



**Independence Alliance**  
Minnesota

## State Platform

Approved in Convention August 12, 2023

***The Independence Party of Minnesota rejects the extremes of the far-left and the far-right. We believe that protecting and preserving Freedom for all citizens, supporting Families and Children, and ensuring Free Markets with limited regulatory burdens are the foundations for personal liberty, economic growth, and prosperity. The Independence Party of Minnesota Platform is based on economically populist and free market solutions with the goal of creating a benevolent, dynamic, and uplifting free society that is focused on the well-being of all to realize their fullest potential.***

***FREEDOM: The Independence Party supports policies that honor an individual's rights and capacity to decide what is best for themselves. We believe in an inclusive society that protects everyone's rights, and where all citizens should be free of discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, sex, and sexual orientation.***

**Reproductive Rights** – The Right to Privacy is fundamentally protected through the Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments. The Right of Women to control their own bodies and make private reproductive and healthcare decisions is essential. Any efforts to infringe on this most basic right must be measured and respectful to both the interests of the woman and potential viability of the child. We believe that Minnesota abortion law now in effect does not adequately reflect the state interest in protecting the fetus after the point of viability.

**Second Amendment** – The Right to Personal Security and Private Property is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. The Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear arms and is a central tenet to preserving one's liberty and protecting one's life and property. Subject to the laws currently set forth by the State of Minnesota, the right to purchase and bear arms shall not be infringed.

**Full Citizenship for Young Adults** – All citizens 18 years and older who participate in our democracy through the vote, serve in the military, and are held to all the responsibilities of an adult citizen including paying taxes and potential incarceration should have all the rights and responsibilities of adult citizenship including the right to obtain and drink alcohol. We must lower the drinking age to 18 to ensure young adults are not treated as less than a full citizen.

**FAMILIES AND CHILDREN:** *Families are the foundation of society. Policies designed to support families and the nurturing of children have been woefully underfunded and unappreciated by current policymakers in Minnesota and throughout the country. We strongly support policies that provide a system of support that enables families to adequately care for their needs and enable their children to thrive.*

**Universal Healthcare** – Everyone should have access to a Medicare-for-all program with guaranteed free catastrophic and hospitalization coverage. Citizens may opt to participate in Part B for basic preventive healthcare with minimal co-pays and annual deductions. Citizens may participate in a Part C option for Private coverage and optional Part D Prescription Drug coverage. Private employers may continue to offer private, market-based health insurance plans.

**Childcare Vouchers** –Vouchers to families that need childcare for infants and young children (two months to three years old) should be made available for use with in-home childcare or providers that meet state requirements.

**Child Labor** – Oppose all efforts to lower barriers to child participation in the labor force including extending hours and ability to work in dangerous workplaces and occupations. Child labor is not an antidote to the Nation’s workforce shortage. Instead, lawmakers at the national level should resolve barriers to legal immigration to build a more stable workforce that can fill these dangerous entry level positions that are critical to our economy.

**EDUCATION:** *The Independence Party considers education a pillar of achieving personal freedoms, public safety and health, and advancing prosperity for all. We know that Public Education provided through state and local governments has been the key to economic advancement for generations and a great contributor to leveling the playing field for economically disadvantaged communities. Strengthening public education and the programs it provides is critical to building stronger communities, growing our economy, and improving the lives of all.*

**Universal Pre-K** – Each School District may opt for state funding for a full day pre-K instructional program for three- to five-year-olds that includes breakfast, lunch, and snacks. After school programs would also be made available for families up until 6 pm at additional costs. All teachers must meet state requirements and be eligible for state funded advanced educational opportunities or student loan forgiveness. Private childcare and educational providers, including home school providers that meet state requirements may also be eligible to receive a per-student allowance for qualified pre-k educational and care programs.

**Fully Fund Public Education** with an emphasis on Evidence Based Reading Instruction for children at all levels. It is imperative that our schools produce students and adults that can adequately read and succeed in our fast-growing high-tech economy. Entry-level Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) programs should be mandatory for all high school students to introduce students to these disciplines and expand interest in pursuing STEM careers.

**Free Community College, Trade, Technical, and Vocational Schools** that prepare students for a variety of occupations – administrative, technical, managerial, including the trades, as well as for

preparation for secondary education in state institutions of higher learning. Encourage partnerships with manufacturing organizations and labor unions that provide apprenticeships and journeyman opportunities that can lead to full-time careers.

**Require Civics Education** – Understanding the workings of government and society is critical to being a more responsible and informed citizen. We support mandatory Civics Education in public schools and at the secondary-education level in all state-supported schools.

**Continued Adult Learning** – Unfortunately many adults leave school with reading capabilities well below the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level. Continued adult education is critical to enabling these adults to better participate in society and succeed in our economy. Partnering with school districts to assist with opportunities to achieve GEDs and/or High School Diplomas for learning adults including incarcerated youth and young adults can have a significant impact on their future success, rehabilitation, and preparation for return to society.

**TAX AND INVESTMENT:** *The Independence Party believes in a tax system that is fair and does not impose undue burdens on working and middle class families. We also oppose excessive taxation on small and medium sized businesses that are essential drivers of state and local economic growth. Furthermore, we support fiscal restraint and responsibility in government with a budget and spending process that limits irresponsible spending.*

**Eliminate the MN State tax on Social Security income.** Minnesota seniors have already made their contributions and deserve the right to enjoy their retirement without the burden of additional taxes.

**Implement a Carbon Tax and Investment Program** that will create a revenue resource that can be used to invest in carbon capture and sustainable technologies that will reduce the state's carbon footprint. It will also enable landowners, tribes, and forestry resources to serve as carbon off-sets that will generate new revenue for rural and tribal communities.

**Eliminate Income taxes** on single member households making less than \$35,000 and dual income households making less than \$65,000.

**Budget Surpluses** must go back to the taxpayers or toward public infrastructure projects. Ideally, any budget surplus funding to be used for state infrastructure projects would be approved via public referendum. At this stage, Minnesota does not have the ability to stage an Initiative or referendum. This needs to be addressed by amendment to the state constitution.

**AGRICULTURE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES:** *The Independence Party is a strong supporter of Agriculture and supports policies and programs designed to support its role as an economic driver of the Minnesota economy and support the development and sustainment of rural communities that are the heart of this economic engine.*

**Eliminate capital gains for family farms and protect the stepped-up basis tax provision.** This is vital to ensure the next generation of farmers and ranchers can continue feeding, clothing, and fueling the world.

**Oppose the federal 'marked-to-market' aka “Farm Killer” proposal.** Marked to Market would tax the unrealized gains of generational farm assets and inflict hundreds of thousands of dollars in new capital gains taxes on American farmers and ranchers, jeopardizing the future of family-owned agricultural operations.

**Expand broadband access to all corners of Minnesota.** Ensure rural communities have affordable and reliable access to high-speed internet.

**Funding for rural healthcare facilities.** Funding is needed to meet the level of service required by those communities including state-subsidized reimbursements levels that enable these facilities to remain open and serving rural populations.

**PRESERVING AND IMPROVING DEMOCRACY:** *The Independence Party believes that elections need to be free and fair, accessible to all, and election outcomes – fairly administered and credibly counted – need to be recognized. This is the basis for our Democracy. Any deviation represents a threat to our democratic system, our basic freedoms, and our way of life. Further, our democratic systems need to be strengthened and improved.*

**Universal Voter Registration and Voter ID** – Provide state-issued Voter Identification Cards to all eligible citizens with a permanent address accompanied by a vigorous public information campaign to ensure broad acceptance and participation. These state ID cards would be issued free of charge every ten years and can be used in conjunction with another form of ID (MN driver’s license, utility bills, rental/lease agreement, etc.) to verify address if the voter has moved since the date of issue.

**Open Primaries** – Implement a “Top Four” Open Primary system that lists all candidates from major parties and those candidates from minor parties that meet state ballot requirements and allows all voters to participate. Forty-nine percent of all voters are registered Independents or unaffiliated with either of the major political parties. An Open Primary provides equal opportunity to all candidates and provides voters with more choices regardless of party or party affiliation.

**Ranked Choice Voting for General Elections** – General Elections will include the top four vote getters in the Primary. Ranked Choice Voting would be implemented for the General Election. If no candidate receives a simple majority, RCV will be used to eliminate the candidate with the least number of votes and apportion their votes to the second choice until one of the remaining candidates achieves a majority of the remaining vote.

**Referendums and Initiatives** – Amend the Minnesota State Constitution to provide for the use of public referendums and initiatives. The public must have a remedy to address issues and provide policy solutions that the Legislative and Executive Branches of State government have been unwilling or unable to address.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** *The Independence Party believes that public safety and the fair administration of the law is a central tenet to personal liberty. You are not free if you are not safe in your community. You are not free if your home, personal property, and loved ones are under threat of violence, crime, and destruction. Our communities require public safety to conduct a vibrant and functioning economy. We support policies and programs that support public safety and the fair administration of justice to all.*

**Restorative Justice** - For most non-violent offences, replace incarceration with restorative justice programs. This would include comprehensive programs of restitution, community service, reconciliation with victims, and rehabilitation counseling.

**Three Strikes** – Violent offenders are 64 percent more likely to repeat violent crimes and be rearrested within 16 months of release from prison. Minnesota needs to enact a Three Strikes Law that puts violent felons behind bars for 25 years or more after their third violent offense. The threat of prison sentences may deter some repeat offenders from committing additional violent crimes and also protect the public from further acts of violence when those felons are incarcerated.

**Community Policing** – Provide additional funding to enable police departments to build effective Community Policing models that will enable greater engagement with the communities they serve through programs to work with all facets of the community – civic/political organizations, non-profits and service providers, private businesses, and local media to create collaborative partnerships to address problems, reduce crimes and increase trust in police.

**Police Social Workers** – Provide funding to increase the numbers of Police Social Workers that work with local police departments. Police Social Workers provide a valuable service to community safety and assist police departments by reducing the call volumes for domestic and mental health situations and provide more effective response to situations involving subjects experiencing mental health crises.

**Drug Courts** – Expand the use of Drug Courts that provide an alternative approach to sentencing non-violent drug offenders and instead place a greater emphasis on education, treatment, monitoring, and rehabilitation that enable offenders to work and participate in society.

**ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES:** *Minnesota is a mining state. Its current iron ore mining operations produce approximately 40 million tons of high-grade iron ore annually which accounts for 75 percent of total U.S. iron ore production. Minnesota is also the home to extensive deposits of minerals such as copper-nickel, titanium, gold, diamonds, and platinum that that are critical to driving the green energy economy and supporting the development of new applications and technologies in aerospace, military, and medical fields. We support the environmentally responsible and sustainable development of these resources in an all-of-the-above strategy of achieving a carbon-free economy and driving economic growth in the state.*

**Innovative Nuclear Energy solutions.** Remove the moratorium on nuclear power plant construction in Minnesota. We support advanced Nuclear Energy technologies (Generation IV) that reduce or eliminate the major risks of old-technology nuclear power plants built in the 1960s and 1970s and offer distinct economic advantages and a critical solution to achieving Minnesota’s stated goal of achieving a carbon-free energy blueprint by 2040.

**AUTHENTIC AND INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP:** *The Independence Party promotes 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 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.*

**Implement Best Practice Methodologies and Technologies for more pragmatic and efficient governance of State programs and resources.** Evidence-based decision-making should be the basis for decisions and policy at all levels of government. This requires a non-biased, systematic process to assess the validity and completeness of evidence.

**Honest, effective leadership dedicated to improving the lives of future generations.** The economic, political, social, and environmental legacy that we leave future generations should be a priority in all public and governmental decisions and policies. Our goal will always be to leave a more democratic, more prosperous, more equitable, and more sustainable society for future generations.