



Liberty for All

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Illinois LP demands that Republicans abide by election laws - *From April 2004 LP News*

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Illinois election officials should follow state law and prevent President Bush from appearing on the November ballot as the Republican presidential candidate, says Jeff Trigg, executive director of the Illinois Libertarian Party. Trigg is trying to convince officials either to uphold the law by keeping Bush off the ballot, or to eliminate the obstacles for all candidates.

"Republicans wrote these rules and they should live by them," Trigg said. "They made their bed and now they must lie in it by petitioning to get on the ballot, just like they require of us."

Current law requires the Illinois Board of Elections to certify the names that will appear on the general election ballot 67 days before the election. This year that deadline is Aug. 27.

But Bush will not be nominated until Sept. 1, when the GOP holds its national convention in New York City. Therefore, his name cannot legally appear on the ballot as a Republican unless the law is changed, Trigg points out.

The proper solution, he says, is for the board to insist that Bush's name appear as an independent -- as the law allows -- or to ease ballot access for all political parties, not just the Republicans. Instead Republicans and Democrats are

collaborating to enact a new law that would carve out an exception only for Bush, which is "nothing less than favoritism and a mockery of the principles of democracy," Trigg said. On March 25, the state Senate unanimously approved SB 2123, which would allow only Republicans and Democrats to be nominated after the deadline, while leaving the requirements the same for all other candidates.

The Illinois LP responded by holding a press conference on March 30 at which they demanded that the Illinois House refuse to pass the bill and called on Governor Rod Blagojevich, a Democrat, to veto the measure if it was approved by the legislators.

"The Senate bill doesn't change the deadline; it just lets them ignore it for 2004," Trigg said.

Since Republicans knew about the deadline in Illinois before they set their convention date, they could have simply held their convention before the August 27 deadline, Trigg pointed out.

But instead they "deliberately ignored the rule of law and arrogantly expected the law to be changed just for them," he said.

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2004 LPI Convention Report

For this convention, we followed the KISS method—keep it simple, stupid. And it worked. Attendance was up 20% over 2003 and the attendees really enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about three of the candidates seeking the Libertarian Presidential nomination.

The convention started out Saturday afternoon, March 20th with a session about the

2004 election cycle with Scott Bludorn sharing details about his campaign for the 53rd state representative election. Vice Presidential hopeful, Tamara Millay, the joined the session talking about her past experience campaigning in neighboring Missouri.

Following the 2004 Election session, the three Presidential candidates took their turns making their case our attendees.

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Bush off ballot? *(From page 1)*

The current effort to sidestep the law isn't the first time Republicans have engaged in such election-year shenanigans, he pointed out.

In 1998, then-Secretary of State George Ryan, who was running for governor, put his state employees to work challenging petitions collected by Libertarians, and succeeded in knocking seven Libertarians -- including LP gubernatorial candidate Jim Tobin -- off the ballot. Ryan won the election by only a 4 percent margin.

In the ensuing scandal, Ryan was indicted for improper use of state resources.

At the March 30 press conference, the Illinois LP also called on the legislature to eliminate other disparities in election laws.

For example, in the race for U.S. House District 1, the Republicans need 196 signatures to get on the ballot, while "new parties" and independents need 9,793 signatures.

State law will also force the Libertarian Party to collect about 50,000 petition signatures in 90 days just to run its presidential and U.S. Senate candidates, making Illinois's restrictive ballot access one of the most arduous in the nation, Trigg said.

In neighboring states such as Missouri and Wisconsin, gathering just 10,000 signatures would allow a political party to run for every partisan office in the state -- so the LP's request is more than reasonable, Trigg said.

"In fact, with two-thirds of all General Assembly races unopposed in 2004, Illinois should be copying those states' election laws so more voters in Illinois will actually have a choice on the ballot," he added.

"This whole episode shows that Republicans will even break the law in order to remove us from the ballot. Now it's time to insist that they live by the laws they create -- without giving themselves special rights."

NEW LPI WEBSITE

www.lpillinois.org

The old address, www.il.lp.org, will always point in the right direction. The new address will give us more control over the administration of our site.

2004 LPI Convention Report *(From page 1)*

Michael Badnarik led off the afternoon with his focus on the Constitution, where we have gone wrong, and what he would do to change that.

Barry Hess introduced Aaron Russo, listing Aaron's accomplishments in his past endeavors, and Aaron followed with a passionate speech about the current American situation.

Gary Nolan finished the afternoon by stepping in front of the podium to interact with our audience about a range of national issues facing us in this election.

Those of you with internet access, can listen to or watch these presentations at our website.

<http://www.lpillinois.org/2004convention/av.php>

Learn more about these candidates at their websites.
www.badnarik.org
www.russoforpresident.com
www.garynolan.com

After the candidate presentations we ate some dinner while waiting for debate moderator, Jeff Berkowitz, to get set up. The debate that followed was so entertaining and exciting, that they agreed to continue for almost another hour after a break.

Jeff Berkowitz, of the renowned political talk show, "Public Affairs", did a superb job drawing more out of the candidates by using an open format as opposed to the structured, 30 second retorts often seen in other debates. ("Public Affairs" runs on public access stations throughout Chicago and the suburbs.)

You can listen or watch the Presidential debate at the website listed above.

For more on Jeff Berkowitz visit him at:
<http://jeffberkowitz.blogspot.com/>

In between meeting sessions on Sunday, March 21st, we heard more great ideas from Vice President nominee hopefuls, Richard Campagna and Tamara Millay. Richard currently resides in Iowa and Tamara lives in the St. Louis area with family in Illinois. Midwest Libertarians are well represented with these two.

More about them at their websites:
www.tamaramillay.com
<http://www.lpia.org/election/campagna.php>

Contribute Online @ www.lpillinois.org *(Look to the left for the Contribute Graphic)*

2004 LPI Convention Meeting Minutes

Libertarian Party of Illinois
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
Rosemont, Illinois
March 21, 2004

Party Chairman Guy Finley called the meeting to order at 9:45AM

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

48 members were present in person
23 members by proxy
71 total*

* The total varied throughout the meeting as some members left early or arrived late.

Quorum was present.

AGENDA CHANGES

Ken Prazak moved to change discussion of by-law changes from #13 on the agenda to #8

Discussion ensued whether by-law changes would become operative immediately or following meeting and whether it would be better to put off discussion of more contentious issues until the end.

Ken Prazak also moved to add discussion of Unified Membership Program (UMP) to agenda as item #13.

Both agenda changes were adopted by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND 2004 AGENDA

Minutes of 2003 Convention and agenda as amended were approved by voice vote.

OFFICER REPORTS

State Chairman Guy Finley reported that in 2003 we succeeded in electing Libertarians in 5 of 9 local elected offices and that fundraising has recently picked up. Finley also noted the recent resignations and leadership changes within the party and the need to improve communication (both electronic and traditional) and clarify the relationship between the LPI and its affiliates. The chair also called for compiling a comprehensive budget by June and more careful and rigorous accounting standards to avoid future FEC fines. Finally, Mr. Finley called for the party to support its candidates in upcoming petitioning drives and set goals for the coming year including establishing a new affiliate, growing party membership, and working with student groups.

Vice-Chair for Campaigns and Elections Jim Syler noted that www.lpillinois.org/campaigns was now up and running and would serve as a resource for Libertarians running for or contemplating running for office.

Treasurer Julie Fox gave a report on the financial state of the party. Noted that fundraising and membership came up short of the amounts budgeted for. Julie also noted that FEC fines were in the process of being settled through negotiation and dispute resolution procedures and transition of the treasurer's position to David Lee by the end of the month was proceeding.

Business meeting recessed at 11:30AM for brunch and to hear from the Libertarian Party's Vice-Presidential candidates. The meeting resumed at 1:45PM.

CHANGES TO BY-LAWS

Suggestion was made that by-laws could not be changed because notice of possible changes was not mailed out to the entire membership by the time specified in the by-laws.

Chair ruled that by-law changes were sent out by the date specified in the by-laws and that changes could be made.

Discussion ensued with a vote held on upholding the ruling of the chair.

By a vote of 33 for upholding the ruling of the chair and 23 against, the chair's ruling was upheld and discussion on amendments to by-laws continued.

FIRST PROPOSED AMENDMENT (proposed by Jim Syler): To amend By-Law II by replacing current language with "The purpose of the party shall be to promote the ideals specified in the Libertarian Party Statement of Principles by: moving public policy in a libertarian direction...chartering affiliate chapters...nominating candidates for office...entering into public information activities."

Following discussion, the amendment failed by a vote of 42 against the amendment to 18 in favor. The current language in the by-laws was retained.

SECOND PROPOSED AMENDMENT (proposed by Jim Syler): To amend By-Law III by striking Section 2 (relating to voluntary service in lieu of membership dues for members under 18).

Following discussion, the amendment passed by a vote of 44 in favor to 10 against. By-Law III Section 2 was deleted.

THIRD PROPOSED AMENDMENT (proposed by Jim Syler): To amend By-Law IV Section 4(a) by adding (10) "The State Organizing Committee may meet by

(Convention minutes from page 3)

any means which allows simultaneous aural communication among all participants.”

After brief discussion, this amendment passed by a vote of 59 in favor and none against.

FOURTH PROPOSED AMENDMENT (proposed by Jim Syler): To amend By-Law IV Section 4(a) by adding (11) “The State Organizing Committee may create Special Rules of Order and Standing Rules which apply only to the SOC and its meeting.”.

Following discussion with the parliamentarian who pointed out that SOC could already adopt its rules under the current by-laws, the amendment was withdrawn by Mr. Syler.

FIFTH PROPOSED AMENDMENT (proposed by Jerry Kohn): To amend By-Law IV Section 3 by deleting 3 (b), 3(c), and 3(d) and replacing with

3(b) Any LPI State Organizing Committee officer may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the State Organizing Committee. Affiliate representatives to the State Organizing Committee may only be removed by their respective affiliates according to the affiliate’s by-laws.

3(c) In the event of a vacancy in any of the LPI officer positions, the State Organizing Committee shall appoint an interim officer by a majority vote of the State Organizing Committee. This interim appointment shall extend until the end of the term or until the next LPI State Convention whichever event occurs first. Officers elected by the convention to serve for the remainder of the term shall serve out only the remainder of the that term before being required to step down or stand for reelection for a full term.

Jim Syler suggested changing the second sentence of 3 (c) to read: “This interim appointment shall extend until the next State Convention.” This amendment to the amendment was passed by a voice vote.

Following discussion, the amendment failed with 38 in favor and 21 opposed. The amendment fell short of the 2/3rd majority needed for passage.

Following a brief recess, Bill Stevens motioned to reconsider the failed amendment.

Discussion followed with motion to reconsider passed by a vote of 45 in favor and 12 against.

Val Vetter motioned to amend the amendment leaving 3(c) as it currently is in the by-laws and changing 3(b) in the amendment to 3(d) and 3(c) in the amendment to 3(b).

Also change “In the event of a vacancy in any of the LPI officer positions, the State Organizing Committee shall appoint an interim officer...” to “In the event of a vacancy of the Chair, the State Organizing Committee shall appoint an interim Chair from among the SOC officers...”.

Vetter amendment to the amendment passed by a voice vote.

David Lee made motion to table consideration of the amendment. This motion failed with 15 voting for and 42 voting against.

Bill Stephens called the question.

Kohn amendment as amended by Syler and Vetter passed with 44 voting in favor and 16 against.

NOMINATION OF LPI CANDIDATE FOR UNITED STATE SENATOR

Val Vetter nominated Jerry Kohn. Nomination was seconded by David Lee. Kohn was nominated as LPI’s candidate for U.S. Senator by unanimous consent.

LPI ELECTIONS SOC OFFICERS

Val Vetter moved to ratify state officers as appointed by SOC following resignations of Rhys Read, Austin Hough, and Julie Fox.

Discussion followed with Ken Prazak urging rejection of current leadership and Jerry Kohn and David Kelley supporting the current chair and SOC.

Convention voted to retain current officers by a vote of 39 in favor of the current leadership and 18 opposed.

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

David Hughes nominated Julie Fox for membership on the judicial committee

Jim Syler nominated Walter Steele for membership on the judiciary committee

Ken Prazak nominated Scott Bludorn for membership on the judiciary committee. Scott Bludorn declined the nomination.

Julie Fox and Walter Steele were elected to the judiciary committee by unanimous consent.

NATIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES

Convention unanimously approved a slate of members to represent LPI at the 2004 Libertarian Party National Convention in Atlanta.

Woody Windischman was nominated to the Platform Committee with Jim Syler to serve as an alternate. Slate passed by unanimous consent.

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Jerry Kohn receives Libertarian nomination for US Senate

On Sunday, March 21st 2004 at the Libertarian Party of Illinois state convention, Jerry Kohn was nominated by unanimous consent to run for the US Senate in 2004. The convention was held at the Ramada Plaza-O'Hare and featured a Presidential debate moderated by Jeff Berkowitz with Aaron Russo, Gary Nolan, and Michael Badnarik. The Libertarian Party of Illinois also nominated 50 delegates to the Libertarian National Convention in Atlanta the last week of May, where the Presidential nomination will be decided.

"I'm honored and humbled and promise to do my best for our party, our state, and our country," Jerry Kohn said upon receiving the nomination. "Win or lose, Libertarians provide healthy competition for the two self-serving political machines that have grown arrogant and dismissive of a docile electorate. The two power parties work hard to keep us off of the ballot because Libertarians ask uncomfortable questions about taxes, honesty in government, and about respect for human liberty. I look forward to a healthy debate with my opponents in the coming months so we can ask more uncomfortable questions they need to answer."

While endorsing Jerry Kohn for his 2002 race for state representative above his Republican and Democratic opponents, the Chicago Tribune had this to say, "If voters want to send a message, they should support Libertarian (Jerry) Kohn, an Oak Lawn high school teacher who is making his first run for office. Kohn is a strong candidate with well-crafted ideas and he is endorsed." - October 17, 2002. Jerry was also endorsed by the Chicago Sun-Times on October 26, 2002.

In Jerry Kohn's second run for office in 2003, he won, and now serves on the Acorn Library Board of Trustees in Cook County. Jerry Kohn has more teaching experience than opponent Jack Ryan, and also more experience in an elected office. Jerry Kohn has earned his place in any US Senate debates through hard work and dedication, instead of simply throwing millions of dollars around.

"I'm going to start asking my opponents uncomfortable questions today", claims Jerry Kohn. "Jack Ryan and Barack Obama, what are you afraid of? In the spirit of democratic, free, and equal elections, I implore you to invite all the candidates, including myself, to your debates instead of shutting out political voices like they are doing in Iran right now. Prove to the voters of Illinois that you also believe in the principles of democracy that our great United States was founded upon. If you don't believe in free and equal elections, then you aren't qualified to serve as a US Senator. I'm ready."

Website: www.kohn2004.org

Scott Bludorn announces for state rep. race

(BUFFALO GROVE) – Voters in the Northwest suburban 53rd legislative district will indeed have a choice in the general election this November as community activist and business professional R. Scott Bludorn has announced he will seek the office of State Representative to replace incumbent Sidney Mathias. "Voters in the northwest suburbs will finally have a choice for limited, efficient, and accountable government" said Scott Bludorn, Libertarian Party of Cook County president.

"Mr. Mathias, originally elected as one of George Ryan's foot soldiers, has never faced a serious challenger who forced him to defend his record of wasteful pork barrel spending and his repeated attempts to weaken the property tax caps which are vital protection to our families' budgets. This kind of deal-making and reckless spending is leading Illinois down the path to a California style disaster" Bludorn said.

"I will engage in a high visibility campaign to inform Republican voters that they may have been misled into thinking that Sidney Mathias represents the principles of limited government the GOP leadership in Springfield has long since abandoned. Mr. Mathias is out of touch with the values Illinois voters think they are voting for but his public record shows that he is a reckless big spender rivaling the most liberal Democrats. I will campaign full time from now until Election Day to expose that record. I'm looking for the votes of Republicans fed up with corrupt politics-as-usual from Springfield, Independents who want lower taxes and less government, and Democrats who oppose government intrusion into people's private lives" Bludorn said in a statement to supporters.

"I seek to return responsibility to individuals and families so that they may address their unique needs as well as those of their communities. Most households require a dual income with one spouse working to pay for the cost of government which reduces the time and means necessary for civic participation and charity. I want to reduce the wasteful cost of government at the State level and create more taxpayer safeguards to protect them from county and municipal big spenders as well" said Bludorn.

Mr. Bludorn is currently employed as District Manager for New Age Concepts Inc. and President of the Libertarian Party of Cook County – Northwest.

COMMITTEE TO ELECT BLUDORN
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Website: www.bludorn2004.com

Around the State

LP Northwest Cook County is active in many areas including fighting the smoking ban in Skokie and participating in parades. Website: www.LPCook.org Contact: R. Scott Bludorn, bludorn@attbi.com

LP Lake County continues taking on taxes and county fair outreach. Website: www.lake.il.lp.org Contact: Eric Dubiel, chair@lake.il.lp.org

LP DuPage County has elected precinct committeeman and want more. Website: www.dupagelibertarians.org Contact: dupagelibertarians@yahoo.com

Southern Illinois Libertarians worked the DuQuoin State Fair and are looking for candidates. Website: www.il.lp.org/affiliates/sil/ Contact: Jim Syler, calion@mac.com

LP McLean County is just getting started in Bloomington/Normal. Website: www.lpmcleancounty.org Contact: David Lee, lpmc@lpmcleancounty.org

LP Fox Valley doesn't like the new seat belt laws. Contact: Julie Fox, dobie1214@aol.com

College Libertarians have formed the new **Students for Individual Liberty** at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Websites: www2.uiuc.edu/ro/liberty/ and www2.uiuc.edu/ro/sil/ Contact: David Warden, warden@uiuc.edu

Rockford Area Libertarians have gotten three members elected. Contact: liberty@lprockford.8m.com, (815)964-4012

LP Chicago could use you at their next meeting. Website: www.lpchicago.org

LP Will County has ballot access in one state rep. District. Website: www.willcountylp.org Contact: Eric Ferguson, feedback@willcountylp.org

(Convention minutes from page 4)

DISCUSSION OF UNIFIED MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM (UMP)

Ken Prazak criticized UMP suggesting that LPI should withdraw from UMP

David Lee suggested this matter be deferred until next year's business meeting.

David Kelley argued that the LPI did much worse before joining UMP.

Ken Prazak moved to leave UMP

The motion to leave UMP failed with 22 voting in favor of leaving UMP and 29 voting for staying in UMP. Six people abstained.

Jim Waldron asked that the SOC continue to study the matter and report back to the next state convention.

ADJOURNMENT

The business meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:15PM. Minutes prepared and submitted by Jerry Kohn, LPI Secretary

2004 LPI candidates

US Senate
Jerry Kohn
www.kohn2004.org

State Rep. Dist. 53
Scott Bludorn
www.bludorn2004.com

US House Dist. 4
Jake Witmer
www.electjakewitmer.us

State Rep. Dist. 64
Jim Young

State Rep Dist. 9
State Rep. Dist 11
State Rep. Dist 48
State Rep. Dist 85
State Rep Dist. 95

(We have ballot access and candidate recruitment is still taking place.)

Also look for a slate of candidates running for county board in Jackson County—Carbondale area.

And NOW is the time to start thinking about running for 2005 local, non-partisan offices. Get a head start and let us know.