

In Their Own Words

I am Andrew Kohlhofer, and I'm running for Congress in New Hampshire's 1st District. Probably few have heard of me, but my goal is to change that.

I am running because I believe our country is at the tipping point. We will either slip into the abyss of ordinariness and malaise of Europe, adopting notions of liberty by seeking to level everything for everyone; or we are on the verge of a great political awakening that liberty does matter, that the rule of law does matter, that the Constitution is the legal framework of the country.

That is why I have adopted for my theme 2 Corinthians 3:17 and its corollary: "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." And, conversely, where that Spirit is not there is tyranny.

This liberty is the notion that it is God who works within each one of us who believe to will and to his good pleasure. It leads to extraordinary innovation and the strength to do what is right no matter what the situation.

It also humbles our leaders so they see themselves as ministers, servants of those who elected them. They are not lords to direct our paths or to infuse us with their intentions.

My attitude is that I am not running to get elected; I am running because I believe that certain things need to be done and I am going to do them. If people like that, I will get elected; if not, I will not be.

As a member of the Fremont Budget Committee, I stood my ground against what I believed to be excess school spending. My reward was being voted off that committee twice, because I would not compromise with the powers that be to curry favor. (If you want to get a taste, Google Andy Kohlhofer and watch the YouTube videos). I believe there are not government solutions to our problems, but there are people solutions.

Take the financial meltdown. Wall Street was simply doing what the government demanded: Make risky loans to people who cannot afford them. It then developed complicated financial instruments to balance against that risk while trying to make money in a low-interest environment.

When the dollar tanked in 2008, these derivatives quickly lost 75 percent of their value, and the rest is history. Wall Street overreached because of the implicit government policy of too big to fail for themselves and those agencies that were buying those bad mortgages, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

We don't need Wall Street reform; we need government reform. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac need to be liquidated. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 – wasn't that supposed to prevent this? – needs to be updated, and the government needs to get out of the lending and loan guaranty business. (Government is also directly involved in student loans, farm loans and small business loans).

The Federal Reserve also needs to be reigned in. Not buy onerous regulation, but by simply changing its mission from inflation watcher to dollar protector.

The Fed must be required to keep the value of the dollar between \$350 to \$450 an ounce of gold. This provides transparency and eliminates the current Gnostic permutations that flow from there. If the Fed were concentrating on the value of the dollar rather than regulating the financial system, this meltdown would have been far milder.

I believe we need to cut spending by \$300 billion to \$400 billion. When the government owns or leases some \$1.25 trillion in unused or underused property, when the Cato Institute estimates there is \$92 billion in direct cash transfers to corporations, when the Office of Management and Budget has a list of \$132 billion in ineffective and redundant programs – never mind TARP, Stimulus II, Obamacare and the new financial regulation changes enacted – I think there is plenty of room to cut.

Finally, I do not believe the government is the agent of change. I believe the American citizens are. All those programs designed to "make America a better place" need to be eliminated.

It is not the government's responsibility to get people to volunteer, to register to vote, to sign people up for mortgages. There have always been great Americans such as Charles Loring Brace, William Lloyd Garrison and Martin Luther King who saw a need and helped develop a solution.

There are many other areas I would like to address such as education, energy and race relations, but I do not have the space.

Andrew Kohlhofer, of Fremont, is a Republican candidate for Congress in the 1st Congressional District.