Dear colleagues:

       I hope all is well with you.  I am writing to initiate a discussion
   of LNC goals for the rest of 2018 and the 2018 – 2020 term.
       In what follows, I offer some comments and suggestions about
   selecting our goals for 2018 and the 2018-2020 term, in addition to
   comments about some projects and outcomes I would like the LNC to
   consider.  I hope you find my comments to be helpful.  (Those who
   served with me during previous LNC terms may recall that I sent similar
   messages concerning goals for those terms.)

       Allow me to emphasize that the purpose of this message is to
   initiate a discussion of goals.  While I have enclosed below some
   prospective goals for your consideration, I have not offered
   suggestions concerning the specific strategies, tactics, and resources
   required to achieve such goals.  I believe we should prepare a list of
   reasonable goals for consideration, determine the ones for which
   suitable strategies and tactics exist (given our resource constraints),
   and then select and prioritize the goals we deem most appropriate.

**I.  Assumptions and Preferences**

       In offering these comments I have the following preferences and use
   the following assumptions:

   1)  Based upon information provided at the initial LNC meeting by
   treasurer Tim Hagan, I believe it is possible the LNC will conclude the
   2018 fiscal year with a net operating surplus.  However, since I prefer
   to be very conservative in estimating revenues, I shall assume for the
   purpose of discussion that the LNC will conclude the 2018 fiscal year
   with a net operating deficit between $50,000 and $125,000.

   2)  At this time, I believe it is not unreasonable to assume the LP
   will have between 15,000 and 17,000 sustaining members by Dec. 31,
   2018.

   3)  I have a very strong preference for selecting goals involving
   matters over which the LNC has the ability to control or to influence
   substantially.  For example, the quality of LPHQ service to our members
   and the suite of goods and services available to our members are
   matters over which the LNC has effective control.
       Although I have this preference, I have suggested below membership
   and fundraising goals for the 2018-2020 term; these goals are in some
   sense exceptions to this preference. That is, to a substantial degree
   our membership and fundraising levels are influenced by events outside
   our ability to influence substantially, much less control.  For
   example, actions taken by President Trump may generate substantially
   increased interest in the LP.  In addition, an endorsement of the
   Libertarian Party and its candidates by a prominent celebrity with no
   previous connection to the libertarian movement could help us greatly.

  4)  At the risk of belaboring what may be obvious, I believe it is very
   important for the LNC to ascertain to the extent possible the
   preferences of our members and affiliate organizations.  In particular,
   I hope my fellow regional representatives are soliciting information
   about such preferences from their state affiliates.

**II.  Goal Categories**
       For the purpose of exposition, I shall use the list of categories
   below; they are listed in no particular order of importance.  I hope
   you find this categorization method to be helpful.  I realize there are
   other ways of categorizing our activities; you are welcome to recommend
   other ways for our consideration.  Please note that these categories
   are not mutually exclusive; many goals can be included under several
   categories.

   1)  Financial Resources

   This category concerns issues associated with raising funds for our
   operations.  Specifically, we should determine our financial needs in
   relation to our goals for the year and term, and identify the means by
   which we obtain funding for those needs.  As part of determining goals
   in this category, we should consider the following:

   \* How much do we need during the 2018-2020 term to accomplish our
   goals?
   \* How do we attract new donors (including those who are not LP
   members)?
   \* How do we encourage current donors (including LP members) to increase
   their donations?
   \* How do we recognize and reward donors for their generosity?
   \* Are our current methods of fundraising appropriate?
   \* Should we increase the amount we allocate to a reserve fund (e.g., a
   "rainy day fund")?

       I believe we should continue to enable our donors to select more
   easily the budget categories (or perhaps specific projects) they want
   their donations to fund.  While LP.org already provides special
   webpages for affiliate support, ballot access, the building fund,
   historical preservation, the Legal Offense Fund, and the State CRM
   project, it may be helpful to provide a larger menu of choices (e.g.,
   candidate/campaign staff development, youth outreach) to which donors
   can direct their donations.

   2)  Member and Affiliate Support
       This category involves several areas of activity.  I consider these
   issues to be of particular importance:
   \* Do we have an acceptable level of performance in providing service to
   our members?  In what ways can we improve our service?

   \* In what ways can we improve our support to our affiliate
   organizations?  This support can occur in many ways, such as funding
   ballot access activities and/or outreach activities, providing advice
   on improving organizational structure (e.g., filling potentially
   dangerous lacunae in organization bylaws), and providing legal advice
   on dealing with government regulations (e.g., campaign finance
   regulations).

   \* How do we help our members become better activists and candidates?
   In particular, what educational and training programs should we
   sponsor?

   \* In what ways can we improve the process of recognizing and rewarding
   our members?

   \* In what ways can we improve LP.org, LP News, Liberty Pledge News, and
   our social media webpages to provide useful information to our members?

       If I understand correctly, the work performed by Andy Burns (State
   Affiliate Development Specialist) has been very well received by many
   state affiliates.  The LNC should consider in what ways the program
   supporting Mr. Burns can be improved.
       During my service as national chairman (the 2000-2002 LNC term),
   executive director Steve Dasbach and I considered the possibility of
   funding a "regional director" to assist the state affiliates of New
   Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.  We thought a "regional director"
   might be able to take advantage of economies of scale to improve the
   ability of these affiliates to respond to prospect inquiries, to
   generate media coverage, to monitor important legislation, and in
   general to make the affiliates more effective in their efforts.  The
   LNC may wish to consider a similar idea.

       I am investigating ways in which to fund "field organizers" to
   assist with building Libertarian groups on college campuses, perhaps as
   part of a broader program to provide assistance to affiliate
   organizations.  The LNC may also want to consider the possibility of
   funding "field organizers" as part of its support to affiliate
   organizations.
       Incidentally, the LNC has funded such programs in the past.  For
   example, Joe Knight of New Mexico served as a "field organizer" to
   assist in building campus organizations during the early 1990s.  If I
   remember correctly, by 1993 the LNC had discontinued the program.  I
   believe the LNC decided that the program did not produce results that
   justified the cost.  I believe the LNC also funded a position of "field
   organizer" for Marla Bottemiller during roughly the same time period.
   Again, the LNC eventually chose not to continue the program.  I suspect
   the position was not continued for the same reason the campus field
   organizer program was not continued; however, I do not know this with
   certainty.

   3)  Membership Recruitment and Retention
       This category involves issues of how we recruit new members and
   retain current members.  Of course, our ability to recruit and retain
   members depends upon many factors, such as the success of our
   candidates and the quality of our service to our members.  Some
   questions for our consideration include:
   \* Should we target specific population segments for recruitment
   efforts?  For example, should we emphasize outreach to college
   students, owners of small businesses, members of certain demographic
   groups, etc.?
   \* In what ways should we seek new members?  These ways could include
   direct mail (both postal and Internet), advertising in various media
   (including radio and cable TV ads, YouTube videos, Google ads,
   billboards), and outreach efforts at conventions of various
   organizations.
   \* In what ways can we improve our literature, website, and social media
   to facilitate our recruiting efforts?
   \* In what ways can we improve the process of recognizing and rewarding
   our members?  (This issue is common to several categories.)
       As you may know, I am involved in various ways in libertarian
   outreach to high school and college students.  In addition, some of the
   funds I have donated to the LNC are under my control as the campus
   outreach coordinator.  Also, I am a member of the board of directors
   (and member of the board of advisors) of libertarian organizations that
   promote outreach to college students.
       Thus, I may have conflicts of interest with regard to the approval
   of LNC goals involving campus outreach.  Should I believe such
   conflicts exist, I shall bring them to the attention of the LNC and
   refrain from voting on such matters.

   4)  Influence/Impact
       This category involves issues of how we can influence the political
   landscape, and how we can increase the impact of our activities.  Some
   questions for our consideration include:

   \* In what ways can we improve our influence with various news media and
   information channels?  (I use the term "information channel" to
   describe entities such as blogs.)  For example, should we issue more
   press releases?  Should we devote more effort to finding interview
   opportunities for LP members and candidates?  Should we invest more
   resources in “social media”?

   \* In what ways can we improve our ability to mobilize our members and
   friends to support specific projects?  For example, if we need to
   mobilize our members to support/oppose a specific piece of legislation
   in Congress, how can we best achieve this?  (One important aspect of
   this may involve how we recognize and reward those who respond to our
   calls for action.)

   \* In what ways can we establish and improve relations with "libertarian
   movement" organizations (e.g., Cato Institute), "friend of the family"
   organizations (e.g., National Taxpayers Union), and issue-oriented
   organizations (e.g., Marijuana Policy Project)?  For example, should we
   make a greater effort to obtain speaking invitations for LP members at
   conferences sponsored by the aforementioned organizations?  Should we
   invest more resources in sponsoring information booths at such
   conferences?

   \* In what ways can we benefit by working with other organizations on
   specific projects, such as promoting good legislation/defeating bad
   legislation in Congress?

   \* Should we consider participating in litigation to achieve specific
   results?  For example, should we consider additional challenges to
   campaign finance regulation?

   \*  Should we increase our participation in organizations that seek to
   make redistricting less partisan?  Should we be more involved with
   efforts to move toward voting methods such as ranked choice voting?
   (Note:  Our distinguished colleague Bill Redpath serves as treasurer of
   the Board of Directors of FairVote.  In addition, former LP stalwart
   Paul Jacob serves as vice chair of the Board.)
       I believe an important component to our increasing our
   influence/impact is for the LNC to improve its capacity for strategic
   thinking and long-range planning.  In particular, I believe we must do
   a better job of anticipating opportunities for the LP to make a
   positive impact on the political landscape.

   5)  Candidate Support
       This category involves issues of how we can best support our
   candidates at all levels.  Some of the questions in this category
   include:

   \*  In what ways can we support candidates for election this year?

   \*  In what ways should we support the 2020 presidential campaign?  For
   example, in what ways can we generate support for inclusion of the 2020
   LP presidential ticket in the debates?

   \* What programs should we sponsor to train our candidates and campaign
   personnel?  These programs should include not only training in the
   "nuts and bolts" of running successful campaigns, but also helping
   candidates to develop platforms that are both Libertarian and appealing
   to voters.  (Note:  It may be appropriate for us to outsource certain
   types of training to organizations such as the Leadership Institute.)

   \* In what ways should we publicize our candidates, both inside and
   outside the LP?  In what ways should we recognize and reward our
   candidates?
   \* In what ways should we support our elected and appointed officials?
       As part of candidate development and support, I believe we need to
   develop and maintain a high-quality repository of information about
   prior campaigns, both to provide information about what ideas have been
   tried and to compile a list of "best practices" for campaigns.

   6)  Operations Issues
       This category includes various issues involving the operations of
   the LNC and our responsibility to conduct the affairs of the
   Libertarian Party.  Some of the issues we should address include:
   \* What are our goals for the 2020 national convention in Austin, Texas?
   \* How should we evaluate prospective national convention sites for 2022
   (and perhaps 2024)?
   \* Do we need to review our internal rules and procedures?  For example,
   do we need to conduct a review of the Policy Manual?
   \* Should the LNC adopt a more formal (or perhaps, more extensive)
   committee structure to assist us in our efforts?
   \* Should we conduct a formal evaluation of the LP Bylaws and Convention
   Rules, with the purpose of offering suggestions for improvement to the
   2020 Bylaws Committee?  (Various problems associated with the LNC
   at-large and Judicial Committee elections at the 2018 national
   convention suggest that an evaluation of the Bylaws and Convention
   Rules could be helpful.)
   \* Should we evaluate the current organizational structure of the LPHQ
   staff?  (Of course, such an evaluation would require the participation
   of Wes Benedict in his capacity as Executive Director.)

**III.  Suggested Goals**       Allow me to suggest that we consider adopting goals along the
   following lines.  They are listed in roughly a descending order of
   importance.  Please do not hesitate to offer comments and suggestions
   about the goals we should consider.
   G1:  The LP will have at least 20,000 sustaining members as of May 1,
   2020.
   G2:  The LNC will take action to see that each state has an operational
   affiliate party by July 1, 2019. I suggest that "operational affiliate
   party" be defined in the following manner:

   \* There is a properly maintained website for the affiliate (perhaps the
   website is paid for and maintained by the LNC).

   \* There is at least one LP member in the state who actively serves as
   an official contact for the affiliate in its dealings with the LNC, and
   there is at least one LP member in the state who actively serves as a
   contact for the affiliate in its dealings with the state government.

   \* LPHQ has a copy of the current bylaws and associated documents for
   the affiliate, along with a copy of the relevant laws of that state
   regarding political parties and ballot access.

   (We may wish to add to the definition something along the lines of
   "Inquiries to the affiliate receive a response in a timely manner.")
   G3:  The LNC will raise at least $3.5 million from July 1, 2018 until
   May 1, 2020.
   G4:  The LNC will develop and approve new and revised outreach
   literature, to be available no later than Dec. 31, 2018.  Some of the
   literature (e.g., issue pamphlets) should be available in the form of
   PDFs that can be downloaded from LP.org.
   Note: I believe the LNC should pursue this goal as part of a more
   general process of literature development and evaluation.  In a
   separate message I shall send you some suggestions concerning this more
   general process.
   G5:  The LNC will sponsor a series of seminars/workshops in 2019 at
   various locations around the country.  The workshops could be
   structured largely along the lines of the "Success '97" and "Success
   '99" seminars (instruction on the basics of affiliate development and
   candidate development).  Note:  Approval of this goal should be
   contingent upon the degree of interest demonstrated by our members and
   affiliates.
       As far as I can remember, the LNC did not vote to adopt goals for
   the 2016-2018 term.  I believe it would be appropriate to discuss
   prospective goals for the term (along with goals for the remainder of
   2018) between now and the next LNC meeting (probably to take place on
   Sept. 29-30), and to adopt goals during that meeting.

**IV.  Additional Considerations**       In addition to the suggested goals, I hope the LNC will accomplish
   the following during the next several months:
   \* Develop a well-maintained calendar of the events at which it is
   desirable to have an LP presence (e.g., speaker, information booth,
   literature distributed to attendees, advertising in conference
   program).  For example, the calendar would include the dates of the
   national conferences of "friend of the family" organizations.
   Presumably the calendar would also include information as to event
   location, contact information for event coordinators, etc.

   \* Utilize LP News and LP.org more effectively to recognize and reward
   quality activism.  For example, I would like to see an article in each
   issue of LP News that recognizes an outstanding effort by an LP
   activist, affiliate organization, and/or candidate.  Similarly, I would
   like to see at least one article per month on the website that
   recognizes such outstanding efforts.
       As an aside, I realize the work required to identify and recognize
   outstanding efforts can be substantial.  Moreover, I realize that such
   recognition can actually cause problems.  (Some members may believe the
   honorees do not deserve such recognition.  Other members may feel
   slighted by the fact that their efforts have not been recognized.)
   However, all things considered I believe we shall benefit by including
   more material in our "house organs" about fine work by our members.

   \* After analyzing the results of the 2018 elections, develop and
   approve a plan by Feb. 15, 2019 for dealing with ballot access issues
   during the 2019-2024 time period.

       I shall greatly appreciate any comments and suggestions you have
   concerning LNC goals and projects for this year and this term.  In
   addition, I would be grateful if Mr. Benedict and his staff colleagues
   would review this message and offer their comments.

       I consider it likely that I have omitted some issues you will deem
   worthy of discussion.  Hence, I may send a revised version of this
   message in the near future, along with a revised list of goals for
   consideration.
       Thanks for your work for liberty, and for your consideration of
   this message.  Best wishes to you in all your endeavors; I look forward
   to seeing you in late September, if not before.
       Take care,
       Jim
       James W. Lark, III
       Professor, Dept. of Systems and Information Engineering
       Professor, Applied Mathematics Program, Dept. of Engineering and
   Society
       Affiliated Faculty, Dept. of Statistics
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       Advisor, The Liberty Coalition
       University of Virginia
       Region 5 Representative, Libertarian National Committee