



## Trump and the Libertarians

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Bill Kristol tells WMAL radio he is trying to find donors for a conservative third party run against Donald Trump if the New Yorker is nominated as the Republican candidate for president.

Among the liberal Republicans there is also splintering. [Breitbart](#) broke the story that Donald Trump's impending success in winning the GOP nomination was causing fractures in Republican Party delegations, as one DC GOP delegate, Rina Shah, was decertified as a delegate to the GOP nominating convention for saying publicly that she planned to vote for Hillary if Trump was nominated.

The DC Republican Party is something of an outlier.

Its national committee man and woman, lawyer Bob Kabel and real estate developer Jill Homan, are both (openly) gay, as is its chairman, financial manager Jose Cunningham. Its executive director, Patrick Mara, though a happily married heterosexual and new dad, was the first DC candidate some years back to endorse gay marriage over civil unions, and the DC Republican Party supports gay marriage in its platform, and did so before the DC Democratic party did. (Only the DC and Delaware GOP affiliates supported gay marriage in their platforms before the Supreme Court enacted it).

Perhaps coincidentally, Homan and Mara both fall into another faction of the current GOP: Homan, a former campaigner for Maryland Governor Bob Ehrlich, the Republican precursor to Larry Hogan, says she describes herself as "trending libertarian," and Mara has been known to use the "L" word (lower case) to describe his brand of socially liberal, fiscally conservative Republicanism.

The "libertarian wing" of the Republican Party has been having spasms this week over Trump, and Google [searches](#) for "Libertarian Party" shot up after Trump's latest win. Membership applications and donations to the Libertarian Party have [doubled](#) since Trump won the Indiana primary, with 100 people joining daily.

Congressman Justin Amash, PACster Matt Kibbe, and former Congressman Ron Paul are libertarian Republicans on the list of those pledged to never support Trump.

Senator Rand Paul doesn't seem to have any plans to endorse Trump, though Senator Paul has had no difficulty in the past endorsing Mitt Romney or campaigning pointedly for Republican gubernatorial candidates like Ken Cuccinelli in Virginia in 2013, when unusually successful Libertarian Party candidates like Robert Sarvis started polling over 5 percent.

George Will, who has evolved into a libertarian fellow traveler, blurbing CATO Institute books and speaking to libertarianish groups (last night he introduced transsexual Christian libertarian economic historian Dierdre McCloskey at the American Enterprise Institute), wrote an editorial predicting Trump will cause the GOP to lose both the House and Senate.

Dave Nalle, the former national chairman of the Republican Liberty Caucus, a group of libertarians inside the GOP, has switched parties at least temporarily, and will be a delegate to the Libertarian Party nominating convention in Orlando, May 26-30. He aims to help nominate former Republican Governor Gary Johnson, who has been appealing to GOP voters in the #NeverTrump movement. Asked why he was switching parties, Nalle answered:

Nominating Johnson gives Republicans who cannot stomach Trump an acceptable option other than Hillary. I blame the party leadership for its failure to support a reasonable alternative to Trump. They would rather let the party die at the hands of bigoted yahoos who do not believe in Republican values than accept the need for serious internal reform and platform changes which would attract new voters to the party. This completes a process of debasement of the party that began when leadership tried to expand the party base by welcoming radical groups which were driven out of the Democratic Party. Trumpism is the price we pay for not realizing that there are principles which are more important than winning elections.

This week, one of the DC GOP's other 19 delegates (not Shah), invited me, as a local DC Libertarian, to lunch, to beg me to get Gary Johnson and the Libertarian Party to run an aggressive, but ideologically moderate, campaign to appeal to Republicans who won't vote for Trump. This Republican delegate – DC's delegates are all pledged to Rubio or Kasich – had also tried to meet with Libertarian Party national director Wes Benedict, but had only managed to get a 15 minute phone pitch, where he made the same points.

When I told my lunch partner I actually thought Libertarian candidates for Congress should appeal to Trump voters (he may not have read my previous "Two Libertarian Cheers for Donald Trump"), he was horrified. Supporting Donald Trump as a wrecking ball aimed at the political class and as someone who was energizing independents and non-voters is, according to my lunchmate, "anti-intellectual," because Trump doesn't always articulate the correct policy proposals.

So the libertarians, in the GOP and in the LP, are of two minds. Some think Trump will drive many Republican voters to vote for Gary Johnson. As Zuri Davis, an editorial assistant at the Rand Paulish webzine *Rare* told her friends, "My vote will be going towards the Libertarian Party in November."

But other Libertarians are supporting Trump.

Well known libertarian economist and author Walter Block, started a group of Libertarians for Trump, whose website aggregates pro-Trump articles by libertarianish authors including David Stockman. The Chief Operating Officer for Libertarians for Trump is Martin Moulton, the 2014 Libertarian Party candidate for D.C. Shadow Representative to Congress, the top Libertarian vote getter in DC's last election.

Moulton explains his support:

Now that Mr. Trump is the presumptive GOP nominee we seek to support the candidate most likely to win the 2016 presidential election and advance Libertarian policies. If a registered LP candidate does not gain the national attention and votes needed to beat Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Trump's consistent calls to reevaluate NATO's relevance, question interventionist disasters and financial losses, and his promise to audit the Federal Reserve in his first 100 days, make him the most likely 2016 candidate to successfully enact and realize Libertarian solutions for all Americans.

Moulton, who is African American, gay, and has one Latin American parent, presumably doesn't think Trump or all of his supporters are Nalle's "bigoted yahoos."

At this date there are no known delegates to the Libertarian nominating convention supporting Trump. So unlike the GOP, the LP may not have to take moves to decertify any delegates.