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From the Chair

A few words from Chair William Hunt.

I was walking my dog a few days ago, and a neighbor stopped me to talk: “What are you going to do about these mask mandates?” she asked, referring to her school-aged children. I know this neighbor well enough to know she is a successful small business owner and is very independent-minded. We have had some pleasant conversations as I was campaigning for state representative, but the tenor of those conversations never reached the urgency of this recent interaction.

At first, I chuckled at the question—what does she expect a libertarian candidate for state representative with a four-election second-place streak to accomplish? But after I got home, it struck me that this neighbor represents a voting bloc that really hasn’t really been exposed to the Libertarian philosophy.

The major voting demographic that swung Virginia’s governor’s race (and nearly New Jersey’s too) was the parents of school-aged children—especially mothers (nothing is more ferocious than a mother bear protecting her cubs). After a year-plus of distance learning, parents have actually been exposed to what their children are being taught. Now that their children have been sent back to school, parents are forced to comply with unilateral mandates no matter their personal, religious, or medical reservations.

Apparently, a lot of parents don’t like the leftist idea that they have no say in how their children are educated—and they showed it on election day. The question for us is, who is this motivated voting bloc going to come out for in Rhode Island’s 2022 election?

As I have lamented in my last two articles, there is a strong movement in our state to push our government even further to the left. Come November, Governor McKee will be positioned as the “Moderate” candidate despite his record of: unnecessarily extending the state of emergency, mandating the masking of our children, and forcing healthcare workers to choose between their personal health and their religious beliefs or their jobs.

The Libertarian Party of Rhode Island is well positioned to provide a compelling point of view that these people are desperate for, but you need to take personal responsibility for getting that message out. As a reader of this newsletter, you are more politically engaged than most: what are you doing to advance the cause of Liberty in your community?

I am calling on you to get involved and/or start your own community group or organization related to the issues you are most passionate about. Give people like my neighbor an opportunity and an outlet to voice their concerns and frustrations and work to make a difference. We need to start filling-out this liberty-minded community so we are ready to be mobilized for next year’s election cycle.

Next time I talk to my neighbor, I will make it a point to ask about the groups she is involved with that share her views on these issues and see if there is a way I can get involved. I

hope you will also go outside your comfort zone to bring our message of Liberty to people at their level and related to the issues they truly care about.

-Billy Hunt, Chairman LPRI

From the Floor

A space for LPRI members to have their voices heard.

Have something to say about recent political events? We want to hear from you!

Send us your opinions, comments, and other miscellaneous musings about libertarian topics: communications@lpri.us. Use "From the Floor" in the subject line.

Libertarians shouldn't fall prey to the siren song of ranked-choice voting

A race for city council in Portland, Maine was nearly [decided](#) by picking a piece of paper from a bowl. Prior to a recount, in which several tabulating errors were exposed, the last two remaining candidates in the race appeared to have the same number of votes. What is the great democratic solution ranked-choice voting offers in a tie? Apparently random luck. Voting officials chose a candidate at random to win the seat.

While a candidate did eventually emerge [victorious](#)—not the candidate whose name was draw from a hat—this incident exposes just one of the problems with ranked-choice voting, which Maine first used in June 2018. The use of ranked-choice voting for state-wide offices was approved at the ballot box in November 2016, after a four-way gubernatorial race in 2016 where independents split the vote and Republican Paul LePage emerged as the plurality winner. Proponents of democracy were outraged: he received less than 38% of the vote; the people didn't pick him; how could he possibly represent them?

One of the supposed features of ranked-choice voting is that it requires a majority, rather than a plurality, winner. This, we're told, ensures races will be fair and democratic. The candidate the majority wants will win. Until there's a tie, apparently. And then democratic processes get thrown out the window.

But this idea that ranked-choice voting ensures candidates who haven't won the favor of the majority can't win election seems to directly contradict another supposed feature of ranked-choice voting, which is often touted by libertarians. The ability to rank candidates supposedly is conducive to greater representation, meaning candidates from third-parties stand a greater chance of getting on the ballot and receiving votes.

Then why is it ranked-choice voting so often seems to be implemented directly after an election with multiple candidates from parties other than Republican and Democrat?

At the same time Portland's city council race was going on, voters in Westbrook, Maine

were approving a referendum allowing the use of ranked-choice voting in municipal elections. In 2016 and 2017, the town's mayoral races featured four candidates.

Like Rhode Island, Maine plays games with certification of third-party candidates, but this is clearly not too much of an obstacle to independents seeking office. One is drawn towards the conclusion, then, that ranked-choice voting isn't really about improving representation. Yes, proponents of ranked-choice voting might encourage the appearance of third-party candidates on ballots, but by raising the threshold of votes a candidate needs to win, they're making it much more mathematically difficult for those third-party candidates to win. Ultimately, they're making it easier for entrenched political parties to win. Libertarians should be wary of ranked-choice voting.

-submitted anonymously

Interested in getting more involved? We're currently looking to fill several positions, including Events Director and Political Director.

To learn more about our open positions and the responsibilities associated with them, visit <https://lpri.us/about-lpri/officers-staff/>.

If you think you're the right candidate to fill one of those positions, let us know! Email communications@lpri.us or send us a message on social media!

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Policy Report

News from around Rhode Island.

We're roughly one-year out from the 2022 election. Midterms are, of course, a big deal on the federal level, but are even more significant in Rhode Island because the governor's term will be up.

The 2022 gubernatorial race is the next best chance libertarians have to make an impact on the state.

Here's what the race looks like, at the moment:

A Democratic primary has been a certainty for a while now. Nellie Gorbea became the first person to announce her intention to run for the state's highest office back in May, challenging incumbent Dan McKee. McKee has not yet formally announced his intention to seek a second term in office, but it's likely he will. It's also important to remember that McKee wasn't elected to the office he currently holds, but took over for Gina Raimondo following her appointment as U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

Gorbea has since been joined by a fairly-long list of fellow challengers:

Declared Candidates

- [Matt Brown](#), former [Rhode Island secretary of state](#), candidate for U.S. Senate in [2006](#), and candidate for governor in [2018](#)
- [Helena Foulkes](#), former [CVS](#) executive, granddaughter of former U.S. Senator [Thomas Dodd](#), and niece of former U.S. Senator [Chris Dodd](#)
- [Nellie Gorbea](#), Rhode Island secretary of state
- Tom Iannitti, former [Rhode Island Senate](#) Policy Analyst
- [Seth Magaziner](#), [general treasurer of Rhode Island](#)

(Source: [Wikipedia](#))

Republicans have not yet declared any candidates, but Blake Filippi and Alan Fung have expressed interest in running. Filippi currently serves as minority leader in the House of Representatives. Fung was formerly the mayor of Cranston; he has twice before run for governor.

Also running as an independent is Luis Daniel Muñoz, who is a physician and has previously run for governor.

Conspicuously missing from this list is any kind of liberty-friendly candidate. The Republicans can't even unify behind a candidate; how can we rely on them to push for a liberty-focused message during the next few years?

The pro-liberty message couldn't be easier right now: over the course of the pandemic, the state has largely been run by a one-person show from the governor's office. And, after failing during the early days of the pandemic to push back against this affront to limited government, Republicans now can't even come up with a candidate.

Libertarians cannot count on another party; we need our own candidate for governor in 2022.

We don't even need to win the gubernatorial race; we just need someone ensuring our ideas are part of the public discourse. And we need 5% to achieve party status. Even if we lose, we still win.

We're on a mission to #TurnRIGold.

And that starts with

5%

We only need **5%** of the gubernatorial vote next November to achieve party status.

Even if we lose, we still win.

BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Visit [lpri.us](#) to donate or volunteer and help us **#TurnRIGold**

But we need your help. We need volunteers to run for office, as well as to help raise awareness and run campaigns. And we need donations to help make sure we have the resources to succeed.

While there's nothing easy about running for office, things like campaign filing paperwork and campaign finance deadlines don't need to be something to fear. Our Executive Committee has a great deal of experience running national and state-wide campaigns for public office. We've developed a blueprint to help candidates with their campaign. From door knocking, to fliers, to media, we can offer help with any area of your campaign.

Running for public office not for you? We're always looking for volunteers to help with a wide variety of areas. From door knocking, to street walking, to manning booths at information fairs, we can use your talents, whatever they may be.

[Click Here to Volunteer](#)

[Click Here to Donate](#)

Featured Event: Muh Roads Volunteer Cleanup

Putting libertarian principles in action.

The Rhode Island Liberty Alliance is holding a road cleanup event on Saturday, November 20.

The alliance adopted Veterans Memorial Parkway in East Providence and plans to subvert stereotypical misconceptions about libertarian attitudes towards private ownership while putting volunteerism in action in the community.

The Muh Roads event is being sponsored by the Libertarian Party of Rhode Island and Liberty RI.

From the Rhode Island Liberty Alliance:



The end goal of this initiative is to inspire as many people as possible to join us to take back Muh Rd from the state!

Join us Saturday November 20th at 11:00am at the [East Bay Bike Path Public Parking Lot](#) (across from Mercer St.). Bags, gloves, clean-up tools, and high-visibility vests will be provided. **The first 25 participants will get a limited-edition “Muh Rd” t-shirt.**

After the clean-up, we plan on grabbing a drink at the [Narragansett Brewery](#) if you want to grab a drink and/or lunch.

To register for the event, visit: <https://rilibertyalliance.com/event/muhrds/>

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