



# Illinois

REPUBLICAN PARTY

## 2008 Platform

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Chairman, Illinois Republican Party

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## **2008 Platform of the Illinois Republican Party**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the Illinois Republican Party, since the election of 1860, the Republican Party has had a special calling – to advance the founding principles of freedom, opportunity, and limited government and the dignity and worth of every individual. Illinois Republicans have provided critical leadership, to this Country and those causes, from Abraham Lincoln to Ronald Reagan, from Everett M. Dirksen to Henry J. Hyde

These principles form the foundation of both an agenda for America in the year 2008 and this Platform for our Party. They point us toward reforms in government, a restoration of timeless values, and a renewal of our national purpose.

We commit ourselves to the values that strengthen our culture and sustain our nation: family, faith, personal responsibility, and a belief in the dignity of every human life.

We offer not only an agenda but also a vision of a welcoming society in which all who yearn for freedom and human dignity have a place. To all law-abiding Americans, particularly immigrants and minorities, we send a clear message: this is the party of freedom and progress, and it is your home.

We are the party of the open door to those who share our principles, determined to strengthen the social, cultural, and political ties that bind us together and make our country the greatest force for good in the world. Steadfast in our commitment to our ideals, we recognize, as did Ronald Reagan, that members of our party can have deeply held and sometimes differing views. This diversity is a source of strength, not a sign of weakness, and so we welcome into our ranks all who may hold differing positions on issues but who will not compromise on our shared bedrock principles. We commit to resolve our differences with civility, trust, and mutual respect.

We seek to be faithful to the best traditions of our party. We are the party that ended slavery, protected life, granted homesteads, built land grant colleges, and moved control out of Washington, back into the hands of the people. We believe in service to the common good – and that good is not common until it is shared.

Our vision is one of clear direction, new ideas, civility in public life, and leadership with honor and distinction.

To the citizens of Illinois, we commit ourselves to the following:

- ❖ To conduct ourselves in such a way as to rebuild the public trust in the Republican Party and in government as institutions of public service and not personal gain;
- ❖ To do all in our power to strengthen the families of Illinois;
- ❖ To protect the fundamental right to life and dignity of every human life;
- ❖ To provide a foundation for job creation and business expansion across the State and reduce regulations and taxes that smother the free market;
- ❖ To enlist Illinois in defending America's borders;
- ❖ To endorse necessary resources and appropriate strategies to combat terrorist attacks and to fight and win the war on terror;

- ❖ To make our communities safer through reducing crime and drug use;
- ❖ To safeguard our way of life through adoption of sensible energy resource policies;
- ❖ To promote Illinois' advantage as a transportation hub for the nation;
- ❖ To create an environment in which our public schools will become the best in the nation;
- ❖ To reduce the size of government and the number of citizens dependent upon government;
- ❖ To ensure that high quality health care is available, through the private sector, throughout our State in both rural and urban areas;
- ❖ To restore fairness and balance to a legal system that has become unfair and unbalanced;
- ❖ To safeguard Illinois' fundamental crop – our agricultural sector; and
- ❖ To maintain our stewardship of our natural resources through scientifically sound and economically balanced initiatives.

#### **OUR PARTY'S PHILOSOPHY**

The cornerstone of our democracy and of the Republican Party is found in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." From these principles flow our commitment to Equality, Freedom, and The Right to Life, Opportunity, Less Government, Low Taxes and Strong National Security. The Republican Party is unwavering in its commitment to these principles. We honor the Constitution and believe that neither the Executive, Legislative nor Judicial branches of government should detract from the rights enumerated therein.

#### **PLATFORM OF THE ILLINOIS REPUBLICAN PARTY**

In order to realize our philosophy and to promote uniform, cohesive efforts to accomplish the same, we hereafter set forth our party's platform.

#### **A CALL TO ETHICS & REFORM OF GOVERNMENT**

Trust, pride and respect: we pledge to restore these qualities to the way Illinoisans view their government and their leaders.

The Republican Party recognizes that without integrity, promises and solutions have no value. Therefore, our Party will not stand for the slightest compromise in the ethics of our political leaders, regardless of party affiliation. We recognize that a compromise in the ethics of our Party officials can and will cause damage to the overall Party and to the citizens of Illinois. Ours will be a Party of ethics and integrity, regardless of the cost.

At the same time, we condemn the pay-to-play politics endemic to the Blagojevich Administration and the culture of corruption which the Democrats have established at all levels of government in Illinois. We sense the concern and growing outrage of the people of Illinois in having their trust so egregiously violated, and we join them and call on them to join us in seeking reform of Illinois government.

- ❖ The Republican Party supports the citizen-led effort to institute a process for recall of elected officials.
- ❖ We advocate requiring voters to display valid photo identification before registering to vote and before voting in the polling place.
- ❖ The Constitution of the United States establishes a separation of powers among the three branches of government in order to preserve our republican form of government and ensure that no branch takes government from the hands of the people themselves. We call on Gov. Blagojevich to cease his practice of usurping the authority of the legislature in both spending and program decisions. And we call on the judiciary of the United States to cease their usurpation of the authority of the elected representatives of the people at all levels and their abridgment of the rights of the people themselves.
- ❖ The Republican Party of Illinois calls on the Governor and the General Assembly to meet the contractual obligations of our state by properly funding the various state pension systems and ending the practice of diverting pension fund contributions to other purposes.
- ❖ We call on the Governor and the General Assembly to cease diversion of dedicated funds – such as the road fund – to other purposes.
- ❖ We call on the Governor and the General Assembly to balance the state budget and provide for a responsible capital development program without resorting to the expansion of gambling, which harms Illinois’ families and our state’s business climate and presents costly challenges for both law enforcement and social service agencies.
- ❖ In the critical task of restoring ethics to our political and governmental systems, we call on all political and public officials of all parties to adhere to the following principles:
  - Party officials must act in such a way as to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
  - Party officials must place public service ahead of personal gain.
  - Government contracts and licenses must be awarded based entirely upon merit pursuant to an open process.
  - Neither political leaders nor their emissaries may encourage, direct or even tolerate government employees engaging in political work on government time or using government resources for campaign purposes.
  - Neither political leaders nor their emissaries may solicit campaign contributions from government employees or contractors, nor may government officials award contracts based on past contributions.
  - The Governor and the General Assembly should bar former government officials from lobbying the government agencies they have left within two years of separation.

We salute President Bush and the United States Department of Justice – in particular, Northern District US Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald – for their aggressive efforts to combat political corruption in Illinois. No previous Administration on the Federal, State or County level has done more to confront political corruption and prosecute it in Illinois than the Bush Administration.

## **EMBRACE OF THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY**

The family is society's central building block. Thus, efforts to strengthen family life are efforts to improve life for everyone.

Our children need secure and nurturing environments, which are best found within the traditional family. No law should be enacted nor policy implemented without fully contemplating the effect it would have on children and their families.

Though not universally achievable, the ideal, best environment for children is within a two-parent family based on the principle of marriage between one man and one woman. The Republican Party endorses a constitutional amendment protecting our Defense of Marriage Act and enshrining in constitutional law marriage as it is defined in our "DOMA."

Our laws should strongly support and celebrate the loving commitment a man and a woman make to each other in marriage. Our laws should strongly support and celebrate a loving, married couple bringing new life into the world and rearing their children in a secure and nurturing environment from conception to adulthood. No law should undermine the importance of that union, divide that union nor unduly burden the efforts of parents to rear a family in a safe and nurturing environment.

Those persons in our society best equipped and motivated to protect and nurture children are their parents, not government bureaucrats, teachers, counselors or social workers. The Republican Party endorses legislation to re-establish the right of parents to consent to health care involving their minor children, regardless of whether such care entails diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted disease, alcoholism, drug abuse or mental illness, and particularly in the consequential arena of abortion and contraception.

## **EMBRACING THE FIRST FREEDOM: THE RIGHT TO LIFE**

Recognizing that the rights and needs of children begin at conception, the Republican Party of Illinois embraces the Right to Life of innocent unborn children and supports reform proposals protecting that right and limiting the practice of abortion in Illinois.

We believe that all innocent human life must be respected and safeguarded from conception to natural death: therefore,

The unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life, which cannot be infringed. The Party affirms its support for a human life amendment to the U.S. Constitution and we endorse making clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protection applies to unborn children.

We urge the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*.

We affirm our support for the appointment or election of judges at all levels of the judiciary who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of human life.

The Illinois Republican Party opposes the fostering of utilitarian experiments which sacrifice human embryos in what appears to be a futile search for medical cures. Such experimentation undermines the right to life of every human being and offends the moral conscience of many taxpayers. We embrace the more fruitful – and

completely ethical – avenues of research using cord blood, bone marrow and other adult stem cells, and we note the success of adult stem cell research in treating or curing more than 70 diseases, conditions and injuries.

In particular, we call on the Governor and General Assembly to:

- ❖ End the taxpayer subsidy for abortion;
- ❖ Require a doctor to involve a minor’s parents before aborting her unborn child;
- ❖ Outlaw the barbaric practice of partial-birth abortion; and
- ❖ Enact the Illinois Born-Alive infant Protection Act guaranteeing medical assessment and appropriate medical care for babies whose birth is incidental to abortion

### **A CALL TO RESTORE THE ILLINOIS ECONOMY**

The Republican Party deplores the budgetary gridlock with which the Governor and the General Assembly’s majority Democrats have brought disrepute on Illinois government and instituted uncertainty as the watchword for our state. Businesses take note of such wrangling and indecision and, despite our state’s natural advantages in location and infrastructure, turn to other states for expansion and office or plant siting.

We advocate a pro-growth orientation for our state’s economic policies, subjecting proposed legislation or regulation to analysis as to its impact on economic growth for Illinois and rejecting any proposals which would impose a negative impact.

The Republican Party stood united in 2007 to defeat Gov. Blagojevich’s “gross receipts tax” proposal and continues to stand against tax increases on the people and businesses of Illinois.

We call on the Republican delegations in both the Illinois House and the Illinois Senate to present an alternative budget, reflecting our principles, to engender debate on spending and to move along the process of enacting a budget for Fiscal Year 2009.

Illinois Republicans understand that taxing businesses translates into fewer jobs, less investment and higher consumer prices. Therefore Republicans not only oppose higher general taxes but will consistently fight the multitude of tax and fee increases which are bleeding Illinois employers and destroying jobs.

We deplore the re-enactment of the Illinois death tax during Gov. Blagojevich’s first term, some 20 years after Republican leadership in our legislature had abolished it, and we call on the General Assembly and the Governor to do away with this unjust tax on Illinois families, family businesses and farms.

Illinois Republicans share the alarm of our fellow citizens over the escalating prices of gasoline and note the contribution of federal, state and local taxes – including state and local sales taxes – to our state’s disastrously high ranking in at-the-pump prices for gasoline. We call on the General Assembly and the Governor to abate these taxes on gasoline and to appeal to the federal Environmental Protection Agency for sensible changes in the EPA’s gasoline formulary rules in order to alleviate the cost of refining gasoline for the greater Chicago market.

## **INSTITUTING A 'FRONT DOOR' POLICY ON IMMIGRATION**

We are a nation of immigrants, and the Republican Party welcomes those who respect our laws and seek freedom and opportunity in our great country. We believe it is only right to expect that our new residents come in through the front door and join us in society as fellow Americans. Further, we advocate retaining the right to adopt and enforce prudent policies relating to the numbers of immigrants America welcomes each year and their individual contributions to our nation's needs.

We call on the Federal Government to streamline the task of citizenship for legal immigrants to assimilate and complete the process of becoming Americans.

We call for the granting of full citizenship rights to be granted to any immigrant upon the completion of service to the armed forces of the United States.

Those who have been deported for violating our laws by their conduct as residents of the United States – should not be granted a second opportunity to take their place among us; this is a matter both of self-protection and of upholding the public trust.

Illinois government should assist our federal government in the mission of protecting our homeland. Illinois Republicans therefore urge reversal of "sanctuary city" policies, which bar our law enforcement officers from aiding Immigration & Customs Enforcement agents. The lack of adequate security at our ports and on our nation's borders fosters an atmosphere conducive to smuggling of terrorists and their weapons into our country. We are duty bound to support the efforts of the US Dept. of Homeland Security and to insist on even greater efforts to protect our homeland.

We further call on the Governor and the General Assembly to abandon incentives for illegal aliens to settle in Illinois.

## **A CALL TO REMAIN SERIOUS ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY**

The first responsibility of our government is to defend American citizens. Nothing is more important than the defense of our borders, our cities and our rural areas. The world remains a dangerous place – particularly while America is at war following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on our shores – and our government's top priority must be national security. We support Senator John McCain and his covenant to enhance national security and continue the protections afforded the citizens of the United States.

We are appalled by the reckless remarks of Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) in undercutting America's troops and by the bid of Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) to appease the radical, anti-American regime in Iran.

## **ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY FOR OUR CITIZENS**

While the threat of terrorism is certainly a significant aspect of safety for Illinois citizens, day-to-day safety and security of our local communities is also critical. A majority of the crime committed in Illinois is by repeat offenders. We need to ensure that crime is aggressively prosecuted and prison sentences are carried out.

Even with more faithful execution of our laws by law enforcement from the street to the judicial bench, citizens will remain at risk to criminal acts in their homes, their neighborhoods, their businesses and in going about their everyday lives. Illinois Republicans note with shock and dismay the growing climate of violence in Illinois' largest city and call upon Gov. Blagojevich and the General Assembly to enact such policies as may permit law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, their families, their property and their businesses. Specifically, we endorse:

- ❖ Continued use of the Firearm Owners Identification system and use of criminal and mental background checks by licensed firearms dealers;
- ❖ State pre-emption of local ordinances which impede the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms (see the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution);
- ❖ We strongly endorse and support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment to the Bill of Rights to the U. S. Constitution. We believe every citizen (American) has the right to keep and bear arms. No state city or local law should be allowed to infringe upon this right;
- ❖ Enactment of “Concealed Carry” legislation offering permits to properly trained, law-abiding citizens to bear concealed weapons for personal protection; and
- ❖ We call upon the legislature to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for Illinois Prison closure/construction policy. The plan should be a five year, ten year and twenty year plan for prison usage, closure and openings. We call upon the state to assist effected communities with an economic development strategy that will introduce alternative employment opportunities in those communities;

#### **A CALL TO MEET ENERGY NEEDS**

We believe the best answer for our current and future energy needs is to continue our investment in the technology necessary to discover new sources as well as ways to better use the sources we now have. From promoting wind energy, the use of clean coal technology to fostering exploration for natural gas and oil in Illinois, our state’s own natural resources offer a contribution toward our country’s energy independence and our economy’s future strength. We embrace more robust initiatives to develop Illinois’ energy resources and embrace environmentally responsible efforts to expand domestic production of oil both here in Illinois and nationally. We publically support energy resource development within the borders of our 50 states, including environmentally responsible private sector initiatives to tap the vast reserves under the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. We further support the expansion of our U.S. refinery capacity.

The end result of expanding production will be the creation of tens of thousands of high paying jobs, the lowering of cost of fuel to the end user and the lessening of dependence on foreign countries.

Illinois Republicans call on the Governor and General Assembly to take all steps necessary to add to Illinois’ nuclear power capacity.

#### **A CALL TO PROTECT OUR TRANSPORTATION ADVANTAGE**

One of the critical advantages Illinois enjoys is our heartland location, making our transportation facilities especially vital to our economy as well as to the daily lives of our citizens.

We oppose the sale of transportation infrastructure to foreign interest.

We support full utilization of our air, water, rail and road infrastructure for the benefit of our state citizens and to promote commerce and recreation.

Illinois Republicans deplore the actions of the Governor and majority Democrats in the General Assembly in diverting designated road-fund dollars to purposes other than the construction and maintenance of our critical



network of roads and bridges. Illinois citizens accepted motor-fuel taxes with the understanding that those funds would be used to maintain our roads and highways, dedicating a user fee to this purpose on the principle that those who benefit from the transportation network most directly were willing to pay their fair share. Republican governors and lawmakers have jealously guarded the road fund over many years to ensure that the payers of user fees would be respected and that the sums needed to protect our infrastructure would always be available. Gov. Blagojevich has trampled this long-standing Illinois policy, to the detriment of the citizens and of our investment in this critical asset.

### **ENHANCING EDUCATION**

Illinois must continuously strive to do better in educating our children. Illinois Republicans call on the education system of our state to deliver results for the vast sums of taxpayer dollars annually invested in the schools from the federal, state and local levels.

All children in our educational system should have access to a quality education which puts the students' interests first, and no child should be forced to attend schools that do not educate.

- ❖ Children should be immersed in English from the earliest days of their formal schooling, and remediation should be offered to those for whom English is not a native language.
- ❖ A basic foundation of our education system for more than a century has been that local officials are in the best position to make decisions regarding local school districts. Illinois Republicans embrace local control of our schools.
- ❖ We call on the Governor and the General Assembly to restore funding stripped from the 2008 budget to make abstinence education available to students in our public schools throughout Illinois.
- ❖ We strongly support the rights of parents to direct the education of their children, whether by charter schools, private schools, home education or by choosing public schools which will best further their children's future prospects.
- ❖ We note with concern the increasing tendency of school officials to place children on medication to control their behavior. We should protect the fundamental right of parents to have the final say in what is best for their child's well-being. We believe parents should receive advance notice of any medicine or medical treatment their child may be offered or seek and that parents should have the right to consent – or withhold consent – for any such treatment.

### **RESPECTING CITIZENS BY LIMITING GOVERNMENT**

Illinois Republicans take note of the ringing declaration of the late President Ronald Reagan, speaking in 1988 to students at Moscow State University: "Freedom is the recognition that no single person, no single authority of government has a monopoly on the truth, but that every individual life is infinitely precious."

- ❖ Taking note of the US Supreme Court ruling in *Kelo v. New London*, the Republican Party of Illinois calls upon the Governor and the General Assembly to reform Illinois' eminent domain laws to protect the rights of Illinois property owners.
- ❖ We call on the Governor and the General Assembly to abolish the state death tax.

- ❖ The Republican Party of Illinois condemns the efforts of Illinois Democrats to graduate the state income tax.
- ❖ We call on the Governor and the General Assembly to meet the constitutional obligation of a balanced budget. Since the election of Gov. Blagojevich, the state's operating debt has mushroomed to nearly \$3 billion.
- ❖ We call on the Illinois Congressional delegation to unite behind efforts to make permanent the tax cuts in the Economic Growth & Tax Recovery Act of 2001.
- ❖ We call on the Congress to replace the federal income tax with a simpler, fairer, more affordable alternative.
- ❖ We call on the Congress to reform the Social Security system – before it's too late.
- ❖ We call on the Congress to defeat S-2433, Sen. Barack Obama's Global UN Tax.
- ❖ We call on the United States Senate to reject treaties which cede the powers and rights of the American people to the United Nations and other international agencies.
- ❖ Illinois Republicans take pride in our party's landmark initiatives to reform the public welfare system and call on the Governor and the General Assembly to press further reforms, not only for the sake of taxpayers but especially for the dignity of those whose lives are too dependent on government.
- ❖ Alarmed at growing predictions that Democrats in the General Assembly are planning to hike the state's individual and corporate income taxes – most likely after the 2008 election – Illinois Republicans stand united against any such increase.

#### **ENHANCING HEALTH CARE FOR ILLINOIS CITIZENS**

To prevent health care from being bogged down in the morass of government bureaucracy, free market solutions must be fostered for delivery of affordable, accessible, quality health care to Illinois citizens. Illinois Republicans reject the socialized medicine schemes being promoted by our two United States Senators and by majority Democrats in Springfield. Health care policies should: Encourage competition among insurers and increase the availability of insurance coverage opportunities Offer nationwide portability to breadwinners who need to change jobs or move;

- ❖ Foster accessibility by lowering costs and putting individuals and families in charge of their own healthcare decisions;
- ❖ Simplify and reduce the paperwork with which our healthcare providers are burdened;
- ❖ Encourage healthy lifestyles by offering tax credits to those who under-utilize the healthcare system;
- ❖ Enhance accountability and consumer choice by requiring doctors to publish their fees; and
- ❖ Restore the public trust by vigorously investigating and prosecuting Medicare and Medicaid fraud.

## **REFORMING OUR CIVIL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Though modest steps have been taken toward reforming our civil courts, massive problems continue to permit the Trial Bar to reap huge rewards from an unbalanced system.

- ❖ Illinois Republicans support capping noneconomic damages in civil lawsuits, offering just compensation for real harms.
- ❖ Illinois Republicans vehemently oppose the Democrats' 2008 proposal to reinstate the Structural Work Act, which would restore a system of double jeopardy for Illinois employers. The Workers Compensation system exists to ensure compensation for injured workers; reinstating the Structural Work Act not only is unnecessary but would send a signal to employers across America that Illinois, under Democrat rule, is not ready to do business; such a move would actually cost jobs for Illinois workers.

## **PROMOTING ILLINOIS AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture remains Illinois' core industry. Agriculture built the state, and the state's growth and success continue to depend upon farm families. Illinois Republicans know that Illinois farmers feed the nation, create thousands of jobs, provide vital raw material for the production of alternative fuels and drive hundreds of local economies.

- ❖ Republicans are appalled at the Blagojevich Administration's indifference to this key sector and his use of Illinois farms as a source for state revenue through increased fees.
- ❖ Illinois Republicans continue to back ag-business in further development and promotion of bio-fuels as one resource for energy independence, noting Illinois farmers' dominance in production of corn and soybeans grown for this purpose.
- ❖ Recognizing the unique burden the death tax imposes on the passing of family farms from one generation to the next, Illinois Republicans urge the Governor and General Assembly to repeal the reinstated state death tax and urge the President and Congress to make permanent the suspension of the federal estate tax.
- ❖ Illinois Republicans believe in free – and fair – trade. We support efforts to expand foreign markets for the goods produced by Illinois farmers as well as other Illinois businesses.
- ❖ Illinois Republicans support elimination of the capital gains tax, which penalizes the transfer of assets, discouraging investment by Illinois farmers and limiting the enjoyment of their retirement.

## **PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

As the party of Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican Party has a long tradition of respecting the environment, allowing for the responsible use of natural resources to benefit the present generation while preserving our natural resources and heritage for future generations.

The best way to ensure a clean environment while respecting private property rights is to apply sound scientific evidence and a determined focus on balance when making environmental policy.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

Illinois Republicans call on all citizens of Illinois to join us in restoring to Illinois government the principles enunciated in this Platform, principles which have guided our Party and which motivate us to active involvement in the political arena.

Above all, our Party is poised to replace the current corrupt leadership which the Democratic Party continues to offer this state.

Our Platform offers real policies for change, policies which would actually solve and not just talk about serious problems facing our citizens.

Join us for change. Together we can restore Illinois to our proud heritage of hard work, personal responsibility, entrepreneurship and respect for the inalienable rights to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.