

Mother Jones

Just How Libertarian Is Paul Ryan?

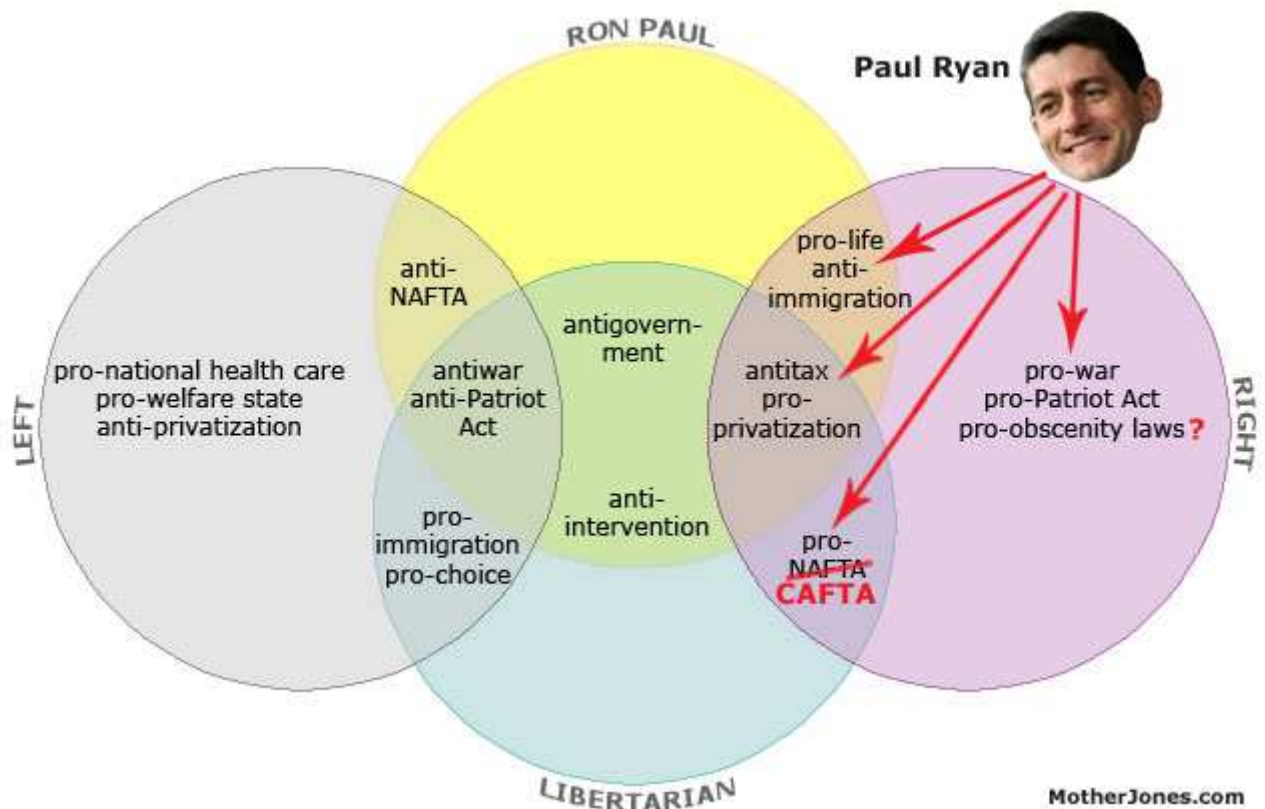
—By Dave Gilson

| Mon Aug. 13, 2012 1:41 PM PDT

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Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.), Mitt Romney's new running mate, has been hailed as the closest thing to a libertarian on the Republican ticket since Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas). "Ryan is going to be very attractive to the broad libertarian voters," the Cato Institute's David Boaz told BuzzFeed. But aside from his Ayn Rand-reading, entitlement-busting ways, just how libertarian is Ryan?



Thankfully, *MoJo's* Josh Harkinson made this handy Venn diagram showing the various flavors of American libertarianism, from cranky Ron Paulism to traditional free-market and social liberalism. Sticking Ryan on the diagram shows that while he has a lot in common with small-government, antitax libertarians, he has a lot in common with

mainstream conservatives. He has supported extending the Patriot Act, voted to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and voted for the bank bailout—all big no-nos for old-school libertarians.

Ryan is hardly the purists' pick, but as *Reason* noted before Romney tapped him, "For advocates of limited government, Ryan remains one of the most important allies in Congress."