



LETTER: Johnson conservative choice for president

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Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson was once voted the most fiscally conservative governor during his time in office beginning in 1995 and ending in 2003. He brought a business-like mentality to governing and believed that public policy should be based on cost and benefits and not strict ideology.

Known as “Governor Veto” during his time in office, Johnson vetoed a record of 750 bills, a majority of which had to do with spending. When he left office, New Mexico was one of four states at the time to have a balanced budget. Also, during his time there, he received a grade of “A” for his fiscal policies from the libertarian Cato Institute.

In 2012, Johnson ran for the presidency on the Republican ticket and only garnered one percent of the vote during the Republican primaries. He had an impact in one primary debate when he stated that his dog created more shovel-ready jobs than Barack Obama did. When Johnson could not get over the one percent mark, he was shunned not only by major news networks that were covering the Republican primary, but also by the Republican establishment. It was after the New Hampshire primary that Gary Johnson bolted the GOP and decided to become a presidential candidate for the Libertarian Party. He won the nomination, and though he was not included in the presidential debates, and though he lost, Johnson garnered more votes than any other Libertarian candidate before him.

There is the possibility that in 2016, Gary Johnson will once again run on the Libertarian Party ticket. Though the odds of him getting into the presidential debates, and winning the presidential sweepstakes, are very long, I strongly believe and I strongly hope that his voice and his positions on the issues of the day will be heard.

There are some issues over which I personally disagree with Gary Johnson. For example, Johnson is an advocate of abortion rights, where I am not. Nevertheless, when it comes to defending civil and economic liberties, we are in agreement. When it comes having the federal government pared down to size, we are in agreement. When it comes to realizing that this nation is on an unsustainable path both fiscally and economically, we are in agreement. When he states that our entitlement programs (i.e. Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid) are unsustainable, we are in agreement. When he states that this nation must enact and must project both military and economic power, we are in agreement.

I do hope that people will give Gary Johnson a serious look and come to the conclusion that, yes, his voice should be heard.

Alex Pugliese

KENILWORTH