



Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas

May 2005

LP Legislative Efforts Increase Respect

"For the first time to my knowledge various people at the State Legislature are actually seeking out the opinion of the Libertarian Party on selected issues," LP Legislative Advisor Robert "Rock" Howard reported in an April email to State Executive Committee members.

According to Rock a few state representatives now know the LP and respect us enough to casually ask for libertarian opinions on bills coming up for a vote. Also, Rock reports that after the LP testifies against a bill, particularly when the Party is the only ones who testified against a bill that made it through committee, he is sometimes asked for more details by House staff or the Texas Research Council before the matter comes up for a vote on the floor.

"Even for bills where we did not testify, the Texas House Research Council will sometimes call us and ask for an opinion," Rock reports. The Council is tasked with providing anonymous comments for and against bills that are coming up for a vote on the House floor.

"They know we are often good for an opinion that is a bit different than the usual ones that they collect," Rock said.

Another sign of our increased influence is the reaction at the April 27 public hearing for the LP's ballot access bill HB 1721. State Chair Patrick Dixon described the hearing as a "love-fest" in an email.

At the much delayed the Democratic Party of Texas came out in full support of the bill.

"We had quite a few people

press release on the issue. speak in favor of our bill, and only one against," Patrick said.

The Republican Party of Texas state office submitted a written affirmation opposing the bill, but at the same time a GOP county chair spoke in favor. Several voter rights groups, the Green and Constitution Parties, and the Kinky Friedman for Governor campaign now support the bill.

Kinky Friedman's campaign got on board after an April 25 LP press release covered by the Austin American Statesman pointed out that his campaign would be the "immediate beneficiary" of the bill since the LP had already secured ballot access for 2006.

HB 1721 if passed would end the practice of "primary screenout" and lengthen the time allowed to collect petition signatures to get alternative party or independent candidates on the ballot.

The bill was filed by Rep. Todd Baxter of Auston on behalf of the LP after Rep. Terry Keel of Austin helped secure the draft language of the bill. Rep. Mark Strama signed on as a joint author as well as Rep. Keel and Suzanna Hupp of Lampasas as co-authors.

The LP has also been successful in getting an amendment to HCR 44 that would add a Libertarian Party representative to a commission that would reform Texas election laws. The amendment was put forward by Rep. Rafeal Anchia of Dallas with the blessing of Rep. Mary Denny of Flower Mound, the committee chair and author of the original resolution.

Rock testified at the April 13 hearing on the bill and the LP issued a

press release on the issue.

"The re-write of our election code must not exclude the representation of independent and non-partisan voters," said Libertarian Party of Texas state chair Patrick Dixon in support of the proposed amendment.

The resolution calls for the Lt. Governor and the House Speaker to create a commission to update and modernize the Texas Election Code, a process that was last done in 1985. The commission would clarify the code, remove references to outdated voting mechanisms and to bring the code into compliance with recent federal legislation and judicial decisions pertaining to elections.

Patrick contacted the leadership of the Green and Constitution Parties of Texas, as well as the political action group Independent Texans. All expressed their willingness to have the Libertarian Party represent their interests on the commission.

The LP's success in the 2004 ballot access petition drive—submitting 82,458 signatures collected in just 75 days, which neither the Green Party or Independent Ralph Nader were able to do—is one factor in the increased recognition. Our presence on the 2006 ballot, earned by two statewide candidates vote percentages, and our proven ability to impact a house race—the LP specifically targeted Republican State Rep. Jack Stick in 2004 and cost him the race—have also gotten attention.

Another important factor has been Rock's testimony on behalf of the LP on a variety of bills and his work with several legislators to improve proposed legislation.



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Submissions of party news, meeting minutes, photographs, biographies of candidates, suggested websites, letters to the editor, etc. is encouraged. Please send to Laura@libertyworks.org to submit.

Around the State: Activist Update

April was a busy month for Libertarian activists including our six candidates participating in May 7 elections.

Austin City Council place 4 candidate **Wes Benedict** made news for his campaign by filing complaints on his opponent Betty Dunkerley with the Texas Ethics Commission, the Austin City Clerk and the Austin Ethic Commission.

Benedict campaign treasurer **Art DiBianca** uncovered numerous inaccuracies in the incumbent's campaign finance reports which are publically available online. Art found that in 2002 the incumbent skipped eight days of contributions and failed to account for \$62,000 among several other lapses including exceeding limits on donations from non-Austinites.

Dunkerley, the city's former finance director, was reported by many to be a "finance guru."

The Austin American Statesman had an article on the charges April 19. Copies of the complaints are online at wesbenedict.com.

Wes, who earned 35% of the vote in a 2003 run for city council, has about 90 volunteers working on his campaign. They have distributed about 20,000 leaflets and he has "No Tolls Wes," signs out.

Lago Vista City Council candidate **Patrick Dixon** participated in candidate forums April 13 and 18. His campaign has signs and has been distributing brochures door-to-door. He has also sent a postcard to every voter in the last city election. Patrick reports that getting voters to the polls is a factor in the race and that the campaign has hired Erin Hollinden to make phone calls to voters prior to election day.

Anna Mayor candidate **Kevin Anderson** reports that he's raised about \$500 for his campaign and that 65% of that came from Democrats. He has signs out and has seen a spike in visits to his website during early vot-

ing.

"I have focused on the new side of Anna as my strategy. We outnumbered old Anna in votes 4 to 1," he said.

Other candidates on May 7 ballots include **Barbara Cunningham** for Caldwell City Council; **Steven Austin**, a write-in candidate for Austin City Council Place 1; and **Clyde Garland and Daniel Graalum** both running for Brazos ISD Board of Education place 6.

Houston area Libertarians were active this month at the NRA National Convention held April 15, 16, and 17. Activists including Harris County Chair **Jeff Daiell**, **Lyndell Rottman**, **Monica Granger** and **White Marriott** were present outside the convention hall to let Second Amendment supporters know about the LP. The group held a banner that said "The FIRST line of defense for the SECOND Amendment is America's THIRD party, Vote Libertarian." The banner was paid for by Brazos activist **Clyde Garland** and produced at cost by Austin activist **Rick McGinnis**.

Several audiences heard the LP message in April as well as **Jeff Daiell** was the guest speaker at three Wharton Community College classes on April 18 and **Jeff, Brent Sullivan and Guy McLendon** spoke at a NORML fundraiser. All the LP speakers were well received. Jeff got the crowd on their feet by asking them to stand up for their rights. "It's not very sporting to have a war against an inanimate object," Brent said during his speech and reframed the War on Drugs as a war on individual rights. Guy gave out copies of the Constitution and told how the war on drugs is a violation of that document.

Don Richards of Montgomery County had a letter calling for privatization of education in the April 9 *The Villager* and the county party held a meeting April 21.

Yes, I want the Texas Libertarian Party to Succeed!

Name : _____ Address: _____ City & Zip _____
Phone (evenings): _____ Phone (day): _____ Email: _____
County: _____ Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

- _____ I can distribute Libertarian Party outreach materials.
- _____ I can hold or attend a meeting in my county.
- _____ I can design or host a website for a candidate or county party.
- _____ I am considering running for a local office in 2005.
- _____ I am interested in being an appointed County Chair.

Print this form and mail to:
Libertarian Party
PO Box 27932,
Houston, TX 77227

- _____ Enclosed is a **one-time contribution** to help reach our goals.
- _____ **Monthly Pledge** (please bill my credit card on a monthly basis.)

Amount: ___ \$1,000 ___ \$250 ___ \$100 ___ \$50 ___ \$30 ___ \$10 ___ Other

Please enclose a check or money order made payable to the Libertarian Party of Texas. (No corporate checks, please.)
Or provide the following information to authorize billing to your credit card.

Name on card: _____ Signature: _____
Visa ___ Mastercard ___ American Express ___ Discover ___
Account number: _____ Expiration: (mm/yy) _____

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, and occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. The Libertarian Party of Texas also submits finance reports to the Texas Ethics Commission.

Writers Request Texas Legislative Scorecards

Just for fun I ran the voting records (www.trimonline.org) for all of Ron Paul's Liberty Committee. About 65% scored high with each one having an exception. I did however find two that were just like Ron Paul: Tancredo from Colorado and Flake from Florida.

David DeLamar

The New American, October, 2004 issue featured the voting records on about sixty bills of all the U. S. house and the senate, scoring the voting records from 1 to 100, using Ron Paul's voting record as a 100. The feature of the publication was called "Conservative Index" which is a wonderful education tool for the voters who think they are conservative and that they voted for conservatives.

It seems to me that something

similar to the conservative index for the state of Texas would do wonders for the education of the voters in the state of Texas as well as all other states in the U.S.

This could be done quarterly and expanded each quarter for each year or term of the elected official. Should the Libertarian Party in each state make this available on the web for public consumption, I believe that the party would receive the positive recognition the party so badly needs. Citizens and interested voters would be seeking the party out, rather than the reverse.

D. L. Hendrex, rstridl@aol.com

Texas Legislative Advisor Robert "Rock" Howard recently informed the State Executive Committee that he will be putting together a

Legislative Scorecard and will be asking Libertarians around the state to participate in the fine tuning of that document by ranking the importance of many of the key bills that have come up in the current session.

He is also interested in reviving the Legislative Watchdog concept and having a team of Libertarians from around the state involved with the work at the state house.

As Legislative Advisor this session Rock has singlehandedly kept track of numerous bills of interest to the LP and offered testimony on many. He has also been the lead in securing sponsors for our ballot access bill and in lobbying for it and our inclusion in the Election Code rewrite process.

Anyone interested in helping with the scorecard should contact Rockmh@austin.rr.com soonest.

Events of Interest to Texas Libertarians

May 3 (Tues.) 10:30 a.m. Citizens Against the Trans-Texas Corridor Rally, South Lawn of the Capitol, Austin.

May 3 (Tues.) 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. Travis County LP meeting, Mekong River Restaurant, 215 E. 6th Street, Austin. For information contact Chair Rock Howard at rockmh@austin.rr.com.

May 6 (Thurs.) 8 p.m . PBS Connection Television Show on Channel 8 in the Houston area shows episode on Patriot Act with Harris County LP Chair Jeff Daiell. Repeats Sunday the 8th at 5 p.m.

May 7 (Sat.) Nonpartisan Municipal Election Day. LP Candidates for Anna City Council, Austin City Council, Brazos ISD, Caldwell City Council, and Lago Vista City Council.

May 7 (Sat.) Noon Brazos County LP Meeting, China King Buffet, 2402 Texas Ave. S., College Station. Speaker will be defense attorney Bruno Shimek on topic of the most common mistakes individuals make when first encountering law enforcement. Contact Chris Jagge at c_jagge@msn.com for information.

May 7 (Sat.) 4 p.m. DFW Area Free State Project Meeting, Two Rows on Greenville, Dallas. Contact James Strater for information at james@reallibertynow.com.

May 10 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Williamson County LP Meeting, Hunan Lion Chinese Restaurant, Round Rock.

May 10-12 (Tues.-Thurs.) 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Constitution Class by Michael Badnarik. Grapevine. Registration information available at www.constitutionpreservation.org.

May 14-15 (Sat.-Sun.) Libertarian National Committee Meeting. Intercontinental Hotel, Addison, TX. Local activists may sit in on the meeting. Contact LNC member Rick McGinnis at 512-413-5928 for information and before planning to attend.

May 17 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting, Unlimited Thought Bookstore, 5525 Blanco Suite 107, San Antonio. For information contact Davydoodle_@hotmail.com.

May 21 (Sat.) Noon Dallas County LP Meeting, Rockfish Grill, 5331 E. Mockingbird #160, Dallas. For information contact Tim Lebsack at 214-824-2697 or tim.lebsack@yahoo.com.

May 21 (Sat.) 2 p.m. Collin County LP Meeting, IHOP, 933 N. Central Exp. Plano. Contact Michelle Shingal at 469-877-4661 or lptxcollincountychair@yahoo.com.

May 21 (Sat.) 3:30 p.m. East Texas LP Meetup, Up a Creek Coffee, 109 E. Main, Whitehouse. For information contact Smith County Chair Eric Rathbone at rill0001@earthlink.net.

May 21 (Sat.) 6 p.m. Parker County LP Meeting, location to be announced. Contact County Chair Daniel Barker at parkerlpt@yahoo.com.

May 25 (Wed.) 8 p.m. Austin area Libertarian Meetup, Triumph Cafe, 3808 Spicewood Springs Rd., Austin. James Hammett is host. See www.meetup.com for information.

June 11 (Sat.) Noon to 4 p.m. SLECT Meeting, China King Buffet, 2402 Texas Ave. S., College Station. Phone 979-694-7959 for directions. Contact Chair@lptexas.org for information. Lunch available for \$7.30 per person.

June 19 (Sun.) 2005 Liberty Barbeque, Lake Lewisville. Sponsored by the Free State Project North Texas Group. Special guest Michael Badnarik, 2004 LP Presidential Candidate will be attending. For the whole family. More information available at <http://bbq.reallibertynow.com>. RSVP appreciated, also seeking ticket sellers and volunteers. Contact James Strater at james@reallibertynow.com for information.

June 25 (Sat.) LP Entry in Houston Pride Parade. Volunteers needed! Contact Jeff Daiell for information at jeffdaiell@yahoo.com.

September (Date to be announced) Texas State LP Conference, Austin. Details will be posted as they are made available.