

THE PHILOSOPHY
AND
THE PARTY PLATFORM
OF
THE COOL MOOSE PARTY
1995

PHILOSOPHY

The Cool Moose Party's fundamental belief is that people must actively participate in their own governance. There should be as limited a government intrusion into private life as possible. Where government is required, continual safeguards should be implemented to ensure that upon the completion of the government's intervention and the attainment of the stated policy goal, the government's role should end and the government is to withdraw.

Government by the people includes any method whereby the people have a say in all facets of governmental activity. While the role of government is best when limited, should there be a public determination of a need to apply government, that application should be vested largely, if not entirely, in the people.

Government's role should be limited to accomplishing that which it is granted authority over under the Constitution of the United States. Roles for the government should not extend beyond areas in which individuals could not function in the best interests of the people. Therefore, government should be granted a role in transportation, defense, the coinage of money, and other constitutionally mandated functions. The Cool Moose Party understands that democracy embraces capitalism and as such has a guiding principle that government should avoid engaging with business or manipulating the marketplace. While understanding that such interaction is inevitable, the government's role should be minimal and restrictive in nature.

The Cool Moose Party believes in the operation of constitutional government, and as such, we believe that the constitution should be read as literally as practical. We believe changes of great social import be done by amendment rather than by legislation or judicial interpretation. While we do not exclude the constitutional function of judicial interpretation as a constitutional action, we are more convinced when such an interpretation finds ratification or rejection in the vote of the people.

The lessening of government's role, and thus, its control over the individual, is paramount. The voices of the people must be heard. We believe that in a democracy, minority interest must be strenuously protected, but we feel that such protection is based on constitutional law. With the government's role being clearly defined, the government can adequately protect the interests of the minority while maintaining its constitutional integrity.

The Cool Moose Party believes that the operation of political parties should be recognized as lacking constitutional basis and merely exist to facilitate the election process. Elections and the election process, therefore, needs to be made more publicly accessible and be equalized without a heavy reliance on campaign financing. Government should neither participate nor interfere in the political party system, and, therefore, government sponsorship of party primaries must be abolished.

Individuals acting with the Cool Moose Party should be free from alliances and nepotism that would cloud their ability to act in a manner consistent with good government. They should at all times be fashioning public policy to include as much public participation as practical. Political power, so dispersed, avoids the potential for abuse due to political power being concentrated in monopolistic interests.

Finally, public service is an honor and needs to be considered a privilege. Elections should signify the public's reliance in the integrity of the individual. Thus, all government service should be performed honorably and with great personal sacrifice for the general welfare of the people being served.

THE COOL MOOSE PARTY PLATFORM ADOPTED 1995

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Social policy is best made without the involvement of government. This does not mean that the government has no role in the determination of social policy, but it means that a government's role, when appropriate, should be well defined, explicit as to its implementation, and with a predetermined point at which such a role will achieve its objective and cease. The failure to provide defined outcomes for social policy has made government involvement in social areas a political game rather than a worthy endeavor.

Based on these principles, the Cool Moose Party supports the following legislation:

WELFARE REFORM – A welfare program is an inevitability in a modern society, however, without having had its goals defined, welfare as we know it is a failed policy. Reform, not abolition, is needed. Reform must acknowledge that there are people on welfare based on actual need, in as much as a large portion of the welfare population is under the age of eighteen. This being the case, any realistic policy must reflect the need to get the able bodied recipients off the rolls while protecting the children who are dependent upon the system. Since a large number of welfare recipients are on the rolls for less than two years, the efforts to purge the rolls must take that factor into consideration. If there is a political agreement that the target group of welfare reform is the group of able to work recipients, then it is incumbent upon the government to get these people off the rolls and into employment. This can be done, but it cannot be done without realization that employment opportunity must be made available.

Currently, education and training are standard answers as to how to get these people off welfare. At the same time, there is a realization that the service industry employment does not pay enough to entice these people to leave the minimal security afforded by welfare. Since welfare can produce an income almost equal to that of service employment once health care and child care costs are factored into the equation, the reluctance to work is encouraged by the system itself. These people may be poor, but they are not idiots in terms of capitalism. The real idiots are those making the policies that fail to tackle these facts of life into consideration when devising a policy.

Welfare reform, therefore, must have a limitation. A two year period is suggested. Welfare reform must target the long term recipients and treat them as the savvy capitalists they are. Any program that demands them to work in private industry employment while giving them a co-pay, prorated benefit in terms of health care and day care, is suggested. But, more than that, welfare reform demands the creation of private sector labor. While there is an increase in service jobs available at present, these do not produce the requisite income to encourage the transition off welfare, but a service wage, coupled with day care and health care co-pay on a prorated basis, is indeed an incentive.

Also, if there is education credit given to the employers of those on welfare, there would be an encouragement to both the employer and the employee, while creating an education component that would also create additional labor for educations. The

education, given while employed in the service sector, would compliment the job rather than have the training given before the person has a job. Training or education as the method of getting long-term recipients off welfare is largely a waste of resources in that person does not have a job and is being trained to get employment in areas where there is little demand. It is a set up for a failure and disappointment. The approach, while well intentioned, is misguided.

The approach of delayed entry into the workforce is an old concept. It was employed with some success in the past. Examples of this were the GI bill that delayed the entry of the returning soldiers into the peacetime economy or the encouragement of advanced degrees in the modern society as a way of delaying entry into the flooded labor market. The latter example is showing the wear of the overuse of this concept, but, then again, the continued application of it to the welfare program is even more insane. Government must focus on immediate employment with an opportunity to advance rather than advance training with no opportunity for employment.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party supports welfare reform along the lines of focusing on the long-term able bodied recipients, requiring work after two years on the roles, providing enough private sector employment to meet the needs of the welfare population, providing a pay prorated benefit system for health care and day care, provide education credit to employers and employees.

As to the children, there must be a realization that they are innocent victims. Actions of the adults, however, cannot be condoned or mitigated by the simple existence of a child. Therefore, parents must accept the responsibility for their issue. This means that the government cannot fail to care for the child, but the government cannot be placed in a situation in which it supports the mother or father who fails to make the effort to provide for the child. In short, help should be afforded in situations where on attempts to help the family. If there is a consistent failure to make such an effort without cause, then an assumption can be made that the support of the parent is not in the best interest of the child or the government. In these cases, there must be a policy for removal of the child to provide the needed sustenance. If the government is truly concerned with the welfare of the child, then it must take actions which will demonstrate this concern. If it feels that the parental interests outweigh the government's role, then there should be no need to provide benefits. For too long, government has been snookered into taking the position of paying protection for children which are not really being given the adequate protection to the level expected when the payment is being delivered.

Finally, it should be noted that welfare reform, while a hot political topic, is one that really is of little consequence in the larger scheme of government spending. The budget item is not overly large but can rouse great passion. Welfare, therefore, is a subject for demagogues. Reform is needed, but real government reform is far more urgent and will produce far greater savings to the public. The focusing on welfare is an easy distraction for those in government because it touches a constituency that doesn't vote and doesn't contribute to political campaigns. The use of the issue as one that, if solved, would be the be-all and end-all of government integrity is short sighted. In fact, welfare reform is little more than an attempt at balancing the budget on the backs of the poor and less represented segments of the population.

WELFARE REFORM

1. Time limits for benefits
2. Pro-rated co-pay of health and day care as part of a transition
3. Provide enough private sector employment opportunities
4. Provide education credits for employers and employees
5. Provide method for child welfare/removal from non-compliant parent
6. Target the long-term recipients instead of a broad based program

ABORTION – Again, there is little reason for the government to involve itself in social issues. The issue is one of personal choice. From a governmental standpoint, there should be little regulation. The people should be free to make their own determinations. The government, presumably able to divorce itself from emotion, needs only to concern itself with the economies of the issue and the question of justice in the society.

Faced with the issue of whether there is life in the womb, there is a need for a legal determination based on medical knowledge. The legal determination, therefore, legitimizing the life, must then make the legal determination that the life of the existing person is of greater worth than the life of the unborn. Having given the legal authority to the government to determine when life begins, we have retained the right to make that determination on a personal level if we believe that life begins earlier. In short abortion is not mandatory. There is personal control of one's destiny without the intrusion of government regulation.

If the point of those objecting to abortion is so facially convincing, then it would not need legal support to buttress its position. The fact should speak for itself. That abortions are still being performed leads to an opposite conclusion. If there is a determination not to abort, then it should be made based on morality not government policy.

Governments are abysmal when it comes to controlling social policy. Additionally, attempts at social legislation are often violative of the rights of the poor. The fact is that the wealthy can travel abroad to skirt the law is most convincing in this instance. The inevitable result is that the government is saddled with the care and support of the least fortunate of its lot. The fiscal question, while somewhat cold, needs consideration. As a culture we complain about the high costs of social welfare, yet many of the same people demand that the poor continue in unwanted pregnancies. We cannot, as a society, find enough foster parents and yet we want to encourage more suffering.

While the logic points to availability of abortion, the social policy of the people is what rules. Therefore, to those inclined to outlaw abortion there is the process to amend the constitution should they gather enough people so inclined.

The Cool Moose Party takes the position that it will uphold the constitution on the issue of abortion, regardless of what the constitution provides.

In terms of policy, the Cool Moose Party has no objection to provisions for one day waiting and mandatory consultation on the part of minors. This is because the state has a role in undue restriction. Additionally, Rhode Island's size makes the one day waiting period a reasonable regulation of its youth.

On the issue of state funding for abortion, while it would be a cost saving policy for the state in the long run, that is a matter that is left to the determination of the people. The Cool Moose Party will enforce the will of the people in conformance with the law and the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Rhode Island.

ABORTIONS:

1. Government neutral position
2. People choice restricted by Constitution
3. Possible support for one day waiting and consultation in case of minors
4. State funding if so mandated by the people

GAMBLING – While there is a great concern for gaming issues in Rhode Island, Once again, this issue is a social policy question that is best left to the people. The role of government here is to ensure fair play and collect any revenue due it. Outside of this, government should have no role in determining its social acceptability. That is a matter left to the people. The Cool Moose Party believes in individual choice in this matter, therefore, we are not concerned with its legalization in that gambling will occur with or without legitimizations. Additionally, it is the individual choice to participate. Sheer market forces would determine its success. The fact of the matter is that if the people fail to participate, then the gaming interest will cease to exist. To pass governmental policy to protect the people from themselves is too paternalistic to receive the support of the Cool Moose Party.

If people want gaming, then they must understand its down side. Gambling is no godsend. There are many problems related to addiction. There is the additional downside of the criminal element and the poverty that gaming can create.

As to the government, there should be no case in which the gambling revenue should become a part of the operating budget of the state. The reliance on the gaming revenue will act to the detriment of the state in that it will limit the state's ability to effectively regulate the industry. There will also be the fact that the industry will also be constantly seeking relief from the laws and taxes with the argument that their leaving or failure will cause a tremendous budgetary shortfall. Therefore, any revenue from gaming should be earmarked for one time projects such as library books, restoration of historical property, facility repair and replacement at our institutions of higher education, and like projects of limited scope and duration. All unexpended funds should go into the rainy day fund of the state budget, presently underfunded by about 80 million dollars.

The Cool Moose Party believes that the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act makes Indian gaming an inevitable outcome in Rhode Island. We are less concerned about this gaming in that it is federally regulated. We oppose options that place gaming interests into the state under state regulation and within the reach of questionable business entities.

GAMBLING:

1. Stop opposition of Indian Gaming under federal regulation
2. Continue policy of having local control at the ballot box of non-Indian gaming
3. Avoid using gaming revenue for operating budgets
4. Earmark a portion of gaming revenue for addiction programs
5. Election of members of any state gaming commission
6. Recognize gaming as an individual choice issue
7. Avoid the hypocritical position of state sponsored gambling while opposing gaming

MINORITY RIGHTS – Every person in Rhode Island must be guaranteed equal opportunity under the law. That being said, there is a need to explain the vision of equality and the reality of inequality. Inequality is born of various factors, but if we are to assume equality as the policy, then we can only concern ourselves with the historical inequities that exist. Thus, when viewing the manner in which we need to combat inequality, there must be a process to determine what could compensate for historical inequity and set a goal capable of objective analysis of when that goal has been reached. Therefore, the Cool Moose Party can support programs designed to compensate minority groups for historical inequity provided those programs have stated objectives and are finite in their application.

These concerns extend to all minorities, including those related to sexual preference. The goal is to maintain a society in which all people are treated without prejudice. While this may seem to embrace fully programs of compensatory discrimination, it does demand that the factual background for these programs so warrant the specific set aside. Without a record of discrimination, there is no foundation for the support of these programs. Additionally, without the pattern of discrimination, these groups are equal in protection of the law under the Constitutions of the State of Rhode Island and the United States.

Recognizing the history of discrimination is a prerequisite to entitlement of compensatory treatment. This requirement, then serves as the stated cause to which the objective of the program can be measured against to determine when there is a need to end the compensatory treatment. The Cool Moose Party cannot support any program that is infinite in its duration regardless of what historical discrimination it is set to combat. To do so logically defeats the argument for such treatment in that it perpetuates the inequality and fails to acknowledge that the present society is attempting to create the fairness desired by such policy.

CRIME – The issue of crime is one that can be used quite effectively to scare the populous. The fact of the matter is that there are more people incarcerated than ever before in the United States. The U.S. prison population exceeds a million. That means that there is a tax dollar being constantly spent to protect our own society from ourselves.

Sure, the Crime Bill sounds great. Sure, there is a need to get police back on the street. Sure, there is a need to make society safe. But, surely we are not solving the problems by what we are attempting to do in fighting crime.

While this plank of the platform should not be interpreted as being soft on crime, it should be interpreted as being logical in what we can and should accomplish as a society in fighting criminal activity.

First and foremost, crime must be divided into two separate categories. The first is violent and the second is non-violent. Once this is accomplished, then we can focus attention to violent offenders. If criminology statistics are true, then we can see that by eliminating our violent offenders, we can also cut into the non-violent offenses. By focusing on the violent, we can attempt to make our streets safe and we can provide a greater respect of the rule of law. To attempt to cite and prosecute non-violent offenses is a sham that makes prosecutor's records shine, but does little for the overall picture, especially in terms of police hours and tax dollars.

Once there is a focus on the violent offenders, then prisons will be incarcerating those who need to be kept away from society. To put small time drug offenders and prostitutes behind bars is easy, but fails to stop the violence we find. To focus on these offenses as the war is a losing effort destined to fail.

While it can be argued that this failure in combating crime is a desired outcome of those seeking to pad crime fighting budgets, the problem may be even more pervasive. It is far more easy to prosecute the non-violent and it is far more easy to capture these offenders than actually going out to risk life and limb to secure the violent offender. It cannot be effectively argued that there is a focus on the violent offender. The violent offenders need to be stopped as a priority. Anything short creates a failed policy. Once that area has been taken care of in the society, then, and only then, can the government put resources to fight the non-violent offenders.

Considering the nature of the offense is important when determining punishment. The non-violent offender may not warrant prison time and in fact, the sentence in prison becomes more of a burden on the taxpayer than its value. This is not true of the violent offender in that the society gains by paying to be protected from violence. The non-violent offender merely drains the system, drawing health care and other benefits while in jail, only to get out finding that employment that was once had is gone and the chance of getting it less likely.

We are not thinking straight here. The crime statistics should tell the story. The people should not be scared off by demagogues who preach the need to have our streets safe to get elected only to do little to change this so as to enable the preying on the same fears in the next election. This is unconscionable and should end.

We need to realistically address our crime problem. We need to reevaluate the entire scheme of things to get us to a point at which we can set a policy and realistically enforce the policy with precision and gusto.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party supports a reevaluation of our criminal prosecution system. We support the de-emphasis of non-violent crime in favor of increased emphasis on violent crime. We support prison terms for violent offenders and we support alternative sentencing for those convicted of non-violent crimes. We support truth in sentencing whereby sentences will be reviewed to make them realistic and then enforce those sentences without parole and the only reduction being up to 10%. We

support a system that enforces valid warrants and one that computerizes them and publishes them regularly in newspapers. We support strict enforcement of laws designed to curb the violence in our society.

CRIME:

1. Revise criminal sentencing and impose truth in sentencing laws
2. Publish quarterly an outstanding warrants listing
3. Emphasize violent offenders over non-violent offenders
4. Abolish parole system when truth in sentencing is enacted
5. Computerize warrant records
6. Provide viable alternative punishment for non-violent offenders
7. Set policy that emphasizes police patrol rather than bureaucratic effort
8. Utilize crime statistic reports when formulating policy
9. Revise juvenile criminal laws to reflect modern society
10. Consider decriminalization of victimless crimes

PUBLIC HEALTH – The Cool Moose Party is committed to a policy of universal health care, however, it is universal in terms of accessibility but not being mandatory. That is to say, there should be the availability of the program to anyone, but the choice is left up to the individual. This runs into the area of portability. By being able to have complete access and the ability to bring the health care coverage with the individual, there is the potential for universal coverage availability without being hoisted upon the individual.

As to the issue of nursing home care, there needs to be a policy reform that will justly compensate the providers, but there is a policy consideration of the needs of the average Rhode Islander. We are all well aware of the fact that Rhode Island has an aging population. That being the case, it is clear that Rhode Island will have a greater responsibility than most for taking care of the elderly.

Paramount in party policy is the need to have a complete state sponsored immunity program. Preventative medical treatment, of which immunization programs are a part, will be a long term cost effective policy. Coupled with the fact that the young population of Rhode Island is smaller than most states, it could be an affordable experiment in health care and could pay large dividends to the state in terms of healthier citizens.

The Cool Moose Party is dedicated to the concept of free will in the individual. Therefore, we are of the position that it should be left to the individual as to health care choices. This does not mean that the state has no role, but it means that the role of the state is severely limited. Thus, the Cool Moose Party supports educative programs and pro-active health care policies, such as condom use awareness, counseling in reproductive alternatives, the right to die, and the right to make treatment decisions, and other similar discretionary options that impact on the individual.

The Cool Moose Party believes in the need to provide mental health care of the people of Rhode Island. The deinstitutionalization of the population has merely moved the population out of a treatment facility on to the streets and then, in a move for personal

survival, into the prison where treatment is less effective although equally as costly. Proper treatment and a program of preventive care has the potential relieving much of the social tension that often results in the imprisonment of those in need of treatment rather than punishment. This is not to mollycoddle those guilty of criminal activity, but it is to give mental care to those that are in need of such care and to make our prisons the holders of those not respecting civilization.

THE RHODE ISLAND LOTTERY – The lottery, for better or worse, exists in Rhode Island. From its revenue, it would appear that while Rhode islanders do not want casino gaming in their backyards, they are rather content to be able to play the lottery at their leisure. This being so, and discounting the fact that the lottery has never fulfilled its original purpose of providing funds for education, we must examine lottery gaming with the light of reality.

We are, in allowing lottery gaming in all its forms, being hypocritical. We know this and feel comfortable rationalizing the fact. That as the premise, we can look at what can be done with the segment of gaming and its Commission to make it more responsive to Rhode Island.

For starters, we must examine the broad authority granted to the Lottery Commission. This examination should include the issue of whether or not members of the General Assembly should be actively sitting on a board for which they will otherwise pass policy for as a legislator. Additionally, we should demand a more simplified statement as to the accounts of this agency to enable greater understanding of its functions.

While the Cool Moose Party favors examination, this is not to be considered a call for greater regulation under the agenda of those opposed to gaming at all costs. The Cool Moose Party believes in the individual's right to choose participation in legal enterprises and believes that the government's role in gaming is to create a level playing field and collect revenues due it. All other policies related to gaming itself are only imposed based on a demonstrated need and with a clear measurable objective which will cause the termination of the policy upon its reaching its stated goals.

LOTTERY:

1. Reexamine the authority granted to the Lottery Commission
2. Consider elimination of Assembly member on the Commission
3. Mandate publication of user-friendly statistics related to the Commission
4. Reevaluate the use of the proceeds and consider placing them into the Rainy Day fund
5. Require demonstrated objectives and sunset on all restrictions placed on lottery policy

THE JUDICIARY – Much has been made of recent reform in the selection of judges. While there has been admittedly been some changes, these changes have been, by and large, superficial. The real change that most have desired has not been accomplished.

While the nomination and selection of judges in the Governor is not without fault, it may be as equal a faulty system as the direct election of judges. Still, there is the argument that has been put forward by strict constitutionalist that says the Fourteenth Amendment demands the election of judges.

Without a doubt, neither appointment nor election is without problems. Therefore, the Cool Moose Party, in attempt to match policy to reality, supports the electorate review of judicial appointments of all inferior courts every ten years following the nomination by the Governor.

In practice, this has several advantages. It allows for the cleansing of the bench of deadwood, while protecting the integrity of the courts and gubernatorial appointments. The Supreme Court, while exempted from the process, will be the final arbitrator of judicial questions in Rhode Island and therefore must be free to act under a lifetime appointment. This requirement is not so pressing in the inferior courts.

The Supreme Court would still be impeachable, but not be forced to stand for electorate review.

The Ten year concept is for the allowing of the judge to vest in a pension system. It would be most unfair to require a person to serve on the bench and give up a potentially lucrative profession without some sense of security. Reality is that once out of the practice, the long building of a client base is dissipated and that fact should be considered.

But, this does not warrant lifetime appointments. Ten years is long enough to allow a judge to become seasoned in the court. Also, it would allow for a substantial record that would lend itself to electorate review. The electorate would simply be asked to retain or dismiss a judge.

By putting the judges of the inferior courts under review, there is a limiting of the influence that can be placed on the judges by the appointing bodies. Also, there is a greater probability that the judge will be more responsive to the public in such areas as courtroom demeanor, timeliness of decisions, and other matters that would be capable of review.

Aside from this reform, there are other concerns of the courts. There should be an expansion of the small claims system to allow for more dispute settlement without reliance on attorneys. The limited jurisdiction of the court is a great make work rule for attorneys, but the truth is that most attorneys are unwilling to take the smaller cases that are outside of the scope of the small claim jurisdiction. This should be changed and the process should be better articulated so as to aid the small claimant in obtaining justice.

Further reform could be had in the system to allow for arbitration under a more equitable system. Presently, a person could have a suit filed against him or her and when it is placed into arbitration, the defendant must put up money for the arbitration process or suffer default. This is of questionable legality and defies all logic of American justice. Arbitration should be financed through the court budgets and should be strictly monitored.

Additionally, a duty judge should be mandated for each court that is considered open by statute. Under present law, the courts are open but there is no way to access them.

JUDICIARY

1. Revamp small claims system and give it wider jurisdiction
2. Ten year electorate review of judges below the level of Supreme Court
3. State funding of arbitration in court system
4. Assignment of a duty judge for times when Clerk's Office is closed
5. Consider tort law reform limiting judgments and/or legal fees charged
6. Single hearing officer for all Administrative hearings

POLITICAL PARTIES – Clearly, the vested interests of the Cool Moose Party must be stated up front prior to any discussion of this matter. The fact of the matter is the Cool Moose Party is seeking reform based only in part of the inequality it discovered as part of the participation in the process itself. The other part is based on the general perception of what is wrong with the political process.

The Cool Moose Party recognizes that political parties were established primarily to protect the interest of the select few that held power within these parties. This use, and subsequent abuse, of this power has become most troubling for many and has led to the abandonment of the political process by many.

While there is a need to have a political identity, the use of political party systems to stymie the process is the heart of the problem. People should be encouraged to run for office and participating in the process. Laws which favor political parties within a system, therefore, are most troubling.

Political parties are granted special status under the law. This status should be changed to allow all to equally enjoy the benefits of the law. The Cool Moose Party therefore, agrees with those who argue that the present configuration of law is designed to benefit political parties over the independent campaigns.

While it is obvious that the Cool Moose Party now has, through obtaining 5% of the vote, the right to participate in the political largess, the fact of the inequity is not abated. He Cool Moose Party thus must take the position that it will use its favored status in a manner that is designated to abolish the existing inequity from within the system. We will, where it is in our political interests, use the system with the intention of its eventual abolition and the creation of electoral equity under the law.

In short, we will take advantage of the situation, but in doing so, we will be using the system to enable us to better complete against it in an attempt to eventually create the requisite equity that puts political party candidates on an equal footing with the independents.

This does not mean that we cannot support regulation of elections. There is a duty imposed on the state to conduct fair and equal elective meetings. We concur. There is a need for regulation, but that regulation must be guided by a strong governmental purpose and must be, at all time, neutral in its application. The current statutes in Rhode Island, while possibly facially valid, discriminate in their application.

POLITICAL PARTIES

1. Create an equitable ballot placement process
2. Recognize Independents in terms of Matching Funds without additional provisions
3. Provide representation for Independent views on Election Board
4. Provide equal access to the polls and related information
5. Force political parties to fund their own primaries or pay the state at cost

BANKING – Rhode Island should have learned its lesson from the state’s banking and credit union crisis. The reality, however, is that it hasn’t. Our state budget is an obvious example that our leadership has no real concept of how to properly manage financing within the state. We have built several questionable public projects that are secured by the taxpayer of the states and much of that done without consent. Additionally, we have had ideas floated to utilize pension funds in risky arbitrage and other half-baked financing schemes have abounded.

Rhode Islanders learned the hard way of the dangers of unregulated industry. The problem is that we have yet to learn the impact this can have on unregulated government spending. Therefore, in discussing the role of banking, we must examine the strong role banking plays in the daily existence and funding for the state itself.

As a state, Rhode Island is hostage to the banking interests. We are addicted to credit and the banking people know this. The larger financial institutions, those standing to gain from the bonding by the state for projects and credit union bailouts, failed to adequately monitor the situation and were not very anxious to play whistle blower when the credit union situation turned from grey to dismal.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party demands a review of the state’s relationship with the major banking interests within the state. This includes the review of the bonding counsel and related consultations. A listing should be continually made available in an easily readable format to inform the electorate as to just how much of an interest the banking powers hold in the state and just how much sway they have in the formulation of policy.

The banking interests, while being partially responsible for the credit union and related banking crisis in the state, may be the only interests that will emerge with little or no scar tissue. The bank’s interests, it seem, are protected and those which aren’t are taken as losses against the revenue due the people in the form of taxation.

The Cool Moose Party believes that these banking interests must be exposed.

BANKING:

1. Complete simplified disclosure of all accounts, loans, bonds, and instruments
2. Bidding process for bonding counsel
3. Consider alternative bonding mechanisms
4. Greater oversight and regulation of banking interests

5. Restriction on high risk financing
6. Constitutional restriction on funding without taxpayer approval
7. Clarification of “moral obligation” role of state

THE LEGISLATURE – This area is one that is ripe for reform. The fact that this body makes the laws is dangerous. The fact that this body is not fully responsive to the people is even more of a threat to democratic society.

The body, comprised of both House and Senate, are overly dominated by special interest groups. Additionally, the lobbying interests have far more effect on the decision making process than is good for the people. The fact that lobbying interests frequently overrule the interests of the people is most indicative of the need for reform.

The legislature should be there to conduct the peoples’ business. Instead, it spends countless hours on useless regulation, after the fact legislation, and protection of interests that fly in the face of the people. The use of political power to further the special agenda of the few at the expense of the taxpayer has led to the public’s negative perception of this body. Therefore, reform is required.

The Cool Moose Party supports legislative reform in that it believes that the budget should be the first item of business of the Assembly. Since this is the biggest item of the state’s business, it should not be left to the last minutes of the session. This would allow for better consideration, greater participation, and jmore information being disseminated to the public.

Also, we support reform to maintain the concept of single item legislation, special labeling for all special pension legislation, the combining of all charitable funding onto a single submission of which each legislator will have two per session, the use of combined House-Senate bills to eliminate duplication, and the requirement of a fiscal component for each and every bill to state where the funding will be derived from should the bill become law.

We support the use of night sessions of the Assembly to allow for greater participation by a working public, the maintenance of a more detailed record as to committee hearings, the publication of all documents relate to the Assembly, including the bills and resolutions, that will be accessible to the public via computer available in state depository libraries.

The Cool Moose Party also wants the elimination of Assembly members sitting on agencies, boards, and commissions which are quasi-public or which come under the Assembly’s oversight jurisdiction.

THE LEGISLATURE:

1. Fiscal component for every spending bill
2. Single item legislation
3. Combined listing of all charitable gives of each legislator with separate consideration
4. Combined House-Senate bills to avoid duplication
5. Computerized public records with reasonable access

6. Special labeling of all special pension legislation
7. Complete public disclosure of all public laws and special legislation
8. Evening legislative sessions
9. Budget given first treatment on Assembly's agenda
10. Assembly members prohibited from sitting on bodies that require Assembly oversight
11. More detailed records of Committee meetings

ELECTIONS – The people of Rhode Island need to rely upon the election system to provide them with adequate representation. To that end, there is much to be accomplished in the area of the electoral process.

There is a need to reform the process. The first and foremost is the inclusion of independent political parties into the process itself. Many laws, designed for the two party system, must be revised to provide for this process.

Changes in the process should include a mechanism for complete participation by all in the system. This includes access to the ballot by candidates and the insurance to voters that each vote will count

The Cool Moose Party supports the reform of the election process whereby all people will have the ability to serve on their local Boards of Canvassers, as poll workers, and be appointed to positions that have traditionally required political affiliation.

We support a centralized computerized voting list, more careful inspection of the existing voter lists, easier accessibility to the voting lists for candidates, and a better operated voting system.

We support changes that would allow for electronic voting on referendum and the use of newer voting machinery. We are also in favor of adjusting deadlines to allow for fairness in the nomination process for those inclined to run as independent candidates.

There is a great need to reform the campaign spending aspect of the election laws. The funding methods are the cause of much of the turmoil and corruption that exists in the system. The need to raise phenomenal amounts of funds to be considered viable for an office must end. There should be reforms that would prohibit a candidate from spending more than one half of the total compensation the candidate could get from the office, in running for office. The public would then determine if the candidate overspent his or her money for the office at the voting booth, in as much as it may be impossible to restrict the amount of money a person chooses to spend on his or her own candidacy.

Thus, we can limit the amount of outside money. This would then provide for livelier, less media oriented races in which the candidates would actually be forced to run on the issues rather than in sound bites. Additionally, it would reduce the waste of time and energy without making the similar impact on the issues of the race.

The Cool Moose Party supports the idea that there must be a certification process through which the candidate demonstrates that he or she has enough support to be placed on the ballot, however, once those certifying signatures are verified, the candidate must be included in the process as an equal candidate within the race. This would apply to all laws, including campaign financing.

Traditionally, the political parties in charge of the state have fought to exclude others from the process. They have attempted to restrict access to political party status

rather than encourage it. This must end. The more ideas in the marketplace, the more thoughtful the electorate may become.

The Cool Moose Party is dedicated to making election laws fair and equitable, even if it may jeopardize our own party status. Having come through the exclusionary process, we are well aware of the need for it to change to reflect a new era of participation by all.

ELECTIONS:

1. Revise all statutes to make them apply equally to all political parties
2. Revise the election nomination laws to encourage participation by all
3. Reform campaign spending to limit outside contributions to one half of compensation of the office if elected
4. Centralize the voting lists and make them more accessible to candidates
5. Provide for new electronic voting, especially in the areas of referendum voting
6. Require equalized status once a candidate has qualified for ballot placement
7. Allow for cross nominations within the ballot

QUASI-PUBLIC AGENCIES – The Cool Moose Party cannot see the need for the appointment of quasi public agencies with the power of the purse. There may, admittedly, be a need for the specifically charged agency to do the business of satiate, but those agencies, even if needed, should not have the power to borrow or in any way bind the state.

The history of the quasi public agencies demonstrates that it has been little more than a plan that allowed the legislative and executive branches a method to circumvent the Section 16 of the Rhode Island Constitution that limited the spending power without public consent. This has been given a blind eye by the Rhode Island Supreme Court, a branch of the legislature and the Governor's office rather than being an independent third component of government.

There is a great deal of public dissatisfaction with the use of quasi public agencies. This demands that the government restrict them and take from them any power to commit the state.

The Cool Moose Party does not believe in the use of quasi public agencies. We believe that those elected to office should be held directly responsible for the decisions. We do not, therefore, condone the delegation of the elected official's power to an unelected body.

We also, reject the idea that members of the General Assembly should serve on these quasi public boards. This would appear somewhat contradictory on the surface in that we reject the quasi publics for the delegation of power away from the elected officials, and yet we reject the participation of elected officials, but we see it as completely consistent. We have the position that the quasi public should not exist and that the delegation was wrong. The subsequent inclusion of a few elected officials does

not rectify the wrong, and, in fact, may do more to create a conflict of interests within the government.

Given this reasoning, we are strongly in favor of the complete abolition of the quasi public agencies. We would consider the use of such agencies if they are without the conflicts posed by including legislative members and without the ability to by-pass the Rhode Island Constitution in relation to borrowing without the consent of the people.

QUASI PUBLIC AGENCIES:

1. Abolish all quasi public agencies
2. If retained, demand that there be conflict by including members of the legislative branch or the executive branch
3. If retained, demand that there be no power to commit the state's finances in contravention of Section 16 of the Rhode Island Constitution
4. Put the function of the elected government back into the bodies that were elected to do the function
5. Amend the Rhode Island Constitution to mandate that the public approve by referendum the creation of any quasi public agency
6. Develop a plan to extinguish the current quasi public agencies with minimal disruption or injury to the state's interests.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT – The Cool Moose Party has a firm commitment to local governance. We believe that this is the level that most impacts upon the people and the level at which more people are willing to participate.

Therefore, we believe that the local governing authorities need to be given free hand in determining their needs and their fate. We are aware, however, of the danger this poses. Local leaders have frequently taken on the roles of little dictators. Additionally, we are faced with a government that is more susceptible to favoritism and patronage hiring.

The current set up is not perfect, but it is not completely broken. The minor adjustments supported by the Cool Moose Party would be to give the locals slightly more power, but the money to fund any state initiatives.

The funding of the state mandates has long been a source of friction, but it is true that the state has frequently fallen short on its monetary commitment to program mandates. We therefore, favor a review of the present funding methods. In addition, the Cool Moose Party wants the state to fund all mandates it places on the locals, (currently in statute but circumvented by using the agencies to make regulations that are not statutory mandates, supposedly).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

1. Local government must have power to act
2. State mandates on the locals must be state funded
3. State agency mandates on locals must come under state funding rules
4. Strengthen laws that deal with government abuse and corruption
5. Demand adherence to the Open Meetings Laws
6. Require statewide standards (i.e. Election, Licensing, Records) to be uniformly applied

STATE GOVERNMENT – The role of state government is large. It has the responsibility of bringing together the varied needs of the people of the state while understanding that it must be a participant in a federal system.

The role is broad. The Cool Moose Party believes in a strong Tenth Amendment view of the state's power. That is, the powers not granted constitutionally to the federal government are in the statutes and the people. This is a strong belief of the party.

That being the case, we find that the state must be in the position to act and that it should at all times act in accord with its people. Government must understand that its role includes the people rather than represents them. This is where the Cool Moose Party has fundamental differences with the Democratic and Republican parties. We believe in the use of the people in their own governance whenever possible.

While there is a need to have a representative government, that representative government should only be empowered to the extent that the people cannot self govern. The exclusive representative government, as is the case of Rhode Island, denies the people full participation in government and is, in the view of the Cool Moose Party, in opposition to the will of the framers of the Constitution.

Therefore, we support a well regulated and highly responsive state government. We also support reforms that would allow for greater people participation, including but not limited to voter initiative.

STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Pass legislation to allow for voter initiative
2. Utilize referendum for voter participation
3. Maximize the state's role in the federal system
4. Allow for the people to call a constitutional convention by petition
5. Abolish the role of the Lieutenant Governor

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT – The federal role should be severely limited to the role allowed it by the people and the states within the United States Constitution. This means that the present role of the federal government has grown far too large for the liking of the Cool Moose Party.

The system of pork projects and protected interests is ruinous. Coupled with the fact that the nationalization of laws which impose regulation on just about everything, regardless of need or local input, the federal system is now taxing to keep itself fed at a rate that is nearing oppressive levels.

To counter this, the Cool Moose Party supports the downsizing of the federal government. This is not that the Cool Moose Party fails to identify the need for federal regulation and law in several areas, but it is a realization that the sending of funding to Washington only to send representatives to Congress to fight to bring it home again lacks any sensible logic.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party favors the maintenance of a strong, but self-restrained, federal government. The issues of national policy are rightly discussed by the federal legislative body, but the taxing and spending aspect of the federal government can no longer be tolerated nor funded.

The Cool Moose Party believes that the federal representatives should serve the interest of the country first and its state second. It believes that there the Representatives and Senators sent are there to negotiate the interests of the states in the interaction of the federal government in order to protect the national interest. This may not always run current with the interests of the state, and it is then that these representatives should work to minimize or seek fairness in application to the state's interests. In no case does the Cool Moose Party see the role of the federal congressperson being one of bacon getter.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

1. Limit the intrusion of the federal government
2. Require Congresspeople to put government ahead of pork projects
3. Limit the spending of federal government
4. Put the power of the purse in state rather than federal government
5. Maintain and strengthen the federal role in national policy
6. Federal funding of any mandates to the states

ETHICS – Rhode Islanders are concerned about their government. There is a serious need to demonstrate that there are ethical people operating the state. This problem has come about as a result of a passive electorate and a constant abuse of power by those being elected.

Now, after years of corruption, there is a new dawn. But this new era will not occur overnight and will be easily lost if not protected and nurtured. Still, there is no magic formula. People must raise their expectations of those in government and maintain them in the voting booth.

Ethics are a reflection of the people. Therefore, if the people willingly tolerate unethical behavior, then there can be little expectation that an ethical government emerge. Thus, there is some good to teach ethical behavior, but it still is better to seek as elected officials, those who are open, honest, and, therefore, ethical.

ETHICS:

1. Maintain a course that continues to promote ethical standards for elected and appointed governmental officials
2. Use educational programs to encourage ethics, but mandatory programs should be avoided in that few can be “taught” to be ethical
3. Allow for greater information access by the people to oversee government activities
4. Use the laws to prevent unethical behaviors
5. Recognize that bad ethics is a bad business draw

ARTS – The Arts are an important element in the society, but their importance must be seen in light of the political budgeting reality. The support of various programs of artistic value is important to the general welfare of the population, but the state funding must be one only after a finding of need.

The cultural elements of a society should be encouraged through philanthropic efforts and not through the tax form. The use of tax dollars for arts funding is the encouragement of a political argument that serves to separate the society rather than to unify it. Art is subjective and there, is an area that deserves limited involvement of the government.

Private funding should be encouraged. Industry and institutions of higher education will always fill a cultural void. If the artistic effort is a business, then it should be treated as a business and be given whatever tax treatment and encouragement that is afforded those industries.

Mandated art as part of a public project is questionable. The Cool Moose Party believes that such efforts can be privatized and be granted as an exchange for tax exempt status presently granted such institutions as universities and museums in the state.

While there is a need to support the arts, these efforts, when extended should be in conjunction with the state’s higher education institutions, libraries, and historical associations.

Further, such projects could also serve as candidates for funding from restricted gaming revenue funds since these projects are frequently one time payouts and can be eliminated from funding in times of economic distress while not being a part of the operating budget of the state.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party supports the arts but in a much more restrictive manner.

ARTS:

1. Encourage privatization of arts funding
2. Utilize tax exempt institutions to provide art and cultural opportunities
3. Use restricted gaming funds for one-time art projects outside the operating budget

4. Coordinate art and cultural efforts with universities, libraries, and historical groups
5. Eliminate mandated public funding of art

ENVIRONMENT – The Cool Moose Party is supportive of a clean environment for the people of Rhode Island. We believe in the need to maintain access to the shoreline and the free and common fisheries concept embodied within our state constitution.

We do not, however, believe in the environment at any cost. We are aware of the need to balance the interest of industry with the interests of the environment. We believe that an adequate and working compromise can be fashioned if all parties take a realistic position in that the state interests, not personal interests, are what are being served.

It is easy to understand that the business interests of the state have done little to make it easy to have their positions embraced. The poisoning of sites with chemicals, the near death of one of our state treasures, the bay, the creation of tire dumps, the creation of waste dumps, the unregulated dumping that has poisoned groundwater, and on and on.

Contrarily, it is difficult to understand the over-regulation that has caused the state to lose businesses due to the costs of development. It is the web of regulation that stops affordable housing that could keep our young people from fleeing the state in droves. There are countless examples of the regulatory system gone awry with the intent of clean environment but with the result of wasted time, energy, and dollars.

The balance forces both sides of the debate to realize that they must be responsible while being flexible. The failure to reach this point will remain ruinous to Rhode Island. That is to say, if business and industry continues its contamination unabated, then Rhode Island will not be a decent place to live. But, if the environmental regulatory interests continue without a strong basis in reason, they will have the effect of snob zoning in that they will restrict the state out of competition for industry for its people while making even housing development far too costly for most Rhode Island youth to remain.

This leads to the many areas of common interest. As a state, we should be looking to greener industry. We should be monitoring our regulatory programs to allow for the flexibility to have individuals and priority state interests put on a fact track permitting process. We must encourage recycling through use within the state and the development of recycling based industry. We need to stop allowing the regulatory process from being used as a tool for snob zoning. We need to focus the business sector on the fact that one of the biggest selling points of the state is Narragansett Bay and that this must be protected.

And the list goes on. There must be a strong commitment to groundwater cleanliness. As a state that is reliant upon surface waters, we cannot afford to allow for the contamination of our drinking supplies. We must look to the future water needs of the state, and yet, we must look to what chemicals we are using at present.

The environment is a balancing act in real life, and it is equally so in political life. There is no right or wrong answer. To have a pristine environment, there can be no development. To have development to enable people to exist, there is a cost to the environment. It is that simple. The hard part is to find the point where there can be

maximum development with the least amount of environmental disturbance. That is the position of the Cool Moose Party, and is one that is ever changing.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. Protect public access to the shore and the free and common fisheries of the state
2. Provide for fast-track permit processing for simple projects, rebuilds, and repairs
3. Encourage businesses that are recycling oriented
4. Protect water supplies and groundwater
5. Study the current use of chemicals within the public water supplies
6. Protect the bay as a focus point of industry and development in the state

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE – The Cool Moose Party supports the fishing industry and is strongly in favor of maintaining of the free and common fisheries provisions of the Rhode Island Constitution. We believe that much of Rhode Island's economy revolves around the bay and those who work it. Therefore, we are committed to the fishing industries of Rhode Island.

The Cool Moose Party also recognized that there are several areas of underdeveloped use with the industry and takes the position that Rhode Island could do more to promote its sea workers. To that end, we support programs of aquaculture as a method to supplement rather than supplant sea industry.

All too often, with the closing of the bay, those who work the waters are unable to continue to labor. This could be put to use if these people could be hired to harvest crops of the sea farming industries that could be established within our coastal waters.

The well being of the bay not only serves the current fishing industries, but it serves the tourism industry as well. In addition, its use could be expanded through sea farming while maintaining its integrity and its use as a natural treasure of the state.

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

1. Encourage aquaculture development
2. Provide support services for fishery development
3. Explore methods to expand fishing
4. Encourage a link between the fishing interests and the tourist interests
5. Give fishing interests more say in ocean dumping and dredging interests
6. Preserve the bay

ENERGY – It has long been a contention that the energy rates in Rhode Island are the chief source of the failure of economic development within the state. While there is truth in the statement that the energy costs within the state are prohibitively high, there is way too much credibility placed in the premise that the lagging business sector is completely a result of the high cost of energy.

Thus, the Cool Moose Party recognizes the need to address the situation, but to address it in a manner that is responsive to the real problem rather than the perceived one that the industrial interest tout in order to minimize their own failings.

There are some policy matters that need consideration, but unless the matter is addressed on a federal level, there really is little the state can do. The energy taxation, while under the control of the state and which should be abolished, will only make a minimal dent in the cost of energy. But, this dent would be a move in the right directions.

Therefore, the Cool Moose Party supports efforts to reduce the state tax on energy, but understands that this alone is not the be all and end all solution to the problem facing industry. The fact of the matter is that industry must become more competitive with the restrictive costs of the energy. Thus, industry that is less energy reliant should be expanded.

Given these restraints, Rhode Island must capitalize on its capabilities. It appears somewhat cost prohibitive to consider other forms of energy (i.e. wind, sun, or water), it should be considered. If determined to be cost inefficient, then the only realistic option for the state is to seek a federal solution to compete given the restrictions placed on it.

ENERGY:

1. Abolish the energy tax
2. Encourage federal energy policy that is favorable to Rhode Island industry
3. Encourage industry that is less energy intensive
4. Study the industrial use of alternative energy, but without commitment until determined as being highly feasible

HISTORIC PRESERVATION – The Cool Moose Party believes that Rhode Island is an area that respects its history. To that end, Rhode Island should seek to encourage preservation efforts. This does not mean that there is a need to promote a program that preserves all at the expense of development. This does not mean that there is a need to promote a preservation program that cannot be sustained by the state's budget.

Thus, the Cool Moose Party supports a program of triage in the area of historic preservation. There is a need to make a determination as to what is important to save and make the determination based on the need to preserve, the rarity of the preservation site, and the costs involved in the preservation effort.

The state should encourage historic preservation; however, it must understand its limitations. The Cool Moose Party believes that the private sector through incentives that

can be helpful in historic preservation. The role should not be solely governmental or regulatory.

Additionally, government needs to review its own policy matters in this vein. That is to say, the state needs to consider that the imposition of historic Zoning is a restriction that impacts on the affordability of Rhode Island real estate and business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1. Encourage private efforts of historic preservation
2. Utilize a triage method of preservation
3. Limit the mandatory nature of historic zoning as used for snob zoning
4. Funding of historic preservation should be limited to gaming revenues

LIBRARIES – The Cool Moose Party is strongly in support of the library system in the State of Rhode Island and supports its constitutional protections under the Rhode Island Constitution. We, therefore, agree that there must be adequate funding for library programs. This does not mean, however, that the funds be expended without forethought.

That is to say, there should be a coordinated effort to bring the library systems of the state into a statewide network of cooperation that extends far greater than the present CLAN system. In addition, we support a networking of the legislative and judicial libraries on computer link with the municipal library system.

We support efforts to use the library as a governmental document depository via computer link. This includes the use of the computer to access the records of all public bodies that are filed with the Secretary of State's office as required by the Open Meeting Law, all written judicial opinions, all agency regulations and decisions, the text of all legislation filed, and other historical documents of the state.

There is a clear need for funding. We feel that funding could come from one time expenditure of funds taken in under state sanctioned gaming such as the lottery or other gaming revenue of the state which are not placed in the operational budgeting process.

Libraries educate the public and need to be maintained as the keepers of our society. We must understand that the function is more than simply a place to keep books. The functions of the library need to be widely acknowledged. We in the Cool Moose Party cannot tolerate the closing of libraries as a first line of budget cuts.

LIBRARIES:

1. Require that the constitutional mandate of funding libraries be upheld
2. Use the municipal library system in conjunction with government document distributions
3. Computer link libraries statewide
4. Use the computerized link to provide complete statewide access as a document depository
5. Earmark gaming revenue to fund one time library expenditures statewide

SOLID WASTE – The need to create policy related to solid waste is most important. The Cool Moose Party supports innovation in the area of solid waste. We believe that the way to combat the growing problems of waste cannot be ignored.

The Cool Moose Party support movements that are designed to minimize waste product and encourages conservation of all resources. We support providing incentives for industries in the area of recycling. We believe that the government must practice what it preaches and purchase recycled products.

As to the landfill, we feel that there needs to be great care to maintain the integrity of the lining system of the Johnston landfill. We support the concept of highly technologically advanced use of incineration. We believe that incentive should be designed to require that the incineration programs are always kept at the state of art for the industry.

We continue to support waste water treatment programs designed to maintain the cleanliness of the bay, however, we do urge restrain and study before acting on building facilities. Rhode Island has a track record of building projects that are unmatched to the needs and overpriced. This cannot be allowed if these programs are ever to get the support of a rightly skeptical public.

The Cool Moose Party support contractual obligations and bonds from those involved in incineration to protect the public should the incinerator fail to function as contracted. These funds shall serve to protect the neighborhoods and municipalities from noxious failures of these sites.

SOLID WASTE:

1. Encourage continued efforts in waste water treatment to clean the bay
2. Create incentives for recycling industries
3. Create incentives for clean, high tech incineration
4. Require bonding to protect neighbors from incineration operational failures
5. Demand constant upgrading of incineration technology
6. Protect the integrity of the lining of the Johnston landfill
7. Require state use of recycled products

INSURANCE – The Cool Moose Party supports the concept of individual responsibility. Although this is the case, we are aware that there may be a need for insurance so long as there is a governmental process that encourages individuals to blame everyone except themselves for their plight.

Insurance is a protective mechanism. Therefore, it should do as it claims. The abuse of the insurance process by attorneys, doctors, and the insured has created a monster that has grown dramatically in the last forty years.

There is a need for tort reform that includes limitations on the ability to sue for injuries. The restrictions on suit, however, cannot come without sacrifice by the

insurance industry. Thus, the give and take requires that there be a set limit as to the charges of insurance and the regulation of the price comes with a limitation of the types of claims to be made.

Insurance companies do not want individual responsibility and neither do the doctors and lawyers. Let's face it, complete reform puts lawyers out of work, doctors out of practice, and insurance companies out of business. Thus, these groups will only support limited reform efforts.

From this hypocritical approach, there really can be no clear policy. The realistic outcome is that the policy will reflect the amounts the doctors and lawyers and insurance agents can get from John Q. Public. Thus, true reform in this area will create high unemployment in the areas of medicine, law, and insurance.

Still, the Cool Moose Party believes that these otherwise qualified professionals can make better social contributions in other areas. Therefore, we support reform efforts that are actually designed to cut to the bone the role of insurance within the society.

INSURANCE:

1. Reform system to demand more individual responsibility
2. Tort reform with mandatory limitation on insurance premiums
3. Universal access to insurance
4. Avoid regressive nature of insurance coverage
5. Provide other opportunities for productive employment of attorneys, physicians, and insurance agents
6. Change policy abruptly rather than a slow course that can be politically motivated

LABOR – The role of labor is still a functioning part of government. Unions, while somewhat diminished in their role, enjoys the Fifth Estate of government. That is to say that policy making of any government must include consideration of labor. This is not necessarily union labor, but labor in general.

Labor is the people upon which the government relies. To be a productive society, there is a need for labor. Thus, the Cool Moose Party recognizes the need for cooperation of labor and business interests to create an atmosphere that is conducive to the advancement of the state's interests.

Labor needs to be guaranteed employment and it needs to continually have access to training and personal upgrading opportunities. The needs of labor must be supplied by the state in cooperation with its business interests. Therefore, incentives must be available to make the education of workers a reality.

The state cannot align itself with business against labor, and similarly, the state cannot align itself with labor against business. Rhode Island, with its high level of General Assembly sympathy with labor interests, has created an artificial environment that has actually come home to roost in this hard time economy.

The business interests, equally as ruthless in utilizing the Executive branch and the fourth estate to combat labor, has never fully understood the need for cooperation and

consolidation of efforts. Thus, the Cool Moose Party sees the need to have a complete overhaul of the political process and the regulations related to the interaction of labor and industry in Rhode Island.

LABOR:

1. Reform the laws to encourage business/labor cooperation
2. Minimize labor's influence in the Legislature
3. Create educational incentives for employees through their employers
4. Devise mechanisms for long-term job assurances
5. Realistically count labor statistics
6. Reform the unemployment collection process to encourage labor and real job searches

HEALTH CARE AND RELATED MATTERS – The issues related to public health and health care are of importance to the Cool Moose Party. We believe that the government should make available preventative public health care for its people. We also believe that the government should demand that health care be available to all members of the society, but should not be mandated upon these citizens.

We believe that health insurance have universal availability without mandates and that there should be complete portability of the coverage. We agree that there should be incentives to encourage people to utilize family health care providers and preventative care in place of costly emergency room services.

Rhode Island also must make a serious commitment to the care of the elderly. The present approach of over reliance on nursing home care with underfunding of those in state care in these homes must be replaced. There must be in-home care wherever possible.

We support visiting nurse programs and related health care plans that encourage the patient to become self-reliant in the patient's own home.

The Cool Moose Party, believing in the right to choose one's way of life, supports right to die with dignity legislative efforts.

The state also has a duty of care for its youth. The charge of the Department of Children, Youth, and Family must be in line with a state policy of protective care of children in need. The Cool Moose Party finds that the need for a wide array of care for children. This care ranges from daycare incentives to complete removal of the child and placement in training schools and, if appropriate, orphanages. While it is incumbent on the state to minimize its intrusion on the life of the child, there must be a complete panoply of options available to the state to care for these discarded, abused, and otherwise mistreated youth.

The Cool Moose Party supports complete youth immunization programs and state sponsored monitoring of health care needs extending throughout the lifetime of the resident of the state.

HEALTH CARE AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Encourage statewide child immunization and adult public health programs
2. Demand a more involved role of DCYF
3. Encourage in-home care with visiting nurses as opposed to institutionalization of nursing home patients
4. Devise standards for death with dignity
5. Make all health care plans universally available, but optional, and completely portable

TRANSPORTATION – The Cool Moose Party supports mass transit efforts in Rhode Island. Additionally, as part of its proposals for economic development, the Cool Moose Party also supports the concept of the third rail required for the development of Quonset Point/Davisville.

The Cool Moose Party opposes the use of public highway funds in conjunction with development of private businesses. Therefore, we oppose the use of public money, regardless of the source, in the actual development of the mall itself.

We agree that there is a great need for highway work in the state; however, we feel that the commitment should be toward the repair of ill constructed and poorly maintained roadways instead of new projects that often run over budget.

We support the idea that motorcycles have a personal choice on the use of helmets and we support safety in requiring motorcycles ten years old or newer be equipped with headlamps that are operational at all times the motorcycle is operating, for safety. We believe that seat belt use is a private choice issue.

The Cool Moose Party believes that highways that are lit and maintained are an asset to the state and an encouragement for industrial development; therefore, we support programs that will achieve the goal of top grade roads within the federal, state, and local transportation system.

We also support the linking of Newport and Providence via water travel and are in support of efforts to restore rail links in the state. We also support the recreational use of bikes along maintained pathways.

CONSTITUTION – The Cool Moose Party believes that the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Rhode Island are the ruling documents of our democratic society. We read both documents in a rather strict interpretive manner. We are fully in support of the concept of the Tenth Amendment reserving to the people, all rights that are not expressly granted to the federal or state government.

We are strong believers in the Second Amendment in that we understand it to be unrelated to gun control and more related to the ability of the people to be armed should they ever need to overthrow a tyrannical government.

We believe in a strong First Amendment that allows for the free flow of ideas and the personal freedoms enumerated within it.

The Cool Moose Party seeks, as part of its mission, to restore the rights and freedoms of the Constitution to the people and away from the political entities that have usurped the people's power set forth by our founders.

TAXATION – The Cool Moose Party has steadfastly opposed regressive taxation. We favor the abolition of the local property tax for the purpose of funding education and seek that it be replaced with a statewide income taxation for that purpose. We believe that sin taxes and sales taxes should be lowered.

Sin, sale, and property taxation, like fees, are taxes which severely impact upon the poorer members of society. In doing so, the poor are carrying the burdens of government. This burden should be fairly shared by all members of the society equally. Therefore, we seek equity through progressive taxation.

Additionally, we feel that there could be a reinstating of the estate tax with a household exemption of three hundred thousand dollars. This would restore a cash flow from estate valued in excess of three hundred thousand dollars.

Also, we should consider taxation of pension money that was set aside under tax deferral and is withdrawn for deposit in states without state income taxation. This is a way that the richer members of the society take taxable benefits away from the state to non-tax states and avoid taxation.

EDUCATION – Education and its funding need particular attention. The Cool Moose Party sees this area as one that has great need for legislative attention and gets little effort from the lawmakers.

The Cool Moose Party seeks to reform the funding of education by placing it squarely on the state. The Rhode Island Constitution provides that education shall be the charge of the Assembly. This duty has been shifted to the local school committees. These school committees, bodies designed to promote policy, have been given broad powers of the purse. This must be restored to the Assembly.

The Cool Moose Party supports a two year, Assembly negotiated or imposed contract, completed before adjournment during election years. This would provide a statewide rate with a check at the voting booth if the legislators failed to uphold the wishes of the people.

As to policy, there needs to be a minimization of state regulation, that is, unless the state is willing to pay the bills. The fact that there are mandates on the locals imposed by the state without funding is a complete abomination.

As to education itself, we must encourage the testing for promotion of students. We need to set a broad scope of knowledge that must be possessed by each and every student prior to their graduation.

On the matter of higher education, the Cool Moose Party supports the unification of the Rhode Island system of higher education. Additionally, we support efforts to find funds for capital improvement projects. We believe that our higher education institutions can play a major role in economic development of the state.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Rhode Island is in desperate need of economic development. This need is primarily in the private sector. The Cool Moose Party sees economic development as encouragement of private business and the avoidance of any conjunctive efforts between business and government in which government plays the role of participant, thereby weakening its position to enforce its regulatory powers.

In short, the Cool Moose Party embraces the following ideas for Rhode Island's economic development:

Rhode Island must stop the exodus of its youth.

Rhode Island must stop public subsidizing of business and replace that policy with one that deregulates business and allows it to grow.

Rhode Island must better utilize its resources.

Rhode Island must stop politicizing its economic development plans.

Rhode Island must recognize technology and business trends.

Rhode Island must understand that social policy thrives in a working society.

Rhode Island must understand the needs of its workforce.

Rhode Island must provide leadership and clearly articulate its public policy.

If Rhode Island follows these simple principles there is prosperity in the future. The Cool Moose Party supports the private enterprise concept. We believe in small business. We support efforts to develop Quonset Point, encourage international trade, develop aquaculture, and the encouragement of recycling industries.

VOTER INITIATIVE – While it was mentioned elsewhere in the platform, it deserves reiteration that the Cool Moose Party is fully behind all movements for the creation of voter initiative in Rhode Island.

Although we are somewhat partial to an initiative process that has a relatively high threshold, we are willing to support any measure at this time that has, as its primary aim, the placing of power in the people without restriction, excepting that which is protected under the Constitution.