



The Modern Whig Party

www.modernwhig.org

Membership Primer

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Is The Modern Whig Party? Who Are Its Members? 1

What Does The Modern Whig Party Stand For? 1

THE MODERN WHIG PHILOSOPHY- 1

THE MODERN WHIG PRINCIPLES- 2

What Does It Mean To Be Called A Modern Whig? 3

Where Does The Modern Whig Party Fall On The Political Spectrum (Left or right)? 3

How Are We Different From America's Major Political Parties? 4

Why Should The Modern Whig Party Be Considered To Be A Viable Alternative? 4

How Do We Plan To Avoid The Same Path That Brought The Destruction Of Other Third Parties? 5

Do We Expect The Modern Whig Party To Be A Major Player In American Politics? 5

Why The Name 'Whig'? 5

What Are Our Colors? 6

Why The Owl As Our Logo? 6

What Does The Whig Logo Symbolize? 6

How Old Is Our Party? Who Founded It And Why? 7

The Whig History 8

1600's- THE BIRTH 8

1700's- ENLIGHTENMENT 9

1800's- THE REBIRTH 10

1900's- THE GREAT HIBERNATION 13

2000's- THE AWAKENING 13

THE PREAMBLE OF THE MODERN WHIG PARTY

THE MODERN WHIG PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IS THE PARTY FOR THE REST OF US, THE PARTY OF PATRIOTS, THE PARTY OF EQUALITY, THE PARTY OF LIBERTY, AND THE PARTY OF MODERATES.

WE, THE MODERN WHIGS, STANDING ON THE BROAD AND FIRM PLATFORM OF THE CONSTITUTION, UNITED BY ALL OF ITS INVIOABLE AND SACRED GUARANTEES AND COMPROMISES, RELYING UPON THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, WITH AN ABIDING CONFIDENCE IN THEIR CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT, AND THEIR DEVOTION TO THE CONSTITUTION AND TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, PLEDGE TO GO FORTH WITH INTEGRITY, OPEN-MINDEDNESS, PRAGMATISM, AND TRANSPARENCY AS WE PURSUE OUR CIVIC DUTY.

—ADAPTED FROM THE MODERN WHIG PARTY'S PREAMBLE
DRAFTED IN THE CHARTER & BYLAWS

What Is The Modern Whig Party? Who Are Its Members?

Members of the Modern Whig Party are independent-minded voters who want to be affiliated with a moderate, common-sense party. The Modern Whig Party is not just another temporal third party. We encourage participation and offer leadership positions to many qualified members. Our mission is to engage public participation and cater to independent-minded voters. We have adopted the most sensible issues supported by both the Republican and Democratic parties, a reason why our membership is so diverse in their geographic locations, occupations, and lifestyles.

We believe that independent voters are the silent majority and all-too-often have had to settle for the "lesser of two evils." We also realize that reestablishing a new party is an uphill climb under the current system. This is why our growing membership is the key. The Modern Whig Party is geared toward those independent voters who want to be affiliated with a palatable national party. We know how hard it is to establish a viable new party, but our strength will come in numbers. Our agenda is merely to express our common-sense ideals and slowly gain ground into the mainstream consciousness. In short, the Modern Whig Party is for the rest of us.

What Does The Modern Whig Party Stand For?

Founded by Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, the Modern Whig Party represents a movement that relies on common sense and rational solutions ahead of partisan bickering and entrenched ideology

THE MODERN WHIG PHILOSOPHY-

The Modern Whig Party relies on common sense. The organization is the fastest-growing advocate for such issues as fiscal responsibility, strong national defense, and scientific/educational advancement. We see the value of independent thinking and the danger of being limited to one distinct ideology.

THE MODERN WHIG PRINCIPLES—

There are three interrelated concepts that form foundation of the Modern Whig philosophy.

I. Principles

These principles are critical to the welfare of the country and the Party. They bind us as moderates, unify us as Americans, and serve to exclude extremes.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY – Any action of the government must respect principles of fiscal responsibility and public accountability.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE – Develop practical domestic energy sources to reduce dependence on foreign energy sources.

STATE'S RESPONSIBILITY – Each state can generally determine its course of action based on local values and unique needs.

SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE – When the government is compelled to legislate morality, every citizen should be considered as equal.

EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENT – Increase public and private emphasis on math and science to promote American innovation to compete in the global economy.

VETERANS AFFAIRS – Vigilant advocacy relating to the medical, financial, and overall well-being of our military families and veterans.

II. Structural

Structural Principles are the most important to the Party. Our structure is what makes us fundamentally different, non-ideological, non-partisan, and not confined by the political spectrum.

DEVELOP REAL LEADERS – This central tenet of the Party is to help leaders both grow and to exhibit good citizenship through leadership.

SELF DISCOVERY – As a Whig, it is important to always be learning and growing. This means it is the Party's responsibility to pull information together and to help members discover for themselves their stance on any social topic.

III. Perceptual

We have become a reactive society. While there is little we can do about the underlying problem, as a Party we must always consider many perspectives, including a long-term perspective. The only issues addressed publicly tend to be those featured on the media agenda; however, it is important for us to address issues before they become major problems.

What Does It Mean To Be Called A Modern Whig?

A Modern Whig, or Whig for short, is a person who recognizes and appreciates ideological values on all sides of a political spectrum and pushes forward toward common sense solutions that address the issues at hand.

Where Does The Modern Whig Party Fall On The Political Spectrum (Left or right)?

The Modern Whig Party advocates fiscal responsibility, strong national defense, and bold social progression in dealing with social issues facing America today. Our core principle is rooted in pragmatic, realistic, and common sense approaches to issues such as energy independence and tax disbursement. These principles take into account the needs of corporate America along with the average worker. Our membership includes people from all over the political spectrum including Republicans and Democrats. We focus on common ground in solving problems instead of posturing and positioning in unpractical solutions. The Modern Whig Party falls within a category of its own.

How Are We Different From America's Major Political Parties?

We are different from the other political parties because our members come from across the political spectrum. Our common sense and pragmatic approach has found a way to reconcile actual common ground among individuals. Unlike other parties, we don't expect our members to agree with everything, in fact, we encourage independent thinking.

Many of our members have expressed while they may be conservative on one issue they may be liberal on another. This exemplifies the importance, the value, and the need for a middle-of-the-road approach to politics. The Modern Whigs have become the answer to closing the political gap embracing ideals and solutions across the political spectrum.

Another important difference between the Modern Whig Party and the other parties is that we look beyond partisan rivalry. We will absolutely support a candidate or elected official from a different party if that person subscribes to a doctrine of common sense and rational solutions rather than ideology. We realize that most people are not limited to one distinct ideology and instead develop an independent one based on specific issues.

Why Should The Modern Whig Party Be Considered To Be A Viable Alternative?

There is a profound desire for a non-fringe political movement that caters to independent-minded people in a rational manner without the lobbyist rhetoric. This is what you will find with the Modern Whigs.

How Do We Plan To Avoid The Same Path That Brought The Destruction Of Other Third Parties?

The Modern Whig Party is essentially rewriting the book on building a viable, rational, and realistic political movement. A number of the third parties are very similar to the Republicans and Democrats in that they follow their own hard-lined ideologies and remain unabashedly antagonistic toward opposing political organizations. In contrast, the Modern Whig Party continues to focus on common sense, rational solutions ahead of such partisan bickering and ideology.

At the same time, the Modern Whigs are realistic about the tough road ahead and understand that we must earn our members. This approach, along with our roots among our veterans, has proven to offer voters of all political stripes a viable, rational and non-fringe political home.

Do We Expect The Modern Whig Party To Be A Major Player In American Politics?

We continue to grow and have a number of state chapters in various stages of filing with their respective Secretary of State for ballot access. We look to continue to be a voice in the political arena.

Why The Name 'Whig'?

Throughout the centuries since its origin, the name of "Whig" has been attached to those who oppose government run amok. It was used during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (1639–1651) when it was used to refer to a faction of the Scottish Covenanters. It was used use in the 1680's in England when there was the threat of establishment of a line of Catholic Kings starting with King James II; the Whigs were hugely responsible for the Glorious Revolution of 1688. During the American Revolution it was a term used for supporters against the British in the war of independence. In, 1833, it was a term used for a U.S. member of a political party, called the Whig Party, that favored internal improvements (socio-economic),

modernization, congressional dominance, protectionism, a loose interpretation of the Constitution, and opposed the Democratic Party.

To answer the question: why the name Whig? As many of us know, history proves to repeat itself. Today, retooling our internal system for energy independence is merely the 21st Century embodiment of the old Whig Party's Platform. In addition, renewed efforts at scientific advancement also are just a 21st Century take on the historic platform of education. Also, one can safely assume that the young war veterans who met in 2007 to organize the Modern Whig Party had the historical significance of the name in mind when they made their choice and the general aspects of rational thinking and common sense that they adopt in terms of the old Whig Party.

What Are Our Colors?

The old American Whig Party's primary colors were blue and buff. In keeping with the old Whig tradition, the Modern Whig Party is keeping these colors in use.

Why The Owl As Our Logo?

The owl throughout history had many different powerful meanings. The owl represents knowledge, wisdom, foresight, and intelligence – something that Washington and American politics seems to lack – these are all critical core values adopted by the Modern Whigs.

The last known national meeting held by the Whig Party was at the Owl Club in Brooklyn, New York, 1852. The choice of the Owl also symbolizes are connection with the older Whig party.

What Does The Whig Logo Symbolize?

When looking at the Modern Whig Logo, there are four distinct characteristics to the logo: the color blue, the color red, a white band

dividing the two colors and four white stars. Each of these items has a unique meaning to them and they are as follows: • **BLUE** – represents Liberalism • **RED** – represents Conservatism • **THE WHITE BAND** – represents Liberals and Conservatives meeting on common grounds, in other words meeting in the middle • **THE FOUR WHITE STARS** – represent the American government: judicial branch, legislative branch, executive branch, and the American Voter.

How Old Is Our Party? Who Founded It And Why?

The old Whig Party was a political force that included such luminaries as Abraham Lincoln and Henry Clay. The Whigs are one of the oldest political movements in the nation.

The modern revival was conceived by American soldiers serving in Iraq, who in turn communicated via the internet such ideas with fellow soldiers in Afghanistan. In Iraq and Afghanistan, soldiers have a lot of time to reflect. These soldiers, like American voters, watched how common sense rationality was being abandoned in favor of partisan bickering and decisions based solely on ideology. They noticed how the partisan fighting and ideological focus trumped common sense on not just military issues, but most other issues as well. This included traffic, education, trade, scientific development, fiscal soundness, energy independence, etc. Upon the return of these American soldiers in 2006, they initially revived the Whig Party as a military advocacy organization on behalf of soldiers, veterans, and military families. By 2008, they had attracted a group of military and non-military supporters to the point where they became a mainstream political organization.

The historic Whigs represented a moderate, common sense movement focused on improving US infrastructure and education. In this regard, the returning American soldiers found the Whigs to be an excellent fit in a modern context.

The Whig History

There is a rich history behind the term ‘Whig’. This history involves the fight for freedom against tyranny, for freedom, and for a government of the people, by the people, for the people. For more than four hundred years, the name “Whig” has called for representative government, liberty, socio-economic improvements, modernization, protectionism, and congressional supremacy. Historically, Whigs have believed that in order for any country to thrive, the citizenry must be represented in a form of a democratic republic.

As Henry Clay, one of the founders of the American Whig Party, stated, “Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees. And both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people.”

At the start of the 21st century, government has grown to exercise tremendous power over the American people. Congress has raised taxes while passing bills without even reading them. Only a third of the electorate votes in elections, and, meanwhile, state and local governments have lost control to the federal government. The executive branch has gained more power over the legislative branch, exercising massive foreign spending at the expense of the American taxpayer. Despite the sometimes overwhelming sense that little can be done to change direction, the Whig Party, in 2009, came out of a long hibernation to restore the power to the people and to internally improve America’s socio-economic system; hence, the revival of the Whig Party.

1600’s– THE BIRTH

The name ‘Whig’ was first derived in Scotland. It was used to describe the Scottish that fought against the British crown in a raid called the Whiggamore Raid during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (1639–1651). These Whigs were a group of people from western Scotland who opposed King Charles I of England in 1648. It was also used to refer to a radical faction of the Scottish Covenanters who called themselves the Kirk Party.

In the late 1600s, the British Whigs were born in opposition of the succession of the Catholic King James II to the throne. From this opposition, Whiggery, as it is referred to, was born. Whiggery was a philosophy that began as a distinctly oppositional and populist ideology in which it saw political authority stemming from the people. This philosophy was an idea that the people believed that there was a contract existing between them and their King and if their King overrode their interest they might resist. These Whig principles (Whiggism) were hugely responsible for the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which is referred as the Bloodless Revolution in Great Britain. This war assured a Protestant secession and the constitutional supremacy of the Parliament over the king.

Whiggery was brought to the British colonies in the New World a few years after the Glorious Revolution. The Whiggery philosophy and writings brought about ideas that the colonists had the right to be represented in the British Parliament and that they had the same rights as a citizen in England.

1700's– ENLIGHTENMENT

In the late 1700's, English radical writings were circulated throughout England. These writings sought for political reform to the social and the economic order in Great Britain. Some of these radicals sought for republicanism, abolition of titles, equal rights, frequent elections, economic freedom and freedom of the press. The radical aims of liberty and electoral reform in Great Britain widened with the American Revolution and French Revolution. The term radical was referred as getting to the root of the problem. The supporters, who were mainly from the middle class, of these beliefs became known as the Radical Whigs. The Radical Whigs were part of a faction of the British Whig Party that had a great influence to the American and the French Revolution. Some of these Radical Whigs included famous men like John Locke, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and David Hume.

The writings of the Radical Whigs played a significant role in the development of the American Revolution. Their writings were widely read by the North American British colonists. The majority of these colonists were convinced by these Radical Whigs writings that they should be very watchful for any threats to their liberties. As Great Britain began taking measures to deny the colonists the right to have equal rights as a Englishman -- including the right to be represented in the English Parliament with their own representatives and a tax system that favored the British -- the colonists decided to break away from the Kingdom of Great Britain to form an independent country where the government was by the people for the people.

When the American Revolution started, the word Whig was first used to refer to an American Patriot that supported the war with the Kingdom of Great Britain. These Patriot Whigs were the leading figures who, in July 1776, declared the United States of America an independent nation. Other name that is use for these men is Our Founding Fathers. Some of these Patriot Whigs included John Adams, John Dickinson, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Paine, Paul Revere, Nathanael Greene, Nathan Hale, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington. One of the most sacred documents of the United States of America, The Declaration of Independence, had many Radical Whigs' ideas inscribed within it.

Throughout history, the word Whig and Patriot have had similar connotations. To be a Whig in the 1700's meant you were a Patriot. A few years after America was established, Whiggery went into hibernation, but in Europe, it helped influence the French Revolution.

1800's- THE REBIRTH

In the early 1830s, the term Whig and Whiggery was revived by political opponents of the Democratic President Andrew Jackson. Many of these opponents were against Jackson's policies, which sought to grow

executive powers and administer the 'spoils system' by which government officials were appointed solely on their loyalty to the party instead of their qualifications or merit. As a result, opposition to Jackson's policies helped create the first fully organized party system, which consisted of Jackson's loyalists, the Democrats, and his adversaries, the Whigs.

The Democratic Party at that time was a strong conservative party and many of them were from the South. Lead by Jackson himself, the party brought about radical changes, including a presidency that for the first time threatened to supersede the Constitutional powers delegated to Congress. Jacksonian Democrats followed the Jeffersonian political philosophy that favored an egalitarian agricultural society that expanded into the American West.

The Whig Party at the time practiced compromise as a political philosophy. Many of their members came across the political spectrum. Lead by Henry Clay, the party brought modernization and deepened the socio-economic system (such as banks, factories, and railroads) in America. The Whigs supported the supremacy of Congress over the executive branch and favored a program of modernization and economic protectionism, which the Democratic Party fiercely opposed. The Whigs also supported the policies of the American System. The American System was a mercantilist economic plan based on the American School ideas of Alexander Hamilton to harmonize and balance the nation's agriculture, commerce, and industry. The idea behind this system was to allow the nation to develop and flourish by providing a defense against the dumping of cheap goods by foreign suppliers. This plan consisted of three mutually reinforcing parts and they are as follows: • A high tariff to protect and promote the American industry • A national bank to encourage commerce and a national currency • Federal subsidies for roads, canals, and other internal improvements to develop and connect the nation.

The reason why the name Whig was used as a Party name was to echo the American Whigs of 1766, who fought for independence. In addition, it was also used because "Whig" was a widely recognized label of choice for people who saw themselves as opposing autocratic rule. The Whig Party was successful in passing modernization projects at the state level, but not at the national level. Many of the Whig Party's policies had to wait until Abraham Lincoln's presidency to be fully realized on the national level. The Whig Party promoted local, state, and national candidates for twenty years, competing with the Democrats and winning the presidential elections on two occasions. William Henry Harrison, who in 1840 became the first Whig president, and Zachary Taylor, who won the presidency in 1848, was among the most widely known Whigs, but the party also enjoyed Congressional majorities in the 1840s.

In the years leading to the Civil War, the issues of state rights and the role slavery would play in the Western territories destroyed the Whig Party, as it had begun to unravel the United States. Unlike the Democratic Party, which had heavy membership in the South, the Whig Party's attempt to appeal to as many people as possible without maintaining a cohesive stance on major issues, in particular the role of slavery in new territories, eventually led to its demise, with Northern Whigs joining the newly formed Republican Party and Southern Whigs joining the Democrats.

The Whig Party was for most of its history concerned with promoting internal improvements, such as roads, canals, railroads, deepening of rivers, financial institutions, public schools, private colleges, charities, cultural institutions and anything else that would help America be internally strong. For its short years, the Whig Party had some very well known members, including Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Willie Person Mangum, John Quincy Adams, Winfield Scott, William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, and Abraham Lincoln.

Special Note: Abraham Lincoln did start as a Whig and he considered himself a Whig by heart. There was a famous statement that Lincoln

professed to his friends in 1861 – “*I have always been an old-line Henry Clay Whig*” – Lincoln admired the policies and the leadership of Henry Clay.

1900’S– THE GREAT HIBERNATION

The term Whig and the Whiggery philosophy went into a great hibernation throughout the twentieth century in the United States of America. There was hardly any time in this century that Whiggery was needed. Waiting and watching, until the peoples’ rights and their representation in government were violated and that the government no longer has the best interest of the people, will the Whiggery will be needed. Contemporary Whigs recognize that the party has awoken to remind the electorate and their elected officials, in the words of Henry Clay: “Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees. And both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people.”

2000’S– THE AWAKENING

Special Note from the Consolidator: This section is being revised and rewritten by Mike Lebowitz (one of the founders of the MWP) because of changes in the MWP, which was started in 2006 as a veterans’ advocacy group then it was converted to a grassroots movement to a national Party. Only the founding members know about this history which is why this section is being rewritten.

The idea of reviving the historical Whig Party was started in the deserts of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan by members in the American Armed Forces. The Modern Whig Party was organized as a national party in late 2007 as a successor to the historical Whig Party. Among its founding members were military veterans who had served in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many of these veterans became dissatisfied with the deep ideological divide between the Republican and Democratic parties. Less

than a year into its creation, the Modern Whig Party attracted more than 25,000 members nationally.

Upon the revival of the historical Whig Party, the Modern Whig Party based their national headquarters in Washington, D.C. and a national executive committee to run things until a national convention is called. A Board of Benefactors selected a national chair and a five-person national executive committee. In keeping with the Whig military tradition, one member of the national executive committee has to be a military veteran or military spouse to run the party. A national chair was selected to lead the Modern Whig Party. National Chairman Mike Lebowitz became the first national chair of the Modern Whig Party. Mike Lebowitz is a Washington, D.C. attorney and advocate for veterans' issues. He served in Iraq as an elite paratrooper in the Pathfinder Company of the 101st Airborne Division in the United States Army. He also testified at the United States House and Senate hearings on May 14, 2008 about improving military whistle-blower legislation.

Keeping the standards of the past Whigs, the Modern Whig Party describes itself as a mainstream, middle-of-the-road grassroots movement that caters to those voters who believe in various conservative issues but also believe in various other liberal issues. The Party announced their first victory on Election Day with the election of Ken Belcher as Constable of Lee County, Alabama, in 2008.

Immediately after the election of November 4, 2008, a push began to attract moderate/conservative Democrats and members of the Republican Party who felt disenchanted with both the GOP's failings and its perception as moving farther to the right. In fact, those seeking a non-ideological political movement reportedly began joining the Modern Whig Party as soon as the election results came in. In 2009, Ballot Access News reported that a candidate for the 2009 New Jersey Assembly elections was on the ballot under the Modern Whig Party designation. On November 2, 2009, the Modern Whig Party ran its first authentic electoral test. Gene L. Baldassari of New Jersey sought a seat in the New Jersey

Assembly, representing its Fourteenth District. Mr. Baldassari was defeated in the New Jersey general election. Though this was the Modern Whig Party's first defeat, it was a victory in other places. Mr. Baldassari received great support throughout the nation from the Whig membership and the media.

On December 12–13, 2009, the Modern Whig Party held the first national leadership council meeting in Washington DC. The party's bylaws and charter were made public shortly after, with the document listing its official name as the Modern Whig Party of the United States of America and being approved by a national council.

The Whigs in the past have accomplished a great deal, and we, the 21st century Whigs, have a great challenge ahead of us. As we move forward in the 21st century, we will continue bring internal improvements to the American socio-economic system, fight for congressional supremacy and protect the American way of life. As globalization continues to influence our great nation, we will always put the American people first. The Modern Whig Party is the bearer of freedom and the best hope in bringing common sense back to America. We will be successful as we follow the American Whig principles of the past and the present for we are the party for the rest of us. We will uphold the Constitution of the United States of America and will continue to make America the greatest nation on earth and keep our government of the people, by the people, for the people.

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