



## The case for Gov. Johnson

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In light of recent revelations regarding Donald Trump's past, [alleged] sexual assaults on women, new and emerging allegations regarding the same, and Trump's anti-democratic comments regarding his willingness to respect the outcome of the 2016 presidential elections, many Coloradans are looking afresh for an alternative to supporting the Republican nominee for president. For many, they will hold their noses and vote for Hillary Clinton, or perhaps write in a candidate of their choosing. But for any voter who prioritizes fiscal discipline, limited government, civil liberties and a less hawkish foreign policy, there is a better, more rational choice in 2016: former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson.

Unlike other third party candidates for president, Gov. Johnson is on the ballot in all 50 states. He polls well in Mountain West states, especially, pulling about evenly from both the Democratic and Republican nominees. If voters choose to support him on Election Day, it will ensure two things. First, they will have cast their ballots in good conscience for a candidate they do not actively mistrust and dislike, or indeed fear. Second, they will — by refusing to support either of the deeply flawed candidates put forward by the major parties — be sending both the Democratic and Republican establishments a clear message: We will not be taken for granted, you have to work to earn our votes, and never again must you believe it is acceptable to nominate such objectively terrible individuals for the most powerful and important job in the entire world.

Gov. Johnson is not perfect — but he's a good choice, especially for Coloradans.

Gov. Johnson earned excellent ratings from the fiscally-conservative CATO Institute for his governance of New Mexico in every year he was assessed, consistently outranking the majority of all 50 governors in the nation. He never raised taxes as governor — not once — and exercised his veto power repeatedly to quash ill-conceived big spending schemes.

Unlike our leaders in Washington, D.C., Gov. Johnson balanced the budget every year he was in office — something Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump have shown no capacity for doing. As was noted during the final presidential debate moderated by Chris Wallace, the independent, fiscal responsibility group the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget says Clinton would

increase the deficit by \$200 billion over 10 years, while Trump would increase it by a full \$5.3 trillion over 10 years. In either case, that constitutes a massive debt load to be added to our existing \$19 trillion debt, which is already costing us dearly. These are not sane or sound proposals, and they do not come from serious people.

Gov. Johnson opposes the mass surveillance of hundreds of millions of ordinary Americans, including you and me, that Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump support, and which has been conducted by both the Bush and Obama administrations.

Unlike Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, Gov. Johnson has never operated on the naïve presumption that if the U.S. plays nice with Vladimir Putin's regime, American foreign policy goals or global peace will be furthered.

Gov. Johnson is the only candidate who supports a broad range of criminal justice reforms, including with regard to flawed drug laws. As a governor, he was tough on crime, but recognized the counterproductive effects of aspects of the war on drugs — a realization that it has taken others decades to reach — as well as the economic benefits that come with immigration and free trade.

Gov. Johnson also happens to be the most long-standing supporter of government recognizing same-sex marriages of all three of the candidates. Ironically, he is the most pro-life of all three, opposing late-term abortions just like most Americans do. Contrary to what Donald Trump asserted in the last debate, he is on record as supporting keeping partial-birth abortion fully legal, and Hillary Clinton is of course a staunch defender of it. Gov. Johnson does not share these controversial views.

The sad truth is that in 2016, the major parties nominated unacceptable, unsupportable people, in defiance of public opinion and common sense.

But Colorado voters should not stay home on Election Day, or pick between these two terrible choices. They should, instead, cast a vote they can feel good about and send a message: Support Gov. Johnson, and send a message to those who got us to this place — “never again.”