

The 2nd Amendment in the political arena

First a little background on the politics of politics. In Wisconsin there is a publication called the "Wisconsin Blue Book". It is published biennially in odd-numbered years. The Blue Book is a primer of the governmental structure of the state. It lists legislative boundaries; legislators; history of the State Constitution, and much more. One thing that can be found in it is, the platforms of the various political parties registered in the state.

The general purpose of any political party establishing a party platform is to distinguish themselves from the other parties. They typically adopt specific verbiage to set the policies of the party. This is a resource you can explore to see where you are philosophically aligned.

These policies seem to blow with the political winds. If you look back thru the last 5 or 6 editions you will see quite a variation of positions on all the planks of all of the parties' platforms.

As recently as the last edition; 2009-2010, the Republican Party Platform on the 2nd Amendment didn't even acknowledge the 2nd Amendment. It is listed under the heading of: **American Civilization.** with a single sentence,

Individuals have basic Constitutional rights to defend themselves, their families and property

This last weekend; May 21 - 23, 2010 a group of likeminded patriots were successful in reestablishing the platform and resurrecting it to read as follows under the heading of:

Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms

The Republican Party of Wisconsin is a vigilant supporter of the right of individuals to keep and bear arms embodied in both the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 25, of the Wisconsin Constitution. We therefore oppose all efforts to restrict the ownership, manufacture, transfer, carry, or sale of firearms by law-abiding citizens. We further oppose all efforts to require registration of firearms in the possession of law-abiding citizens, as well as efforts to bankrupt firearms manufacturers through frivolous, unethical lawsuits. Instead, we call for proper enforcement of the many existing laws against those who commit crimes. For safety's sake, we encourage voluntary training in the use of firearms. We cannot ignore the clear lessons of history regarding the tyranny and suffering which can fall upon a disarmed and vulnerable people.

This may not seem like much of an accomplishment to some, but what this does is establishes a benchmark that we can hold candidates to. By a candidate running for office under a particular party means: they are to promote; endorse; and embody these principals.

Going forward in this political cycle, everyone needs to challenge the candidates on their position on the 2nd Amendment and what it means. If the candidates position isn't aligned with the above platform position; everyone must work diligently through forums; blogs, letters to the editor, etc. to spread the word that those candidates do not support freedom.

Another major accomplishment at the GOP Convention was amending resolution **2010 -02 2nd Amendment**. The following resolution was proposed as it is written here. The words that are ~~struck through~~ are the words we were able to get removed.

2010-02 2nd Amendment

WHEREAS, the Constitutions of the United States and Wisconsin both guarantee the right to keep and bear arms; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin does not allow law-abiding citizens to carry concealed weapons for their self-defense; and

WHEREAS, Forty-Eight (48) states has adopted legislation allowing their citizens to obtain permits to carry concealed weapons for their self-defense; and

WHEREAS, in those states which have adopted such legislation, the number of incidents of misuse of the concealed weapons resulting in the revocation of the permits for carrying concealed weapons has been negligible,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Wisconsin, in caucus assembled, urges the Wisconsin Legislature to adopt legislation to permitting law-abiding citizens without a felony record or a record of serious mental problems to ~~obtain permits to~~ carry concealed weapons;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Wisconsin, in caucus assembled, urges the state of Wisconsin to pass legislation to prohibit individuals or organizations from suing manufactures of guns and ammunition for damage caused by illegal acts committed by individuals, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Wisconsin, in caucus assembled, supports strict punishment of criminal activity involving firearms, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Wisconsin, in caucus assembled; opposes any effort to restrict gun ownership by imposing taxes or fees on guns or ammunition or gun licenses and opposes any other underhanded attempts by government to undermine our 2nd Amendment rights

When this amendment came up for a vote; a friendly amendment was proposed to strike those 3 words. After receiving a second, the chair asked for a voice vote. The majority voice vote wasn't discernable, the chair then asked for all in favor to rise; then all opposed to rise. It was clear that the ayes had it but the chair declared that the nays were the majority. Then a roll call vote was called for from the floor. This is where we almost lost it. In a roll call vote, the delegates in attendance represent the total number of delegates allowed for their county. In our case; 16 members had control of 93 votes for our county. (5.8 votes/person present).

The counties with the larger populations, such as, Milwaukee (602); Waukesha (583); Dane (294); have a much greater impact on the outcome in a roll call than the smaller population counties do.

Milwaukee 468 for, 142 against
Waukesha 374 for, 208 against
Dane 215 for, 78 against

We were ultimately successful in the adoption of the amendment striking the permit language. However; it is worth mentioning the counties that overwhelmingly voted against it.

County	votes for	votes against
Burnett	0	18
Chippewa	0	55
Forrest	0	9
Green	0	28
Oconto	0	37
Oneida	0	42
Outagamie	0	161
Ozaukee	5	125
Portage	4	53
Racine	15	170
Richland	0	15
Sawyer	0	18
Waushara	0	25

Equally noteworthy are the counties that unanimously supported it; (this is where I will be spending my vacation \$ this summer)

Adams; Ashland; Barron; Bayfield; Calumet; Clark; Columbia; Crawford; Grant; Iowa; Jackson; Juneau; Kewaunee; La Crosse; Lafayette; Lincoln; Manitowoc; Monroe; Pepin; Pierce; Rusk; Sauk; St. Croix; Trempealeau; Vilas; Washburn.

A special thank you to Tom Irwin and Hudson Mayor Dean Knudson for spear heading this effort, it wouldn't have happened without them.