

NH Values

Whenever I talk about politics, I start with values. Because if our politics do not follow our values, we have lost our way.

The best source for New Hampshire values is our constitution, written in 1784. The founders of New Hampshire wrote into our constitution all the stuff you learned in Civics: Three branches of government, separation of powers, the Governor has the veto, etc. But the writers also included the values that should guide citizens and legislators alike.

The first sentence of our constitution states that government is “instituted for the general good.” NH Constitution, Part 1, Article 1. Government is not created for the special interests. It is created for us, the people.

The founders wrote about taxation, because they realized that an unfair tax system could split and undermine the State. So they wrote “every member of the community has a right to be protected by it, in the enjoyment of his life, liberty, and property; he is therefore bound to contribute his share in the expense of such protection.” NH Constitution, Part 1, Article 12.

The founders believed that in a democracy, everyone should have an equal say in our government. Article 11 of Part 1 says “every inhabitant of the state of 18 years of age and upwards shall have an equal right to vote in any election.”

Finally, the founders thought about the future, and how to ensure that their experiment in democracy would survive. So they included an education clause: “Knowledge and learning . . . being essential to the preservation of a free government . . . it shall be the duty of the legislators . . . to cherish the . . . public schools.” NH Constitution, Part 2, Article 83.

These are our founding values: We are a community, and we will take care of each other; we will tax fairly; everyone gets to participate in our government equally; and we will educate our children.

I am running for the State Senate because we are not living up to these values.

Whenever the legislature is in session, voting rights are under attack. This must stop.

If our legislature was truly looking out for the ‘general good,’ Medicaid expansion would pass unanimously. 90% of the cost is covered by the federal government, and over 50,000 of the working poor now have health insurance.

But in the area of education, and how we pay for it, we are most seriously off track. To read more, see Mark’s op-ed *Why Your Property Taxes are so High*.

Footer

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