

Conservative vs. Liberal Beliefs

<p>CONSERVATIVES - believe in personal responsibility, limited government, free markets, individual liberty, traditional American values and a strong national defense. Believe people are born with natural rights (individual freedoms do not come from the government); the role of government should be to safeguard those freedoms so people can pursue their own goals and interests.</p> <p>Conservative policies generally emphasize the empowerment of the individual to solve problems.</p>	<p>LIBERALS - believe in governmental action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all, and that it is the duty of the State to alleviate social ills and to protect civil liberties, and individual and human rights. Believe government guarantees people's rights; the role of the government should be to guarantee that no one is in need.</p> <p>Liberal policies generally emphasize the need for the government to solve people's problems based on what is best for the greater good of society.</p>
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THE ISSUES:

ISSUE	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL
Abortion	<p>Human life begins at conception; a fetus is a developing human baby. Abortion is the murder of a human being. Nobody has the right to murder a human being.</p> <p>Support legislation to prohibit partial birth abortions, called the "Partial Birth Abortion Ban" (partial birth abortion - the killing of an unborn baby of at least 20 weeks by pulling it out of the birth canal with forceps, but leaving the head inside. An incision is made in the back of the baby's neck and the brain tissue is suctioned out. The head is then removed from the uterus.)</p>	<p>A fetus is not a human life.</p> <p>The decision to have an abortion is a personal choice of a woman regarding her own body and the government should stay out of it. Women should be guaranteed the right to a safe and legal abortion at any stage of pregnancy, including partial birth abortion.</p>
Affirmative action	<p>People should be admitted to schools and hired for jobs based on their ability. It is unfair to use race or gender as a factor in the selection process. Reverse-discrimination (discrimination against white-males) is not a solution for racism.</p>	<p>Due to prevalent racism in the past, minorities were deprived of the same education and employment opportunities as whites. We need to make up for that.</p> <p>Support affirmative action based on the belief that America is still a racist society. Minorities still lag behind whites in all statistical measurements of success. Also, the presence of minorities creates diversity.</p>
Death penalty	<p>The death penalty is a punishment that fits the crime; it is neither 'cruel' nor 'unusual'. Executing a murderer is the appropriate punishment for taking an innocent life.</p>	<p>We should abolish the death penalty. The death penalty is inhumane and is 'cruel and unusual' punishment. It does not deter crime. Imprisonment is the appropriate punishment. Every execution risks killing an innocent person.</p>

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Economy	Capitalism: the free market system, competition, and private enterprise afford the widest opportunity and the highest standard of living for all. Free markets produce more economic growth, more jobs and higher standards of living than those systems burdened by excessive government regulation, taxation, and manipulation.	Favor a market system in which government regulates the economy. We need government to protect us against big businesses, which only care about profits and exploit poor workers. Unlike the private sector, the government is motivated by public interest and the greater good. We need government regulation to level the playing field and make things fair for all.
Education – Charter schools and school vouchers	Charter schools and school vouchers will give all parents the right to choose good schools for their children, not just those who can afford private schools. Parents (who pay the taxes that fund the schools) should be allowed to decide how and where to educate their child.	School vouchers are untested experiments, and charter schools deprive much needed funds from traditional public schools. We need to focus on more funding for existing public schools, raise teacher salaries, and reduce class size. Increase taxes on the wealthy to fully fund education.
the Environment	<p>Desire clean water, clean air and a clean planet. However, extreme environmental “green” policies destroy jobs and damage the economy.</p> <p>Climate change is a natural occurring phenomenon over long periods of time, mostly attributed with the sun and earth’s natural processes. So far, science has not proven beyond any reasonable doubt that humans can affect permanent change to the earth's climate.</p>	<p>Conservatives don't care about protecting the environment. Capitalism and industrial growth harms the environment, and requires strong government regulations to protect the environment because big businesses cannot be trusted to do it themselves.</p> <p>Climate change is caused by an increased production of carbon dioxide. The U.S. is a major contributor to climate change because it produces 25% of the world's carbon dioxide. The U.S. should enact laws to significantly reduce that amount.</p>
Gun control	The Second Amendment gives the individual the right to keep and bear arms. Gun control laws do not thwart criminals. Communities with the strictest anti-gun laws have the most violent crime (Chicago). You have a right to defend yourself against criminals.	The Second Amendment gives no individual the right to own a gun, but allows the state to keep a militia (National Guard). Only the government (police, military) should be allowed to possess guns. Guns kill people. Guns kill children.
Healthcare	Healthcare is not a right. ‘Free’ healthcare provided by the government (socialized medicine) means that everyone will get the same poor-quality healthcare at a greater cost through higher taxes. The rich will continue to pay for superior healthcare, while all others will receive poor-quality healthcare from the government. Health care should remain privatized.	<p>Support universal government-supervised health care. There are millions of Americans who can't afford health insurance. They are being deprived of a basic human right to healthcare due to greedy insurance companies driving up the costs.</p> <p>Government, not greedy insurance companies should manage healthcare to ensure all have equal access, not just the wealthy.</p>

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Immigration	<p>Support legal immigration at current numbers, but do not support illegal immigration. Government should enforce existing immigration laws, and not provide tax-funded services for illegal aliens or their children.</p> <p>Oppose amnesty plan for illegal immigrants. Those who break the law by entering the U.S. illegally should not have the same rights as, or given citizenship over those immigrants who obey the law by entering legally.</p>	<p>Support legal immigration and increasing the number of legal immigrants permitted to enter the U.S. each year. Support blanket amnesty for current illegal immigrants.</p> <p>Believe that regardless of how they came to the U.S., illegal immigrants deserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * U.S. government financial aid for college tuition. * Visas for spouse/children to come to the U.S. Families shouldn't be separated. <p>Illegal immigrants do the jobs that Americans do not want to do.</p>
Religion	<p>The phrase "separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution. The First Amendment to the Constitution states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." This prevents the government from establishing a national church. However, it does not prevent God from being acknowledged in schools and government buildings.</p> <p>Oppose the removal of symbols of America's Christian heritage from public and government spaces.</p> <p>Government should not interfere with religion and religious freedom.</p>	<p>Support the separation of church and state. Religious expression has no place in government.</p> <p>Support the removal of all references to religion or God in public and government spaces.</p> <p>Religion should not interfere with government.</p>
Same-sex marriage	<p>Marriage is between one man and one woman.</p> <p>Opinions differ on support for the creation of a constitutional amendment establishing marriage as the union of one man and one woman.</p> <p>Believe that requiring citizens to sanction same-sex relationships violates moral and religious beliefs of millions of Christians, Jews, Muslims and others who believe marriage is the union of a man and a woman.</p>	<p>Marriage should be legal for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender couples to ensure equal rights for all.</p> <p>All individuals, regardless of their gender or gender identity, have the right to marry whomever they choose.</p> <p>Believe that prohibiting same-sex citizens from marrying denies them of their civil rights. Opinions differ on whether this issue is equal to civil rights for African Americans.</p>

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Social Security	The current Social Security system is in serious financial trouble. Changes are necessary because the U.S. will be unable to maintain the current system it in the future. Support proposal to allow a portion of Social Security dollars withheld to be put into an account chosen by the individual, not the government.	Generally oppose change to the current Social Security system. Opinions vary on whether the current system is in financial trouble. Changing the current system will cause people to lose their Social Security benefits. Support a cap on Social Security payments to the wealthy.
Taxes	Support lower taxes and a smaller government. Lower taxes create more incentive for people to work, save, invest, and engage in entrepreneurial endeavors. Money is best spent by those who earn it. Private business creates jobs, not the government.	Support higher taxes and a larger government. High taxes enable the government to do act in the people's interest and create jobs. We need high taxes for social welfare programs, and to provide for the poor. We can't afford to cut taxes; increased taxes on the wealthiest Americans.
United Nations (UN)	The UN has repeatedly failed in its essential mission: to preserve world peace. The wars, genocide and human rights abuses of the majority of its member states (and the UN's failure to stop them) prove this point. History shows that the United States, not the UN, is the global force for spreading freedom, prosperity, tolerance, and peace. The U.S. should never subvert its national interests or sovereignty to the UN.	The United States has a moral and a legal obligation to support the United Nations (UN). The UN can be effective in promoting peace and human rights. The U.S. should submit its national interests to the greater good of the global community (as defined by the UN).
War on Terror / Islamic Terrorism	Radical Islamic beliefs cannot co-exist peacefully with the Western World and are not compatible with the Constitution and Western values. In the past two decades, militant Islamists have repeatedly attacked Americans and American interests here and abroad. Terrorist organizations must be stopped and destroyed by all means necessary, including use of military force.	9/11 was caused by America's arrogant foreign policy. America needs to stop angering other countries. The threat posed by Islamic terrorism is exaggerated by Republicans for their own political advantage. America is better off 'leading from the rear' and not aggressively combating Islamic radicals head-on. We need to demonstrate restraint and compassion when dealing with the Muslim World.
Welfare	Oppose long-term welfare; creates generational poverty. We need to provide opportunities for poor and low-income workers to become self-reliant. It is far more compassionate and effective to encourage a person to become self-reliant, rather than keeping them dependent on the government for money and survival.	Support welfare (tax-funded government programs). We need welfare to provide essential care for the poor. Conservatives oppose welfare because they are not compassionate toward the poor. We have welfare to bring fairness to American economic life. Without welfare, life below the poverty line would be intolerable.