



# Independence Party of Minnesota

## State Platform

### ***Economic Growth and Small Business***

The Independence Party believes a strong, free, and engaged working middle class is a key driver of economic growth and investment. Government policies that favor the political and economic elite restrict growth and lead to wealth inequality. Higher levels of inequality and a smaller working middle class diminish public engagement in government, and reduce broad acceptance of free market values.

We believe that small businesses are the backbone of a strong and thriving economy. We support policy that creates incentives for entrepreneurship, reduces burdensome start up regulations, provides for opportunities to compete and empowers small business owners to operate as they see fit.

#### ***We Support:***

- Sunday Sales of all legal products
- The legalization, taxation, and regulation of cannabis
- State-regulated online legal gambling
- Maintaining Minnesota's property tax relief provisions for small business
- Increased efforts to assist businesses with internships and educational Partnerships
- Employer Paid Sick Leave
- Strong banking regulations such as Glass-Steagall and regulation of derivatives
- Breaking up of "too-big-to-fail" banks

### ***Infrastructure and Transportation***

The Independence Party believes that maintaining and improving our entire state's infrastructure is one of the key duties of state government and thus should be given high priority, something the other parties have failed to do. This failure has resulted in structurally deficient bridges, and aging and crumbling wastewater/sewer systems throughout the state along with inadequate infrastructure and poor regional development in Greater Minnesota.

#### ***We Support:***

- Personal Rapid Transit and other forms of mass transit
- "Border-to-Border" development of broadband internet access

## ***Election, Campaign, and Government Reform***

Elections should not be driven by special interest money, overly restrictive ballot access and debate criteria, and/or affiliation with one of two major political parties. We believe a better election process, including partial public funding of campaigns and alternative voting methods, will lead to more civil campaigns, legislatures that are more reflective of the general populace and, ultimately, reformed government that is inclusive and “by the people” in a way that doesn’t exist today.

### ***We Support:***

- Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)/Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) and allowing all cities the option to adopt it
- An independent nonpartisan legislative redistricting commission
- Same-day voter registration
- Term limits for elected officials at the state and federal level
- Immediate reinstatement of the Political Contribution Refund program

### ***We Oppose:***

- The “Citizen’s United” ruling to such a degree that amending the U.S. Constitution is in order

## ***Civil Rights and Equality***

The Independence Party of Minnesota supports policies that honor an individual's right and capacity to decide what is best for themselves. We believe in an inclusive society that protects everyone's rights, and one where Americans have the right to be free of discriminatory treatment because of their race, religion, gender, political beliefs or other labels. Furthermore, we know there is no personal freedom without privacy and we should, therefore, be free from unwarranted searches, detentions, seizures and mass secret surveillance.

### ***We Support:***

- Strong defense of the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights and the Constitution of Minnesota
- The right to purchase and bear arms by competent and law-abiding citizens following an adequate background check
- Oregon Death with Dignity (assisted suicide) legislation
- Workers’ rights to organize and bargain collectively

## ***Criminal Justice***

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world to the detriment of the taxpayers and society. We support policies and programs that reverse this trend and allow former offenders to reintegrate into society upon their release. We believe in a fair, affordable, and accessible justice system for all. We believe in restorative justice and an end to the war on drugs.

### ***We Support:***

- Restoration of voting rights to felons immediately upon release from incarceration
- The use of body cameras by law enforcement
- A public defender system in Minnesota that is in better alignment to the American Bar Association's national standards and *Gideon vs. Wainwright* (reduced caseloads)
- The decriminalization of all drugs so that addiction is treated as a public health problem

### ***We Oppose:***

- Civil asset forfeiture without a criminal conviction
- The continued militarization of local police departments
- The privatization of prisons
- Prosecution of medical cannabis patients

## ***Education***

The Independence Party considers education a primary method of achieving personal freedoms, public safety, public health, and prosperity for all. We expect state government to foster the effectiveness of a multi-faceted educational system. We also consider education a states' rights issue, and favor significant shifts of responsibility and involvement in education issues from the federal government to state governments.

### ***We Support:***

- A varied educational system which would include but are not necessarily limited to: Pre-K, primary, secondary and post-secondary schools such as private, public, charter, home-schooling, on-line, etc.
- A varied system of adult educational options such as English as a second language, job retraining, schooling for inmates, etc.
- A strong public library system

## ***Taxes and Budgets***

The Independence Party believes in a tax system that is simple in its implementation, easy to understand, and structured so it cannot be used as a political tool to favor one group over another.

Furthermore, we believe in fiscal restraint and responsibility in government with a budgeting and spending process that limits irresponsible spending. We believe in budget reporting and formulation that leads to a clear and transparent picture of the financial health of the state and national governments that does not exist today.

### ***We Support:***

- Structurally- balanced budgets that avoid the shifting of expenses or borrowing to make them appear balanced
- Making it a priority to reduce the total national debt as a percentage of gross national product
- Budget projections that honestly report the future costs of government programs, including future liabilities such as government pensions
- Accurately reporting the U.S. National Debt by including the sum of all debt owed to public bondholders and all debt owed to federal trust funds such as the Social Security Trust Fund
- A progressive taxation system

### ***We Oppose:***

- Unfunded government mandates

## ***Authentic and Innovative Leadership***

We look for and offer leadership that acts for the greater good, prepares us for the future and remains accountable to the citizenry while valuing transparency and honesty above expediency.

The Independence Party believes that true leadership demands input and solicitation of opposing viewpoints with fair and open consideration of the same with debate conducted publicly and openly. The use of a variety of methods, including technology, should be utilized to broaden input and allow for affordable and adequate provisions of the citizenry to address grievances.

### ***We Support:***

- Measuring the results of government with time-specific, measurable goals that are monitored to determine if actual progress is being made or not
- The separation of religion and state for the benefit of all

- Broad use of technology to bring government to the people in areas of hearings, meetings and testimony
- Establishing alternative legal service models such as limited-license legal technicians

***We Oppose:***

- Government-imposed, state-sponsored morality or values being placed on private individuals of good conscience with differing views

## ***Natural Resources and Energy***

The Independence Party of Minnesota believes in pursuing responsible and sustainable use of our natural resources and that government at all levels must be prudent and responsible when it buys, sells or leases natural resources. As the Land of Sky-Blue Water, special emphasis must be placed on the cleanliness and long term health of our groundwater, lakes and rivers.

Furthermore we encourage renewable energy and investment in its development to ensure our independence from foreign energy sources, ensure future generations have adequate access to affordable energy, and to ensure ours and future generations enjoy healthy and robust natural resources.

***We Support:***

- Strong enforcement of environmental protection laws
- The “Buffer Initiative”
- Natural vegetative barriers statewide for the protection of groundwater and waterways
- A shared governance approach (government, corporate, NGO, farmers, etc.) in addressing water and natural resource issues
- Renewable energy
- Nuclear Energy

***We Oppose:***

- Hydraulic fracturing (fracking) for hydrocarbon extraction

## ***National Security***

The foremost responsibility of the federal government is the defense and security of the nation and its people. To that end, we believe in maintaining superiority in our strategic systems including technology, space, and cyber warfare.

Outside of honoring our treaty commitments, we reject military intervention without a clear threat to our national security, expect clear explanations of what that threat is, demand an enumeration of the specific objectives and desired end results, and require the approval of congress except when time requires immediate action.

***We Support:***

- Curbing nuclear proliferation
- Curbing cyber-terrorism

***We Oppose:***

- Bombings, and targeted killings of, U.S. Citizens
- The government's amassing of vast databases and cataloging of "suspicious activities"

## ***Agriculture***

The Independence Party of Minnesota believes in maintaining agriculture's traditional role in supporting Minnesota's economy and recognize its future potential to address the state's broader natural resource goals. We support the USDA Farm Bill's trend toward risk management policies, but favor a more coordinated approach between the commodity, energy and conservation titles.

At the state level a continued investment in public-private partnerships to expand the uses of agriculture's commodities and supporting local food ecosystems can add wealth to the varied sized and diverse agriculture enterprises and bring healthy foods to consumers and institutions. We recognize the emerging "sustainability" demands from corporate supply chains, drinking water utilities, government watershed regulations and NGOs as generally legitimate, but in great need of unifying policies to return value back to the landscape.

***We Support:***

- The legalization and use of industrial hemp
- Tying farm bill support to natural resource management
- The development of local food economies in urban and rural areas