



Convention Platform Submission

Proposal Type

- Clarification / Editorial Change

Platform Section Reference

Entire Document

Proposed Language

See Attached.

Rationale / Supporting Explanation

This is a restructuring of the current platform. Everything from the current platform has been included in here, reorganized and clarified as appropriate. I have added a few general thoughts, in introductions and descriptions, not principles or planks, based upon the conversation that took place Saturday morning. I have expanded and added a few principles and planks of my own that I felt necessary to flesh things out a little more, to provide better motivation for the rest of the platform, and to provide a more well-rounded and consistent level of detail on all important topics. The current platform provides little motivation or clarity as to what our party actually stands for, it is poorly organized with little justification for what is in it, it shoehorns ideas into titled planks forced together under questionable categories, and is impenetrable to reasonable incremental change. I believe that my proposed platform explains itself well, providing clarity and motivation to the reader, and is able to be debated and changed piecemeal as necessary, making the job of the platform committee much easier and more legitimate. Every principle and plank here is reasonable and defensible, but the primary change is the structure and motivation. I did not use AI to write any of this.

Supporting Document(s)

- [Restructuring_Proposal_Middlebrook.pdf](#)

Members Who Also Support This Platform Plank

Confirmation

✓ I affirm that this submission reflects my own views and is submitted in good faith for consideration by the Platform Committee. I understand that acceptance or rejection is determined by committee and convention vote and that I am an active, registered Republican in the State of South Dakota.

Your Name

Tod Middlebrook

Email

middlet@protonmail.com

Phone

(605) 303-6939

Role / Title

Convention Delegate

Other Role

County

Hamlin

Proposed Language:

=== SDGOP Platform ===

== Introduction: Who We Are and What This Is ==

We are the Republican Party of South Dakota and this is our platform. It consists of four things: this introduction, our fundamental principles, the primary things we seek to conserve, and our policy positions. It has been granted legitimate approval by our member delegates as per our bylaws. We commit ourselves to it in its entirety and all our members in good standing – candidates, leaders, and elected officials alike – are cognizant of it and responsive to it.

We encourage that this document be used to educate the public. We believe the proliferation of these conservative principles and planks is vital to flourishing communities.

We desire that the integrity of the Party be maintained, and to that end we encourage interviewing, evaluating, and supporting candidates, including non-partisan offices such as school boards and local governments, based upon the principles set forth in this platform. We encourage county central committees to abstain from endorsing candidates whose voting record or stated beliefs are out of line with this platform. This platform is a de facto constraint on the voting behavior and official actions and decisions of our members; it keeps us accountable. It makes our voting block more predictable and thus minimizes the opportunity for lobbyists and campaign contributors to sway the votes of our members or alter a bill to fit their personal agenda.

== Our Fundamental Principles: What We Believe ==

These are our fundamental principles, the things that we believe to be true. They are derived solely from these key texts: the Ten Commandments, the words of Christ, the

Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, the Federalist Papers, and the Constitution of the State of South Dakota.

1. We believe the rights of American citizens proceed from God, not from government, and that those rights are confirmed, not created, by our Constitution.
2. We believe legitimate government authority proceeds only from the consent of the People, and that without that consent it is not legitimate.
3. We believe all individuals, from the beginning of their life at conception to the end of their life at permanent death, are sacred children of God and have the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This applies regardless of whether the person is congenitally abnormal, elderly, chronically ill, terminally ill, differently abled, or otherwise not healthy and "normal".
4. We believe human personhood is unique. We do not believe that animals or machines, of any likeness, are people.
5. We believe a legitimate government enforces all of its laws, and does so with due measure, else it is not legitimate.
6. We believe legitimate governments at every level – federal, state, and local – are transparent and accountable to the people, else they are not legitimate.
7. We believe legitimate governments at every level – federal, state, and local – limit themselves to their essential necessary roles as delineated in their constitution(s), and do not compete with private enterprise, else they are not legitimate in their unnecessary role(s).
8. We believe a legitimate government collects only the minimum necessary taxes and fees to effectively fund only essential, inherently-governmental functions as part of a fiscally-sound, structurally-balanced budget, rather than funding non-essential functions, running a large surplus, or growing the size of government. Government that fails at this fiduciary duty is not legitimate.
9. We believe individuals and families are responsible for their own behavior, well-being, and education, and that while the government is not directly responsible for these things, the removal of obstacles towards individuals' and families' good behavior, well-being, and education is a natural consequence of limited government and individual liberty, and does not require the government to make specific efforts to encourage or empower.

10. We believe the essential functions of government include making a reasonable effort to ensure the care of citizens who are physically or mentally unable to care for themselves. We believe that this is a narrow mandate, and does not include any fashionable broadening of the definitions of physical or mental unwellness, any invasion into the lives of families, or any manipulating or coercing of an individual into commitment.

11. We believe private property rights and due process are inalienable and confirmed by the fifth amendment to the United States Constitution.

12. We believe a relationship between the state government and tribal governments that benefits tribal members and non-tribal members alike is both possible and desirable.

13. We believe the right of individuals to keep and bear arms is inalienable and confirmed by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article VI, Section 24 of the South Dakota Constitution.

14. We believe civil liberties and the right to self-defense take precedence over all claimed threats to national homeland security, national sovereignty, and public safety. We believe that such things are best maintained when civil liberties are protected. We oppose all attempted curtailment of civil liberties in statutory law or executive order.

15. We believe marriage is between one man and one woman. A man is an adult biologically-male human, and a woman is an adult biologically-female human. A marriage that has produced one or more children is a traditional nuclear family, and we believe that this is the fundamental basis of society and our success as a nation. We believe it is in the best interest of a child's upbringing and protection to be raised in such a family by both mother and father.

16. We believe a person's innate biological sex, rather than their gender identity or altered appearance, is the relevant standard when deciding cases related to sex-segregated accommodations, such as restrooms, locker rooms, and sports teams.

17. We believe parents have the right and responsibility to nurture and raise their children as they see fit. They are responsible for the financial support, moral training, education, childcare, health care, and non-violent discipline of their children.

18. We believe the spark of initiative and enduring strength within us comes from being children of God. These things reside within us and within our nation, and it is our responsibility to excite and fortify them, within our fellow party members and within the people of South Dakota as a whole.

== The Main Planks: What We Seek to Conserve ==

We are conservatives, and we seek to conserve these fundamental things: our republic, our heritage of freedom, our system of free enterprise, our limited government, our population, our soil, and our exceptionalism.

1. We fight to preserve the United States of America as a federal constitutional republic and the State of South Dakota as a state within that republic.
2. We proactively defend our nation's heritage of religious freedom, freedom of speech, personal responsibility, and equality before the law.
3. We seek to restore and preserve the foundation of our state's economic success and security, which is the work ethic of the citizens as expressed in a level, open, competitive, transparent system of free enterprise in all sectors of the economy, unencumbered and unadulterated by government or rent-seeking organizations.
4. We seek to codify a system of government that maximizes both local control and individual liberty. The sole and proper role of government is to provide for the people those critical functions that cannot be performed by individuals or private organizations. Government closest to the people, when its power over individuals is kept in check by higher levels of government, is the most effective, accountable, and responsible.
5. We seek to conserve our population of smart, capable, entrepreneurial, industrious people. We seek to discourage them from leaving South Dakota, and we seek not to rely upon out-of-state businesses and people moving here.
6. We seek to conserve and improve the health of our soil and the resulting economic resilience of our land, as manifest in both our agriculture industry and conservation efforts.
7. We intend to maintain South Dakota's exceptional status as the best place in the world for a person to live, raise a family, and pursue economic opportunity. We intend to do this via steadfast adherence to and application of our principles and values, and not via policies secondary to envy, insecurity, or a desire to emulate other states.

== The Specific-Issue Planks: Our Policy Positions ==

Detailed here is our support for and opposition to specific yet timeless policies, and how we believe things ought to be or ought not to be, that are not already documented in our main planks, our principles, or our key texts. Each plank defines a boundary of support, describing in some area what we support and what we do not. We use the word "support" to mean that we believe it is self-evident that that these things rest well-founded on our key texts, principles, and main planks. We do not use the word "support" to show any desire for the government to give money to any particular thing; if we believe in such funding, it is directly articulated. Each plank includes as appropriate further well-referenced articulations and interpretations of our key texts, principles, and main planks.

1. We support a robust and resilient agricultural industry of family-owned operations that is not dependent upon foreign inputs or consumers nor on a select few crops, producers, or processors.
2. We support the production of safe, quality foods.
3. We support the right of individuals and families to homestead, engage in their local food economy, and seek self-sufficiency in all areas at whatever level they desire, whether household, family, community, county, region, or state.
4. We support the responsible use of our natural resources, and we support environmental stewardship. We oppose pollution and noxious externalities.
5. We oppose policy driven by concerns of supposed negative effects of supposed anthropogenic contribution to supposed increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration or supposed increased global average temperatures.
6. We support private efforts to develop and utilize traditional, new, and renewable energy resources, striving for reliable energy independence at every level from family to state. We oppose public-private partnerships on such projects, and we support local control of zoning regulations that may affect such projects.
7. We support the responsible, multiple use of public lands. We believe that grazing, conservation, recreation, energy generation and transmission, resource extraction, and monuments can and should coexist on public lands. We oppose further specific land designations that may by law or by effect restrict the use of public lands. With exception, we oppose the sale of public lands.
8. We unconditionally oppose eminent domain, except in situations where federal law supersedes our ability to oppose it. We interpret the phrase "just compensation" in the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to imply compensation that

is voluntarily agreed upon by the private owner. We believe that there is no project, public or private, of such importance that it requires violating the inalienable right to one's own property, and we believe that removing that threat of force creates an environment where such projects are more likely, not less likely, to be completed and benefit the public.

9. We support the pursuit of happiness and support the pursuit of every citizen who wants to have a job outside of the home with good wages, benefits, work environments, and lifestyle. We do not support the mass-importation of immigrants, legal or illegal, nor do we support the proliferation of jobs that provide poor wages, benefits, work environment, and lifestyle.

10. We support vocational schooling, training and apprenticeship. We oppose state funding for such programs, and we oppose the consolidation of such programs into oppressive unions that funnel dues money out of state or to our political opponents.

11. We oppose policy driven solely by the vague idea of "economic development." We do not worship mammon and are not awed by proposals for large projects. Our people and their well-being take precedent over the hypothetical prestige of attracting large projects with dubious benefit.

12. We support the right-to-work provision in the South Dakota Constitution. We support the employee's right to have a secret ballot in any election called to organize a union. Employees should not be coerced to pay union dues.

13. We support the development of modern infrastructure to foster economic growth. We oppose the use of eminent domain to do so.

14. We oppose policy that implements un-American moral standards, such as ESG (Environmental Social Governance), DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), and BRIDGE (Benchmarking Race, Inclusion, and Diversity in Global Engagement).

15. We support a robust and resilient manufacturing sector and a robust and resilient technology sector. We oppose policy driven by fear of industrialization and technological advancement.

16. We support policies that allow entrepreneurialism and the founding and growth of independent businesses.

17. We support a future of Artificial Intelligence where those who choose to use it run their models and agents locally on their own hardware in their own homes, and not remotely in large hyperscale data centers, and not in anyway giving large corporations, domestic or foreign, their intimate thoughts or business-critical information. We believe that centralized

hyperscale large language model training and inference is a fad, and we oppose the short-sighted development of data centers that support such things.

18. We support the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of all South Dakotans.

19. We support the private practice of medicine and we oppose socialized medicine in the form of a health care system that is universal, single-payer, or otherwise government-managed, with the exception of the Veterans Administration and the Indian Health Services, which should provide timely, accessible, and high-quality healthcare for those special populations.

20. We oppose medical mandates, coercion, and intimidation of individuals. We support every adult's right to refuse any particular medical treatment or preventative measure, for any reason or for no reason at all.

21. We support cooperation between healthcare organizations and faith-based organizations to holistically address the well-being of individuals.

22. We support our state's commitment to quality education. We support public, private, and home school educational opportunities and we encourage policies that prevent the government from overseeing the education of those families who choose to educate independently. We oppose the creation of independent charter schools that receive public funding.

23. We support returning control of the school curriculum to the parents and communities that fund it. We support the elimination of all federally mandated requirements, rejecting the relevant conditional funding as necessary.

24. We support the right of parents to be involved to any extent in the education of their children. We believe parents have the right to personally observe and record classroom instruction at no notice, to access their children's instructional materials and records at no cost to them, and to exempt their child from any particular class or assignment for any well-established written reason, such as unwholesomeness, inappropriateness, or sexual content.

25. We oppose any public school instructor's ability to take a position on the issue of a pupil's sexual activity other than to say that all individuals should be in a committed marriage before engaging in sexual activity.

26. We support the teaching of the history and heritage of South Dakota, how natives and settlers gave it its founding character and how diverse individuals have both assimilated into and shaped that character through to today. We recognize "E pluribus unum", the de facto motto of the early United States, meaning "out of many, one."

27. We support the exclusive use of the English language in government and public schools, except when instructing English-speakers in learning non-English languages.
28. We support the teaching of our key texts and the historical role they have played not just in our party but in our nation.
29. We respect the American flag and encourage flag etiquette. We support the appropriate recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance as follows: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."
30. We support the prominent display in public schools of the South Dakota Motto, "Under God, the People Rule." We support the display in public schools of our key texts.
31. We support science as properly practiced, with skepticism and the scientific method, rather than blind trust and appeal to authority.
32. We support the 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution and its limitations upon the federal government's ability to control the affairs of our state.
33. We support integral elections that are fully auditable with paper ballots. We support requiring the physical in-person presentation of state-and tribal-issued photo IDs at the time of voting. We oppose internet voting and same-day voter registration. We oppose alternative voting schemes, such as ranked choice voting, that complicate the voting process and make auditing difficult.
34. We support fully-transparent campaign finance reporting. We oppose policies that would allow the concealment of the origin of campaign contributions.
35. We support the appointment of state and federal judges with an originalist interpretation of the Constitution. We oppose the concept of a "living Constitution."
36. We support the federal Freedom of Information Act as an effective tool for keeping government transparent and accountable.
37. We support the rights of immigrants to enter our country legally and support the rights of legal immigrants to work in our state. It is the responsibility of the state and federal governments to enforce immigration laws and to protect our borders. We oppose coordinated mass-immigration, whether legal or illegal.
38. We oppose any reliance upon foreign law by the courts of South Dakota.
39. We support the Electoral College system and we oppose efforts to usurp it, such as the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

40. We support a party system as the best way to engage the voting public.
41. We support the fair and equal administration of justice to protect the public and their property, to assist victims of crime, punish as well as rehabilitate offenders, provide valuable educational and vocational opportunities to the incarcerated, and assist in the transition of offenders into society.
42. We support the work of all first responders — law enforcement officers, fire service members, emergency medical service members, and tow truck drivers — and their work to maintain a safe public environment.
43. We support with all our hearts those men and women and their families in all branches of the armed forces, past and present, who have sacrificed their time and lives for our country.
44. We support the protection of personally identifiable information (PII). We oppose the collection and distribution of PII, by government or private business, without the consent of the individual in question. We support an individual's ability to request and have any PII deleted from a particular system.
45. We support the rights of both the mother and father as authority within the traditional nuclear family.
46. We support policies that encourage family stability and discourage dissolving a marriage.
47. We oppose exploitation, trafficking or abuse of adults, children and the preborn.
48. We oppose abortion and assisted suicide in all forms. We oppose the idea that medically assisted suicide is a dignified death.
49. We support ethical practices in medical research and oppose any medical research that exploits human embryos or living human beings, including embryonic stem cells.
50. We support the streamlining and simplifying of adoptions and support for expecting mothers to choose life. We support adoption when it is the alternative to the murder of a preborn child. We oppose adoption when it is the alternative to traditional nuclear family formation.
51. We support safe public roads, skies, and waterways populated with safe, sober, non-distracted, human drivers. We condemn driving while intoxicated. We oppose the existence on public ways of automated vehicles that transport themselves without a driver behind the wheel.

52. We oppose the imposition of a personal income tax in South Dakota.

53. We support the cultivation and rewarding of these entrepreneurial characteristics: work ethic, intelligence, good character judgment, the willingness and ability to connect and work well with other people, curiosity and the willingness to explore, and good business instinct.

54. We oppose corporate welfare and denounce the government picking winners and losers. We oppose the unwarranted giving of any tax break or deferment, fee discount, grant, loan, or any other special privilege to an individual property, property owner, resident, person, or company, or to only a portion of properties, property owners, residents, persons, or companies.

55. We support independence from federal funding and the attached strings.

56. We oppose the ability of corporations to rent-seek and take special advantage of federal policies.

== END of SDGOP Platform ==