

The Contract with Republicans

As citizens who have given their support, loyalty, and resources to the Republican Party, we propose an agreement on principles to restore the bonds of trust between the people and their elected representatives.

In 1994, the Republican Party offered a Contract with America consisting of an agenda and a series of reforms that would be acted upon if citizens chose to elect them as their representatives. The People did elect a majority of Republicans for the U.S. House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years.

In turn, we now offer a Contract with Republicans. This contract, however, does not consist of an agenda or a set of reforms applicable to a specific historical context or binding for a single election. Instead, we offer a Contract of agreement based on a set of timeless principles.

We offer principles rather than an agenda in order to make plain to any person who would serve as our representative what we require of them. We will trust the crafting of specific agendas, guided by these principles, to the capable hands of those we elect to represent us.

Furthermore, we believe that a clear statement of principles is most equitable to both the representative and those represented. Elected officials often spend much of their energies with the concerns of reelection. This is not necessarily a condemnation of those activities but rather a recognition of the politics of public service. The public servant's disproportionate focus on reelection and pleasing competing constituencies often results in compromise of the very principles that first led the individual to seek an elected office. We seek to lift that burden from our representatives, giving them an unprecedented advantage over their opponents.

The simple terms of our Contract are that (1) our elected representatives will make every attempt to govern in accordance with the principles set forth in this Contract and appeal to these principles when providing rationale for judgments that are questioned by The People, and (2) in return, we will reward those representatives with our votes, loyalty, and the support of our resources.

We will replace those representatives who do not govern according to these principles with those who will. No one will have grounds to protest because we have made our expectations clear. Likewise, representatives abiding by these principles have the full assurance of our support both while seeking public office and while governing.

Our expectation is that our representatives will govern according to these principles, support others who abide by them regardless of their party affiliation, and oppose those who would govern in opposition to them. It is in that spirit that we submit the following principles:

FIRST: All human life has value. We believe in and embrace a set of enduring moral truths, subject to neither time nor circumstance. We concur with the founders that one such truth is that all people have an unalienable right to life and we assert that human life has inherent value and should therefore be protected. We cannot speak of matters of individual rights without first professing the unique value of human life as deserving of rights. It is upon this basic premise that all other principles for governance rest.

SECOND: All people are created equal. Abraham Lincoln stated that our nation was "conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." We demand that those who govern us recognize the innate equality of all people and exhibit that recognition in their conduct of the affairs that affect the citizens of this country. A government committed to the equality of its citizens will refrain from discrimination in all its forms. We further understand that the equality of persons is wholly separate from the equality of their circumstance, and any attempt by a government to impose the latter is a direct denial of the former. That is, a government that imposes reforms to equalize the welfare of one group of citizens to another is explicitly stating that the first group, armed with identical liberties to the second, is incapable of increasing their welfare without the strong arm of government – they are branded as inferior and unequal to their fellow citizens.

THIRD: Government must promote personal liberty. We recognize that the country flourishes through the liberty of The People in matters of private property, commerce, family, religion, and other matters of human endeavor. Governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed, and we consent only to government restrictions on the personal liberties of honest citizens through the legislature when the practice of those liberties or the manner of their practice infringes on the rights of others to life and liberty.

FOURTH: Government must promote personal responsibility. Liberty requires responsibility. Government must respect the ability of The People to manage their own welfare. We will not elect representatives who doubt the ability of The People to do so. We will reject representatives who support radical reforms designed to seize responsibility, and therefore liberty, from The People. We believe it is the proper role of government to promote personal responsibility in all people and to remove barriers that would prohibit the exercise thereof. We assert that the practice of personal responsibility in private life will foster responsibility for others in the local community. A spirit of community may be chosen voluntarily by responsible citizens; community involuntarily imposed by government mandate will fail.

FIFTH: Above all, the government must be concerned with the safety and defense of The People. We demand that our representatives support the defense of our Nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and secure our borders. To this end, we demand that the government fully support our armed forces with training, equipment, and post-combat care. While our soldiers are engaged in conflict, we firmly demand that our representatives support their efforts and their mission. It is the grave responsibility of the elected representatives of the United States to declare war. Should they not then support the mission of our brave men and women through the successful completion of the conflict?

SIXTH: The size of government must be limited. An expanding federal government necessarily seizes powers currently given to local governments and The People. Government programs that would control the personal property, finances, and health decisions of its citizens create an unequal shift in the balance of power between The People and the government. The People are forced to invest in such programs through their taxes. Citizens who would oppose such programs, once enacted, are therefore forced to vote against their own interests and investments. They will quickly find they have no representation in return for their taxation because those candidates who prefer liberty and personal responsibility over the current source of The People's personal welfare – the government program – will be unelectable. We demand that the power of government be strictly limited in obedience to the U.S. Constitution and that our representatives reduce government control, welfare programs, and tax burdens on The People so they can pursue happiness as they see fit. We require that representatives aggressively develop reforms to restrict the power of government where it infringes upon the rights of The People, reduce costs of necessary programs by removing inefficiencies, and reduce spending that does not support the principles defined within this Contract.

SEVENTH: Our heritage deserves respect and must be preserved. We The People revere the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the republic bestowed to us by our founders and paid for with the blood of patriots both now and throughout our unique history. Our duty is to preserve what Providence, through our like-minded forefathers, has given us and employ prudence when change is needed. We hold suspect any arrogant notion that radical change can improve upon the nation we have inherited and its traditional institutions. We demand, therefore, that our representatives strictly adhere to the Constitution of the United States and take action when it is threatened, especially those statutes, commonly under attack, which prevent the government from interfering with The People's rights, such as the free exercise of religion, the freedom of speech and press, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, and the right to private property. We demand the appointment of and support for judges who strictly interpret the Constitution. Finally, we insist that our representatives protect those institutions and rights that have served our society well, such as traditional marriage and private property rights, and oppose government attempts to redefine or abolish them.

EIGHTH: The United States is exceptional. We demand that our representatives passionately embrace the principle that America is exceptional in the world today and throughout history – We are Ronald Reagan's "shining city on a hill." Our country quickly rose to greatness among the nations of the world through governance by these principles by those who came before us. We state our firm commitment that our form of government, through the freedom of The People, is unparalleled in history and serves as an example to the world. Given this, it is our duty to preserve American sovereignty in all government conduct that affects our citizens and soldiers. The success of our great Nation and The People is a matter of national pride - not to be apologized for but to provide witness, to all people of the world, of the blessings of liberty.

Respecting the judgment of our fellow citizens who seek to represent us, we hereby pledge our names to this Contract with Republicans.