The 2025-27 Independent Party of Oregon Platform was ratified by members on Dec 17, 2024

Preamble

The American public and our party's membership overwhelmingly believe that our political system is deeply polarized and that governments at all levels are failing to address the biggest and most persistent problems we face.

A majority of our members believe that Oregon is headed in the wrong direction in terms of government effectiveness, public safety, and quality of life.

A majority of Independents believe that government service levels have deteriorated at the state and local levels. Despite greater funding, many agencies and government units have not returned to pre-pandemic levels of service.

Well-intentioned programs like Measure 110, which passed with majorities in nearly every county, did not deliver as promised. Persistent homelessness, mental illness, and addiction have worsened and are more visible on the streets in communities in every corner of the state.

Despite historic investments, our systems of criminal justice, mental health and addiction treatment seem less capable of addressing problems than a decade ago.

This perception of failed government performance, sometimes accurate and sometimes exaggerated, has helped fuel a crisis of faith in our political system.

The Independent Party of Oregon is committed to helping rebuild people's faith in our civic institutions by making our political system less polarized and more responsive to the concerns and needs of ordinary citizens rather than lobbyists for powerful special interests and state agencies.

We are also committed to holding elected officials and government agencies accountable to their moral and fiduciary obligation to all citizens to ensure that tax dollars are spent wisely.

We expect elected officials to hold agency administrators accountable for their performance in the implementation of policies. Policy makers, elected officials and agency managers must do a better job of working collaboratively toward shared solutions, come out of silos and remove barriers to ensure that the public institutions responsible for implementing policies are meaningfully and effectively addressing the problems they have been tasked to solve.

The Independent Party of Oregon (IPO) is committed to ensuring that the blessings of liberty and prosperity are broadly shared.

We are committed to policies that address the effects of rising heat and increasing wildfires on Oregon's waterways, communities and forests.

We stand against extremism, crisis entrepreneurs, and those who seek to place private concerns above the public interest. We support policies that are intended to meaningfully bring us together. We work toward reconciliation and to ensure that mistakes of the past are not repeated.

We advocate for a regulated free market that creates opportunities for everyone and paths to success for ourselves and for our posterity.

That means we need an excellent educational system from kindergarten through university; prudent investments in workforce development; to protect the right of workers to unionize; and to prevent the transfer of private costs to public expense (toxic emissions, depleted waterways, etc.).

Fundamental Personal Rights

A bedrock principle of the modern democratic tradition is the expansion of liberty to those that have historically been denied it.

We support the modern understanding of the rights protected by the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights and the Oregon Constitution, including the important "unenumerated rights" involving personal liberty and dignity guaranteed to all by Oregon Constitution, Article I, § 33, and the Ninth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

> “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.”

These natural rights include the right of people to speak, to vote freely, to marry, and to make intimate medical and family planning decisions without government interference.

We support state and federal laws and amendments to the Oregon Constitution, if necessary, to secure these rights for all citizens.

Government reform

- We support protecting and strengthening of campaign finance laws passed by the Oregon legislature in 2024, which must be faithfully implemented by the Secretary of State and other government officials.

- We believe that additional campaign finance reforms are needed, including greater disclosure of the true sources of funding for political advertising, particularly “independent expenditures.”

- We support reforms to increase transparency in lobbying and disclosing the sources of funding for lobbyists.

- We support using a more representative voting system (such as STAR voting, approval voting, or ranked choice voting) that more accurately translate voter preferences into election outcomes.

- We support a “Final Five” primary system that would allow all Oregon voters to cast primary votes for all candidates, with (1) the top five candidates for each office advancing to the general election and (2) candidates able to display on the ballot the names of political parties that have endorsed them.

- We support modernizing the initiative and referendum processes (including an “Initiative Primary”), so that voters can actually vote on propositions they wish to consider.

Public Safety and Harm Reduction

Oregon has not effectively provisioned its public health and safety resources.

Oregon experienced the second-highest rate of unsheltered homelessness in the country in 2023.[1] Oregon has the second highest drug addiction rate in the country. Oregon is last in the country in terms of treatment for people with addiction[2]. Oregon is 8th in the country in terms of the incidence of property crime[3].

- Oregon needs to do more to ensure adequate treatment capacity for people struggling with mental illness and addiction that lack insurance.

- Oregon needs to do more to prioritize public safety and discourage repeat criminal offense (lower recidivism).

- Oregon needs to treat public-safety related crises as problems to address now.

- We support justice reform that is data-driven, cost-effective and that is aimed at reducing individual and community harm.

Education

- We urge greater investment in mental health care training for providers who agree to work in Oregon communities that lack adequate mental health care access.

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[1] 2023 Annual Homelessness in America Report.

[2] Source: KGW news report. THIS REFERS TO A REPORT THAT HAS BEEN DELETED FROM THE INTERNET. INSTEAD USE https://drughelpline.org/states-with-the-worst-drug-problems

[3] Koin reporting on FBI UCR statistics. THIS IS ACTUALLY A REFERENCE TO A REPORT BY U.S. NEWS, WHICH IS NOT THE MOST CREDIBLE SOURCE.

- We urge greater investment in regional vocational Career Technical Education centers to provide enhanced skills for electricians, mechanics, plumbers, wastewater engineers and other needed skills, as well as increased funding for fields related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

- We affirm our support for public education and respect for the role of teachers and other educators in the development of our children.

Extremism

- We oppose the use of violence, intimidation, misinformation, property destruction, threats and related forms of abuse for political or personal ends.

- We are concerned about the role of non-profit organizations, political committees and dark money groups in promulgating political extremist, anti-government and anarchist rhetoric in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

- We believe in free speech, and will use our speech to challenge the dissemination of false narratives and fake news.

Gun Rights

- We oppose local gun laws intended to prevent a district attorney, sheriff, or other local law enforcement, from enforcing state or federal laws.

Environment

- We support policies to reduce emissions that cause climate change and policies to make our waterways and communities safer and more resilient to the impacts of rising heat, including forest fires, drought, and related problems associated with climate change.

- Policymakers should act from the premise that the United States has 2-4% of the world's oil reserves but produces 20% of the world's oil and consumes 20% of the world's oil.

- We support the protection of Oregon forests from the impacts of climate change and the preservation and restoration of mature habitat and watersheds.

Gambling

- We recognize the role that Oregon's federally recognized tribes and local small businesses play in our state's gambling system and oppose further expansion of gambling outside of tribal casinos or traditional lottery outlets.

- We oppose further expansion of state lottery gambling to handheld devices or other new means or methods or games.

Housing

- We support policies to make housing more affordable, including but not limited to incentivizing the construction of below-market-rate housing and expanding Oregon's inclusionary zoning laws to more categories of housing.

Civil Rights

- We support the further restoration of traditional tribal lands from existing public lands and the restoration of tribal rights in the waterways of Oregon.

- We support the creation of an Ombudsman in the Oregon Department of Labor to investigate citizen civil rights complaints not related to employment.