
A winning strategy.

Posted by gatherer - 2008/03/25 08:24

Hello. I'm from Ocean County, and am part of a very small town, which is feeling the adverse impact of Corazine's budget. In effect, the policy of granting no public funding to towns with populations under 5,000 is forcing the town to become Libertarian anyway.

What I am suggesting, especially in southern counties that are overwhelmingly Republican, is that Libertarians register as Democrats, run, infiltrate the party, and sort of take it over. This would work especially well in Ocean County, where Democratic leadership is non-existent.

Local people are already calling us "NRA Democrats", since most people around here are anti- gun control. We also call ourselves "environmentalists for profit", "youth for profit", and "government for profit". It's very easy to take over a weak party in a local town. Once you're in, you can work to change NJ rules regarding third parties. Perhaps in places that are overwhelmingly Republican, the same strategy can be applied to taking over the Republican party. Wait and see what we have planned for our town.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by jboucher - 2008/03/25 15:46

Wow. You're new around here. Cross party lines? Heresy! :)

You're about to be introduced to the wrath of the NJLP. I won't steal their thunder here, and I hope you have thick skin.

I, on the other hand, encourage you to pursue your plan, and urge you to ignore the fossils here that are more interested in promoting the Party than liberty.

Don't be disappointed if the Dem "machine" doesn't instantly love you because you have a "D" after your name. Unless you've contributed to / held fundraisers for the current leadership, you most likely won't make it past the screening (pre-primary vetting). And, if you haven't kissed the ring, they'll support another Dem that has. Also, go find a D committee member in your town, and try to get elected to that. There are almost always empty seats, and an appointment is very likely. Once on the committee, getting screened will be much easier.

Also be aware that hijacking the party in your town won't escape the notice of the County and State orgs. They would rather endorse a Rep and teach you a lesson than allow you to criticize Corzine.

Or move to the FreeState and be appreciated for your activism.

I'm waiting to see what you have in store. Keep us posted, ignore the purists around here, and keep your eye on the prize.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by gatherer - 2008/03/26 06:25

Thanks for the heads up.

In our town, the last three Democratic candidates were selected by write-in votes, including the Mayor, who originally had a handful of his friends write him in as a lark, and ended up actually winning. He delivers pizza.

Luckily, in Ocean County, the Democratic party is so weak, and the leadership so unenergetic, that I actually annointed two candidates to run and they won two years ago. I have another in mind this year, but it'll be harder since it's a presidential election year. In any case, any Libertarian reforms hoped for are stymied by the regulations forcing a town to hire people against its will. On a local level, law enforcement is really the only purpose of government, although the town is seriously considering a proposal to franchise the town name to some brand in lieu of taxing. Not a bad idea.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by Kevin Ferrizzi - 2008/03/29 21:50

Yours is an idea that has been brought up many times. A good friend of mine who serves as a Democratic councilman in my area was the first to mention it to me. Just join us, it'll be great! No thanks. As Boucher pointed out, there is a screening process and plenty of heavies at the county and state level to make a new candidate work their way. We should definitely look to concentrate our efforts where the establishment is weaker, maybe by supporting libertarian leaning Independants in those local elections.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by dwallin3 - 2008/04/14 21:28

I totally agree with you. I live in Logan Twp in Gloucester County. We had three Republicans, the Mayor and two other councilmen get elected and then after the election, swap to Democrat. Two things occurred. The first was that the general opinion in my area is that they sold themselves out to S. Sweeney (Glouc Co. party boss). The second thing is that the Rep party never recovered. The last elections have been with no alternate party to oppose the Dems. What I propose is being honest about what we believe and begin to run for these unopposed seats. If ballot access is denied, we need to use the local press to push for equity. I don't believe you can change things from within. They're too ingrained.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by jboucher - 2008/04/15 02:56

What I propose is being honest about what we believe and begin to run for these unopposed seats.

I don't think anyone suggested being dishonest. Some Republicans advocate small government, want to end the wars (on drugs and Iraq), and want to return government to the duties limited by the constitution. (Hint: Ron Paul).

The second thing is that the Rep party never recovered.

This sounds like an opportunity to rebuild the committee as "Ron Paul Republicans", assuming there is a market for liberty in your township.

If ballot access is denied, we need to use the local press to push for equity.

This confuses me a wee bit. If these seats are unopposed, are you complaining that 2nd column isn't good enough? How would "ballot access" be denied? Will you have trouble getting 100 signatures on a petition as a Libertarian? What exactly do you expect the local press to do for a 3rd party candidate?

I don't believe you can change things from within.

I'm not sure what you're saying here. Isn't changing things as an elected Councilman "from within". I'm thinking you must mean "by running as a Republican" won't change things. You already perceive problems with ballot access as a Libertarian. Don't you think, by your own projection, that it is infinitely easier to enter the system as one of the two established parties?

If you have a total void of Republicans in your town, then you won't have the problem of pleasing the party bosses, and your chances of getting elected won't be better as a Libertarian. History shows us that 1.5% is about as good as it gets for a Lib. I've heard ancient folklore that some absolutely stellar candidates with deep pockets have approached 20% vote totals (I've never met one). I think the absolute worst Republican (when one is on the ballot) gets 25% in NJ.

There are tremendous advantages to running as one of the old parties. You don't have to convince the media that you are a legitimate candidate. You don't have to convince a voter that you are a legitimate candidate.

If you run as a Republican, all you have to do is convince the voter that you aren't George Bush or John McCain.

They're too ingrained.

I don't know who "they" refers too. The media? Yup! They're ingrained to ignore 3rd parties. Voters? Yup, ditto! If you mean Republican Party Leadership, I thought you said there aren't any in your town.

I don't know what issues you hope to run on, but at the town level, I think it would be taxes, taxes, taxes. What position would you take on taxes that wouldn't appeal to self-proclaimed fiscal conservatives? At the town level, you aren't going to get to impact policy on wars of aggression, drug prohibition, reproductive rights, prostitution, gaming, or any of the litany of so-called "Libertarian" positions.

Truth be told, there isn't much of the budget you can fix either. Pensions have to be funded, labor contracts have to be honored, etc. The bulk of your taxes are wasted on the schools, and is mostly out of the hands of Councilmen.

So, I ask you, what is it you will have trouble being honest about if you were to run as a "Ron Paul Republican" with a platform appropriate to a small town office? Is it worth the guaranteed media blackout of a 3rd party candidate?

The voter sees us as gun-totin', pot-smokin' economists. Visit this "humor" site to see what Joe Sixpack thinks of Libertarians: http://uncyclopedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Party

Be honest about what you believe in, and put an R after your name on the ballot. You'll get the highest vote total of any NJLP member in history.

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Re:A winning strategy.

Posted by gatherer - 2008/04/15 08:18

Well, this year, Corazine has actually forced our town to become Libertarian by withdrawing all state money. We're still forced to do what the state mandates, but with absolutely no state funding, which means our councilmen will be civilly disobedient.

I suggested franchising the name of our town to the highest bidder, and the council loves the idea. We are a small town forced to pay into a large school district, but little by little I see us extracting ourselves from the formula of the rest of the county, not only because we are a poor town, and a racially diverse town in a sea of white middle class towns, but because almost our entire town is made out of self-employed people.

I suggested taking over the Democratic party here, because the party has no leadership in the county. Ocean county, with the exception of its extreme north, and anomalies like Lakewood, which, by the way, may be the least governed town in the state (or rather, the most privately governed, has more NRA members than Democrats. There is no political correctness. In fact, one of the exercises they do on the school baseball team is called "slap the midget". In any case, the only Democratic leadership here comes from out of state, and only shows up for state and national elections. The Republicans here, for the most part, are Christie- Whitman type "moderates", not a small government person among them. Our taxpayers recently shelled out 250,000 to build an indoor winter facility for little league in Toms River, and over 2 million to astroturf the fields of the three high schools in the district.

In the meantime, I'm Libertarian to the core. I homeschool my kids, and run a program called "Youth For Profit", that takes at-risk kids, and teaches them to sell ads at a higher rate than they would if they were to sell drugs. Even though my group is non-profit, the kids involved make a profit, and this program is self-supporting. I have instituted a program called "Government for profit", which by the summer will have a business plan to show our town how we can utilize our resources to fund basic services without resorting to taxes. I am also an environmentalist, and believe that we must turn the engine of the economy to favor the preservation of wilderness, by finding ways to make wilderness profitable. I don't believe you can truly foster a spirit of independence and liberty raising kids in a mini-mansion and worrying about the length of your neighbor's grass. Kids need open space to hide and play and misbehave. Then, there's zoning. One big thing local libertarian councilmen can do is destroy zoning laws, "lawn nazism".

Anyway, I'm rambling...

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