

Book turns engineer into Libertarian

Jail overcrowded again Bail bonds by credit card for Oakland

By Arlene Funke
staff writer

The least government is best, according to Steve Furr of Canton.

The 33-year-old Furr, a product-design engineer with Ford Motor Co., is candidate for Michigan lieutenant governor on the Libertarian ticket.

Furr is running mate to gubernatorial candidate Dick Jacobs, 45, a Grand Blanc manufacturers' representative.

"Basically we (Libertarians) believe in individual liberty with responsibility," Furr said. "The Democratic and Republican parties offer 'status quo' politics."

FURR AND JACOBS are two of 100 candidates state-wide running for office on this minority-party ticket.

The Libertarian Party, formed in 1972, calls for strict observance of individual civil liberties, a free-market economy and an end to interference in the internal affairs of foreign countries.

The party's campaign literature calls for a renewal of government as intended and envisioned by such early American leaders as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

"The founders of our country authored a document called a constitution, which was intended to put shackles on government," Furr said.

ACCORDING TO Furr, the government is improperly interfering in the economy through controls, regulations and taxes. He blasts huge military expenditures and the state's single-business and income taxes.

"In Michigan, over the last 30 years, we've had tax hikes under both the Democrats and Republicans," Furr said. "We should be able to spend our money in the manner that we see fit."

The poor economy in Michigan is the "culmination" of businesses leaving the state because of high taxes and excessive regulation, Furr said.

Furr added that he supports equal rights for all, but that he has misgivings about an Equal Rights Amendment containing language that gives Congress power to draft legislation implementing new rules.

The candidate opposes tax credits to businesses because they favor one business over another. Military spending should be for defensive measures, and not used to interfere in the internal affairs of foreign countries, Furr added.

FURR is a 1971 graduate of the University of Michigan, with a bachelor of science degree in aerospace engineering. An eight-year Canton resident, he is married and the father of two daughters and a son.

He has been disenchanted with the Democratic and Republican parties for several years, and voted Libertarian for the first time in 1976, he said.

Furr subsequently read Robert Ringer's book, "Restoring the American Dream," about the Libertarian philosophy.

"I have come to the conclusion that there isn't much difference between the two (major parties)," Furr said.

In 1980, Furr organized a group of volunteers in western Wayne County to distribute pamphlets supporting Libertarian presidential candidate Ed Clark. Furr later became involved in the Libertarian party at the state and local levels.

Minority-party candidates are bucking certain obstacles, Furr said. State election laws make it difficult for less-known parties to appear on the ballot, and the media largely ignore minority-party candidates, he added.

The Democratic and Republican candidates receive campaign funds from tax dollars, which gives them more flexibility (Libertarians do not approve of such use of tax dollars).

Despite the obstacles, Furr believes a Libertarian lieutenant governor could have a major impact. For example, the lieutenant governor is empowered to cast a ballot when a vote is deadlocked in the state senate.

"I would vote for less taxes and less regulation," Furr said.

By Suzie Rollins Singer
staff writer

Weekend arraignments and credit card bonding will become part of the regular routine at the Oakland County Jail by the end of November.

In order to reduce the jail population, U.S. District Judge Patricia J. Boyle last week ordered Oakland County Sheriff Johannes Spreen and the county Board of Commissioners to implement new methods of releasing inmates.

"I've been asking for night court for years to get these arraignments done on the weekends," Spreen said. "Why should we have them (inmates) sitting around all weekend?"

SPREEN SAID he has long supported the idea of allowing arrested persons to use credit cards to purchase bail bonds in misdemeanor cases.

"For some, it might be good, but for others it's asinine to put arrested persons back on the street so fast to commit another crime," Spreen added.

In addition to credit card bonding and weekend court, the judge said that inmates must be transferred to Southern Michigan Prison at Jackson within three business days of sentencing and that jailed inmates must have probation officers available to them on a regular basis.

As of Nov. 1, all sentencing of inmates will be completed for the week by noon on Thursday, allowing the county to transport prisoners to Jackson before the weekend.

on these orders must be submitted to Judge Boyle by Nov. 19.

County commissioners were ordered to submit written assurance of their intent to provide continued funding for temporary housing pending full implementation of a jail study committee's recommendations.

Boyle's order came as a result of a lawsuit filed by a group of inmates in March 1978. Last August, she ordered Spreen to reduce the jail population by 130 inmates to 450. As of last week, the jail still had about 50 more inmates than that.

A FULL REPORT detailing current status



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