today as it was on the day it was ratified. It is not an evolving, ever-changing document.

Republicans believe that centralization of political power invites the replacement of the rule of law by the rule of men and thus enables the rise of totalitarianism.

Republicans believe that each level of government should continuously strive to limit the scope of its own activity and to avoid infringing upon the lawful activities of free citizens.

Republicans believe in the dignity of each individual person and in promoting opportunities for all.

Republicans believe that a robust civil society—traditional families, churches, and various voluntary associations of free citizens—is essential for sustaining self-government.

Republicans believe that in the absence of free markets and secure property rights, personal and political freedom cannot long flourish.

Republicans believe in the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death, and that only parents have the right to direct all reproductive decisions for their minor children.

Who are the Republicans?

Montanan Republicans are men and women of all walks of life and of all creeds and colors. We are grateful to God for the quiet beauty of our state. We are united in viewing the United States of America as an exceptional nation that in its inception broke the historical norm. We celebrate being self-governing, free citizens. We recognize the debt we owe those citizens who came before us, and we gladly acknowledge our duty to pass the gift of liberty on to our children and grandchildren.

If you share these values, please join us.

Resolution on Platform Principles

WHEREAS, Republican solidarity in opposition to the Democrat socialist agenda is necessary to preserve the security of our country, our economic and political freedoms, and our way of life; and

WHEREAS, the Republican Party should welcome those with individual views, thus establishing the long standing tradition of the Big Tent GOP; and

WHEREAS, Republican faithfulness to its conservative principles and public policies as dictated by members of the GOP during convention and found in the Montana State Platform is necessary to maintain and restore the trust of the electorate in the Republican Party and a proven path that will lead to Republican electoral victories; and

WHEREAS, we understand the broad written form of the whole of the Montana GOP Platform provides a great narrative tool for discussing our beliefs, it is a mechanism to detail policy to support in legislation; and

WHEREAS, the MTGOP has a responsibility to develop a simple set of Principles based upon the MTGOP Platform, that could then be applied to all proposed legislation;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the MTGOP identifies the following ten (10) policy positions to be detailed in the Montana Republican Platform in a “Principles” section that shall be placed immediately after the Preamble and thus before the main body of planks;

- 1. Tax Policy:** Reduce taxes, eliminate corporate subsidies and enact a simplified tax code that is flat rate based.
- 2. Size of Government:** Adopt a tax and expenditures limitation (TEL), adopt a more transparent and accountable zero-based budget, only allow the growth of government to match the growth of the private sector, and privatize public services when possible.

3. **Scope of Government:** Market wage based pay and pension system; review and reform MCA to reduce onerous regulations; remove price control mechanisms, allowing the free market forces to work; and adopt a stronger legislative influence on the checks and balances of executive and judicial branches activities.
4. **Sanctity of life:** Support “all life is sacred” policies from conception to natural end of life with the exception of the death penalty. There will be no tax payer funding for abortions or suicides, parental notification and permission in all cases dealing with legal minors, and require tax payer supported medical services programs to provide ultrasounds and **all** available choices for individuals dealing with crisis pregnancies.
5. **Private Property:** Understand that a property’s owner has exclusive rights to determine the use of their deeded property including subdivision, and that government is prohibited from infringing on those rights without due process;
6. **Education:** Adopt school choice policies driven by parental control, reduce centralized control mechanisms embracing local control first, support transparent and locally accountable district budgets, and preserve the autonomy of private and home school institutions.
7. **Social Programs:** Adopt policies of “hand up” not “hand out” in all social programs, adopt accountability and eligibility standards that only help the truly needy, and implement measures that define the primary role of all social services to one of reducing dependency.
8. **Natural Resources:** Understand that the State of Montana has jurisdiction over all non-federal water rights, that the development of natural resource utilization is the best source of property tax burden reduction and high wage earning potential, that economic impacts are just as important as environmental impacts and the permitting process for this use needs to be timely.
9. **State Rights:** Support the 10th Amendment, reject all federal programs that do not include funding for the life of the mandate, believe that all Federal Law implemented in Montana must be based on Article 1 section 1 of the US Constitution, that every Montana elected official work to confine Federal power to its Constitutional limits, and study the transfer of Federal public lands to the state.
10. **Judicial:** We follow the Rule of Law narrowly construed and support that the county Sheriff is the CLEO, individuals are responsible for their actions, and criminals need to compensate victims. We reject that the role of the court is to regulate through litigation, support reforming the Grand Jury laws to better root out corruption, and support limiting the ability of the MT Supreme Court to abuse its power to protect themselves; and be further

RESOLVED, that upon the approval of this resolution, the MTGOP shall update the platform and these principles to reflect substantive changes made no later than 30 days after the end of the current platform convention and also distribute a copy of this resolution by email to each Republican member of the State Legislature, all Republican candidates for legislative office, and to each member of the Montana State Republican Central Committee within 30 days of the conclusion of the Platform Convention.

Platform Plank Statements

Agriculture

The Montana Republican Party recognizes agriculture as the premier industry, creating a tax base that sustains and maintains the Montana State economy. We support free market principles that expand markets for trade. We recognize agricultural producers are the best stewards of the land. We believe private ownership of property is a fundamental principle of our constitutional republic and do not support a further diminution of other private rights. Government's only function is to secure such rights.

American Indian Affairs

The Montana Republican Party supports American Indian Tribal Peoples and their treaties with the Federal Government. We affirm Montana Tribal Peoples as citizens of the state of Montana.

We also support a continued, expanded and mutually beneficial economic relationship between Tribal Peoples and the State of Montana.

In the interest of promoting financial independence, the Montana Republican Party supports Tribal Peoples' right to self-determination concerning the development of their resources.

Business and Labor

Preamble

The Montana Republican Party recognizes that free enterprise is the only economic system that promotes freedom and prosperity. We recognize the importance of new and existing Montana businesses as the source of economic growth in Montana. We support and encourage new capital investment in the Montana economy.

Employment

We encourage efforts to create, attract and retain high wage jobs for all Montanans. We believe that membership in labor bargaining units should be optional.

Worker's Compensation

We advocate a workers' compensation system that continues the reforms adopted by the 62nd Legislature that are fair and equitable to both employers and employees.

Government

We support efforts to reduce the size of government. The limited role of government in economic development is to facilitate competitive private sector growth. We believe government programs should be restricted to those services that cannot be provided by the private sector.

Regulations

We believe in a competitive market free of undue regulation, restriction, coercion, or interference from government. Regulations shall be kept to an absolute minimum.

Tort Reform

We are committed to pursuing tort reform legislation to ensure a more predictable legal climate and reduce the risks and costs of doing business.

Crime

General Principle

We support the concept of individual responsibility; that each person is accountable for his or her actions.

Truth in Sentencing

The public has a right to know, at the time of sentencing, the minimum amount of time a criminal will be incarcerated and under what conditions the criminal may be eligible for parole.

Supervision of Convicted Sexual Offenders

The Republican Party supports registration, monitoring, and supervision of convicted sexual offenders and timely notification to victims and local (city and county) law enforcement of the offender's pending release.

Internet Predation

Cyber-crime and child pornography are growing menaces that the legislature should continue to investigate and deal with appropriately.

School Safety

Every school must have the authority to expel, or otherwise discipline a student who brings a firearm or dangerous weapon into a school building or commits or incites others to commit an act of violence toward teachers and/or students. Every school also has the authority to expel, or otherwise discipline a student who brings illegal substances onto school property.

Youth Court

Youth Court should focus on responsibility and accountability through immediate, consistent, enforceable, consequences for those who violate the law. In the case of juvenile offenses, custodial parents or guardians must be a part of the restitution and rehabilitation process.

Corrections

We support a corrections system that:

- Provides public safety,
- Utilizes best practices to reduce recidivism,
- Addresses the impact of crimes to victims, and
- Requires community approval for community based corrections programs

Restitution

Criminals have an obligation to repay victims or victims' families for the cost of the crime. The restitution obligation should be addressed at sentencing and a portion of the offender's earnings should be applied to restitution.

Limit Appeals

We urge the government to expedite appeal(s) in death penalty cases and restrict frivolous lawsuits by inmates, recognizing that the costs are borne by the taxpayers of Montana.

Jury Authority

We reaffirm the principle espoused by our nation's founders that our court system belongs to the people, not the government. We recognize both the power and the moral obligation vested in juries to secure justice by judging both the facts of a case and application of the law itself. We support requiring judges to fully inform jurors of their constitutional rights and responsibilities.

Drugs and Alcohol

The legislature should continue its efforts to deal effectively with those who drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We recognize the danger that substance abuse poses to our society. We support stronger penalties for repeat offenders. We support alternatives and options to reduce recidivism.

Parental Rights

Parents shall be allowed to reasonably discipline their children without legal consequences.

Consistency in Firearms Laws

Although the Montana Constitution gives the Board of Regents “full power” to “supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System,” it does not give the Board any authority to amend, alter, or abolish the Montana Constitution, nor does it give the University System the authority to deny citizens of Montana the rights they have reserved to themselves from government interference in the Montana and United States Constitution, including the right to keep and bear arms.

Economic Development

The Montana Republican Party is committed to fostering a business friendly environment through less government and more freedom, and eliminating barriers to economic development. We advocate for:

- Eliminating regulations that inhibit development and business activity,
- Reasonable, consistent, and timely permits,
- Reforming or eliminating state agencies and departments that restrict economic development,
- A government culture that emphasizes customer service over regulation and enforcement,
- Reducing or eliminating taxes that hinder development,
- Lowering workers’ compensation insurance rates,
- Free market development of Montana’s diverse industries, resources, and technologies,
- A constitutional government that is predictable, equitable, and follows the rule of law,
- A robust system of public and private education that creates a qualified, competent, and competitive workforce,
- Eliminating government activities that favor certain industries and companies at the expense of others, and
- An honest and stable currency system that encourages savings and investment.

Education

The Montana Republican Party supports quality educational opportunities for all Montanans.

We recognize that educating Montana's children, which takes place in homes, churches, and schools is ultimately the right and responsibility of parents and is essential to maintaining the American way of life. The Party further recognizes the duty that each generation has to educate following generations. We believe our public schools can best contribute to fulfilling this duty when parents, elected school board members, administrators, teachers, and other local citizens control the content of instruction and the allocation of school resources. Local control stimulates innovation, encourages civic engagement and guards against state and federal overreach.

We reject directives from the federal government which interfere with Montana's right to local control of our schools.

We support:

- The daily opportunity for students to voluntarily pray and recite the Pledge of Allegiance
- The right of parents to choose the way their children are educated through multiple school choice options.
- Parental opt-in for collection, use, or distribution of student and family personal information.
- Parental opt-in for sex education in the public education system.
- Parental opt-in for Participation in standardized assessments.

The transgender school directive from the federal government is an attempt to push a progressive social agenda and interferes with Montana's right to local control of our schools.

Election Law

Voter Registration

Montana voter registration should ensure all registered voters are eligible to vote. Voter rolls should be current, correct and free of duplication. Voter registration periods should be ample but end prior to Election Day so that election administrators can focus solely on administering a fair and clean election on Election Day. Election results should be reported to the Secretary of State as required.

Election by Majority

Montana should be served by elected officials who are supported by a majority of those voting, not a minority. Therefore, the Montana election process should be changed so that election by majority in the general election is accomplished by the adoption of a quick runoff system so that if no candidate receives a majority vote a runoff election is held between the top two candidates.

Nomination of Candidates

Members of the Montana Republican Party have the right to freely associate as guaranteed by the United States and Montana constitutions. It is the position of the Montana Republican Party that the voters who select Republican candidates to appear on the general election ballot should be limited to registered members of the Republican Party. We support policies which assure the right of the respective political parties to nominate their candidates free of undue influence by electors outside of the party.

Reform of Political Practices Office

Montana has the only Political Practices office in the nation where a single person serves as investigator, prosecutor, judge and jury of alleged political practice violations. This office needs to be reformed to separate the prosecution function from the judge and jury function with the transfer of the legal enforcement components to the Attorney General and the clerical and reporting components to the Secretary of State.

Constitutional Elections

The Montana Republican Party will support that all elections, both primary and general, including non-partisan, judicial, and school will obey and follow all laws.

Human Services

Preamble

The Montana Republican party recognizes that an individual has primary responsibility for his or her own health and welfare. We support efforts to improve the Montana human service delivery system by continuing to reassess the programs and participation of each department providing these services. We support treatment and care whenever possible in a family related manner at the local or community level. The Montana Republican Party affirms its belief and support for family values.

Human Life

We affirm our belief in traditional family values and support the preservation of innocent human life at every stage of life, in all circumstances, beginning at conception through natural death. We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion; or fund organizations which perform or advocate abortion. In concert with these beliefs: 1) We support efforts to provide parental notification and consent, and informed consent in all cases involving abortion; 2) We support those individuals and organizations seeking to provide positive alternatives to abortion, such as adoption; 3) We oppose assisted suicide; 4) We oppose partial birth abortion; 5) We support a moratorium on human cloning for any purpose; 6) We support non-embryonic stem cell research; 7) We support abstinence education.

Health Care and Wellness

We support the repeal of Obamacare. We oppose the implementation of Obamacare including the expansion of Medicaid to able-bodied adults. We recognize the constitutional concept of individual free will, responsibility, and accountability in personal health care decisions. The innate dignity of the human spirit means we believe in the potential of people with disabilities to contribute, rehabilitate, and receive maximum opportunities for employment, volunteer work, and independent living to the best of their abilities.

Services to Children and Youth

We support social policies and services that preserve and strengthen the traditional family unit. We support inter-agency and intra-agency planning, efficiency, collaboration, and coordination of family-based, faith-based, and community-based services tailored to meet the needs of children, adolescents, and their families.

Immigration

The Montana Republican Party takes pride that our country was founded by immigrants from many countries. We support legal managed immigration. For the security, safety and economy of our state, we oppose illegal immigration and un-vetted refugees being relocated to the state of Montana. The United States constitution and the laws of the state of Montana are preminent and apply to everyone. We support securing our borders and penalizing employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens. Those who are

here illegally must be denied work permits or benefits and deported. Only those persons who are legal residents will be permitted work permits and any other types of benefits or services. We oppose the liberal progressive concept of open borders and we support strict enforcement of current US immigration laws. We urge for the immediate repeal and replacement of the 1965 Immigration Reform Act. We support the original interpretation of the 14th Amendment so that only children born to citizens and legal permanent residents are U.S. citizens at birth.

Local Government

Preamble

The Montana Republican Party supports efforts to return control and authority to local units, as the government closest and most responsive to the people.

Funding

We believe all levels of government are responsible for funding their own programs. No level of government should mandate responsibilities or programs to lower levels or subdivisions of government unless funding for those responsibilities and programs is also provided. Any additional State-mandated local government services should be funded by the State. We strongly urge the Governor of the state of Montana to refuse any federal mandated programs requiring funding by the State or local governments, except those based on a declared national emergency by the President of the United States. We continue to support the goal of limiting local property tax and fee increases and require greater accountability. We urge the wise use of our natural resources (understanding that PILT money is declining). We support ideas that will assist in the funding of local government such as returning management of federally-controlled public land to the state. We support the revenue sharing established by the Montana legislature and Montana's units of local government in order to prevent tax increases at the local level.

Local Responsibility

We believe local governments are responsible for resolving local problems and we support the County Sheriff as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer. State government should be responsible for its actions affecting local government and all state restrictions on self-government should be extremely limited and narrowly construed. We do not support local governments implementing forced participation rules as a means to suppress an individual's rights or beliefs. We encourage all local government entities to strive for less intrusion into the private sector.

Individual Rights

We believe local governments shall enforce property use regulations only upon property or citizens living within the local government's boundaries. The rights of individuals to vote on local governmental tax or fee issues and officials are fundamental. We also believe that growth policies developed by local governments are not regulatory documents and should not be viewed as such by governing bodies.

Property Rights

We believe that governmental units should protect individual rights associated with property ownership that guarantee a property owner's ability to use property as the owner wishes, as long as he or she causes no harm. We support prohibiting the state of Montana and its political subdivisions from adopting and developing environmental and developmental policies that, without due process, would infringe or restrict the private property rights of the [property] owner[s].

Voter Rights

We encourage increased voter turnout in local elections. We support efforts to register new voters and to get them out to vote. We believe it is essential that every eligible voter exercise his or her right to vote. We support vigilance over the integrity of the voting process and the deterrence of voter fraud. Therefore, we believe eligibility must be proven prior to date of election.

Government Transparency

We support open meetings for government decision-making bodies. We strongly urge taxpayers to review, comment, and participate in the development of county, city, and school district budgets. We encourage all local government entities to publish their budgets, draft policies, regulations, agendas, minutes and election information electronically to provide transparency to the highest degree. We urge local bodies to use sunset review of all newly implemented taxes and fees. Pursuant to government efficiency, we support combining elections and election activities when possible.

Land Use

We recognize the destructive and insidious nature of the United Nations Agenda 21/2030 and oppose United Nations efforts to redefine or restrict whole economies and industries in the state of Montana or Montana counties.

We encourage the State of Montana and its political subdivisions to engage in the coordination process with all federal government agencies that adopt policies under NEPA or other applicable federal law.

Privacy

We believe local governments should exclude themselves from activities that would infringe on the constitutional rights of citizens.

National Affairs

Preamble

The Montana Republican Party supports individual freedom and liberty for all citizens of the United States of America. We hold fast to the principles of our founding fathers, including self-determination, small government, state's rights and equality for all citizens. We affirm that the United States Constitution, as written and ratified with the consent of the people, is and shall be the "Supreme Law of the Land." We adamantly oppose any attempts, whether direct or indirect, to destroy and/or undermine the Constitution of the United States and its Amendments, including the Bill of Rights.

Personal Rights and Liberties

We affirm the unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all individuals. We affirm the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of each human being from conception to death. The people of Montana have voted to define marriage in our constitution as only between one man and one woman. We support the definition of marriage as only between one man and one woman.

Montanans have a constitutional right to the free exercise of speech and religion, which includes the right not to participate in activities of daily life that violate their faith. The Republican Party of Montana therefore stands with people of faith in opposition to the enactment of laws or taxation infringing upon this constitutional right. We vigorously oppose the practice of government profiling or targeting of peaceful, law-abiding citizens as terrorists or enemies of our government simply for exercising their 1st and 2nd Amendment or other Constitutional Rights.

States' Rights

We agree with Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who stated that the U.S. Supreme Court does not have the sole authority to judge the constitutionality of federal laws. We hold with these men that the States not only have the right, but also the duty to nullify unconstitutional laws in order to protect their citizens. We demand federal withdrawal from those areas of responsibility reserved by the U.S. Constitution to the states and people. We demand our state elected officials to undertake appropriate action, including legal action, to confine federal power within its constitutional limits. We strongly encourage the Governor of Montana to continue to utilize the authority extended to the Executive Branch by the Montana Legislature to vigorously defend Montana's right to self-governance under the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. We call upon our Congressional Delegation to urge strong states' rights policies governing the use of public lands and resources in the West. We commend the passage of the American Lands Sovereignty Act. We oppose any extension of federal or regional bureaucratic control over water originating in Montana, including federal reserved water rights compacts, and consider any such action an infringement on states' rights. We demand that the United States comply with its compact with Montana, as that compact was understood in 1889 for inclusion of statehood. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer of the county. We support the requirement that a federal officer may not arrest, search or seize in Montana without the advanced, written permission of the elected county sheriff.

Right to Bear Arms

We affirm that the right to bear arms is a right the people of Montana have reserved for themselves, individually, from interference by government agents and government employees. We oppose any restrictions on the type or number of firearms any law-abiding citizen may own or possess. We support the extension of the castle doctrine to include individual vehicles. We oppose any system of national registration of firearm owners and their firearms and the setting of limits on the quantities of firearms and ammunition that are owned by an individual. We strongly defend the intent of the Montana Firearms Freedom Act and the prosecution of any government agents violating that law. We oppose the concept of "gun free zones" in any form or in any place except detention facilities. American citizens exercising their right to peaceably assemble or seek redress of their grievances, whether armed in accordance with the United States Constitution or not so armed, shall not be deemed as terrorists simply for that non-violent act.

Veterans and citizens seeking medical treatment are constitutionally protected and any removal of rights based on predicted threat must include due process, transparency, and opportunity for expedient redress.

National Defense

We support peace through strength, and a strong military including the Montana National Guard and a constitutional State Militia under the direction of the Governor. We acknowledge the need for the continued maintenance of military strength to defend our nation, with an emphasis on research and development, military forces, and refinement of strategic defense initiative technology. We support continuing efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, but totally oppose any suggestions of unilateral disarmament on the part of the United States, or placing any troops or military resources under United Nations or foreign command or the deployment of United Nations or foreign Troops on United States soil for any reason, and support relocation of the U.N. to any country that will have them.

We strongly support defense of our borders by the federal government, upon their failure to do so the state will exercise their right to defend its borders. We strongly support the Constitutional requirement of a formal Congressional declaration of war before committing regular troops to a military operation.

We urge that those in charge of veterans' affairs accelerate efforts of the appropriate agencies to meet the medical and physical needs of those impaired in the service of our country, including vouchers to private carriers to expedite waiting lists.

We stand against the indefinite detention of our citizens by certain provision of the NDAA as it violates the right of habeas corpus and the 5th, 6th, & 9th amendments of the US Constitution. We further affirm that we oppose the Patriot Act and all of its versions or others instruments that erode our individual liberties.

Inflation

We feel that vigilance must be used in continuing to control inflation, as this represents one of the greatest threats to the well-being of all Americans. We stand against federal money policy being established by the Federal Reserve and stand in support of constitutionally defined money.

Energy

We urge, through private enterprise, the development of energy resources, including alternative forms of energy. We oppose any federal or state government mandate to purchase or subsidize energy development in any form. We oppose any tax on carbon emissions. All cost effective forms of energy shall have equal access to the grid as specified by deregulation. We oppose the federal government yielding to any international pressure to oppose any regulation on domestic energy production or consumption. We oppose any classification of CO2 or other greenhouse gasses as dangerous gasses or pollutants. We stand strongly in support of the completion of the Keystone Pipeline. We are in favor of only those Federal administrative rules that do not exceed the authority of the statute.

Telecommunications Policy

We believe that private industry will provide a viable information highway for the future if all government agencies will provide a supportive environment. We oppose federal telephone excise taxes and further government-imposed taxes, fees, or charges on telecommunications or the internet in any forms. We believe a modern telecommunications network will bring substantial benefits to the entire nation in areas such as economic development, education and health care. We oppose all future government internet restrictions that would infringe on the rights of citizens.

Entitlements

We oppose the creation of any new entitlement programs or the expansion of any existing programs for U.S. citizens and we oppose extending these existing entitlements afforded to U.S. citizens to non-citizens.

Flag Desecration

We strongly support an amendment to the Constitution of the United States that would protect the flag from desecration.

National Sovereignty

We support the original Republican National Committee resolution in opposition to the program known as United Nations Agenda 21/2030 in its entirety, or any other diminishment of national sovereignty in pursuance of global governance.

Data Privacy

In keeping with an individual's right to private property, based on the 4th Amendment, individual data belongs to each individual. The government, be it local, state or federal, is required to obtain a search warrant based on probable cause, which must be approved by a non-secret court before the collection of an individual's data is allowed.

Federal Debt

We oppose the irresponsible accumulation of federal debt and federal deficit spending.

Federally Managed Public Lands

The Montana Republican Party supports the U.S. Congress and U.S. President, other public officials and citizens of Montana and the United States to fully exert their efforts and powers to support returning federally managed public lands to the states in order to secure statehood equality and provide for better management of public lands.

Natural Resources

We support a natural resource development policy that promotes jobs in Montana, responsible stewardship and reduces our dependence on federal aid and foreign resources.

We defend the 'first in time, first in right' water doctrine protected by State Law. We oppose ratification or further appropriation of funds toward implementation of the CSKT Compact until final resolution of the legal challenges and full scrutiny of the federal legislation by the judiciary and the Montana state legislature.

We oppose Waters of the US and removing the word navigable from the definition of waterways as defined by state or federal agencies. We affirm the legislature's constitutional duty to provide for the administration, control, and regulation of water rights under state law which is non-delegable to any other claims of regulatory authority or jurisdiction.

We oppose the federal government and any foreign or international entity, such as the United Nations, exercising authority over land use and natural resource decisions in Montana.

We oppose the creation of 'buffer zones' by legislation, administrative or judicial rule, or agency policy to expand water and land use restrictions. We oppose any new federal special land designations without the approval of the Montana State Legislature. We support the granting of federally managed public lands to the state, and development of a transition plan for the timely and orderly transfer. We support the release of current wilderness study areas. We support maintaining or increasing access within the federal lands in Montana. We oppose publicly funded subsidies for conservation easements.

The Montana Republican Party desires to improve the economic wellbeing of our timber communities by supporting timely harvesting, restoration of fire and beetle damaged forests and use of responsible logging.

We support the private development of energy and mineral resources and oppose the Federal governments war on dams, coal and other carbon fuels.

We support informed natural resource decision-making by government entities based on sound science. The Montana Environmental Policy Act should be implemented to protect private property rights, the economy, and society.

We urge Congress to repeal the Equal Access to Justice Act, along with the federal Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act in favor of state-based policies. We support responsible hunting, trapping and fishing that balances resource conservation with the rights of property owners. We support state management of all of Montana's wildlife species according to state law and encourage the delisting of the grizzly bear from the Endangered Species Act.

State Administration

The Montana Republican party supports small, effective, and efficient government, while promoting legislation to return more local control. The Montana Republican Party recognizes a need to strengthen the legislative oversight of administrative rulemaking to ensure that the intent of the legislation not be exceeded or lost. Adoption of administrative rules shall be subject to the final approval of bill sponsors.

Taxation

Federal, state and local taxes should be low, broad-based and easily understood. Taxes shall not be used to redistribute wealth.

Transportation

The Montana Republican Party strongly supports continued development, maintenance, and infrastructure improvements for all transportation in Montana. We support giving priority of fuel tax money to vital transportation routes and economic growth. We support all transportation industries in providing safe and efficient transportation services to the Montana public. We support the interstate, intrastate, and farm to market highway (secondary state highways and county roads) systems. We encourage all government officials and agencies to promote and assist in the maintenance and improvement to the Montana transportation infrastructure to facilitate economic development and commerce, personal independence and freedom of movement, and our state and national security. We support self-sufficiency and reduction of the dependency on federal funding of our transportation infrastructure. We support recognition of defined, documented, or referenced roads or rights-of-way on all lands in Montana.