

# The Most Powerful Office In The World Is NOT The President of the United States!

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Now wait a minute. Isn't the President of the United States the leader of the Western World, the man with his hand on the nuclear trigger, the head of a ten-trillion dollar nation?

The President is, indeed, the most powerful man in the world - but the presidency is not the most powerful office in the world.

Another office is more powerful because it chooses whose names will appear on the ballot for elective office and what will be the policies of the political parties that provide the major support for those candidates. To understand why this office is so powerful, you must understand the Seven Steps of government.

**1. To change things, you have to change the law.**

Are there things about our country you want to change? Taxes? Deficits? Schools? Crime? Abortion? Gay rights? Government funding of anti-social projects? Government over-regulation of business?

Are you satisfied with the way the present Congress is raising our taxes, spending our money, and reducing our liberties?

Our Constitution makes Congress the most powerful branch of government. It can pass laws, impose taxes, and spend our money. State Legislatures are powerful, too, especially over public schools.

So, if you don't like the present policies, what are you going to do about it? Our Constitution gives us a way to remedy laws, policies, and taxes — members of the House of Representatives in Congress and the lower house of each State Legislature must run for office every two years.

**2. To change the laws, you have to change the people who make them.**

Congress and the State Legislatures pass thousands of laws every year. No citizen or group can possibly read them all, research them to find out their effect in advance, or alert their friends to go into action with letter-writing and phone-calling. Congressmen and State Legislators who have been elected by liberal and anti-family groups will not be receptive to your messages anyway.

If you want to change the laws or taxes, you must elect representatives you can reliably count on to vote conservative and pro-family all the time.

**3. To be elected, your candidate must be on the ballot.**

How often have you voted for "the lesser of two evils" when you didn't like either of the

two candidates running for an important office? Have you ever wondered why, despite the rhetoric, both candidates seem to back the same anti-conservative, liberal and anti-family agenda? How many times is a good conservative, pro-family candidate not even on the ballot?

4. **To get on the ballot in a general election, you have to be nominated for an office in a Party Primary Election or Convention.**

The winners in the Party Primary or Convention will be the candidates who appear on the ballot in November. Except in very rare cases, all candidates must first win a Party Primary or Convention. Write-in campaigns are theoretically possible, but they rarely succeed. Third-party candidates are theoretically possible, but unless a candidate has as much money as Ross Perot, running as a third-party candidate probably won't be successful and the votes may not even be counted or reported.

5. **Candidates endorsed by the Party usually win the Primary Election.**

Most voters don't investigate the Primary candidates, or even find out who they are. Sometimes, many candidates run in the Primary for nomination to the same office and the voters are confused. Only a small minority of Americans vote in Primary elections. One of the reasons for the small turnout in Primary elections (in addition to voter apathy) is that you usually must declare yourself a member of one Party or another in order to vote in the Primary. Primary Election rules vary from state to state, but in most states, in order to vote in a Primary you either have to pre-register as a Republican or a Democrat OR, if Party Not Declared, ask for a Republican or a Democratic Party ballot on Primary Election day.

Most Americans don't want to do that. The result is that persons nominated to be the "Republican candidates" on the ballot in the general election are chosen by those who are willing to declare themselves "Republican" in the Primary or Convention that selects the nominees.

Sometimes the Party organization actually "endorses" candidates in the Primary Election. Many voters who don't know much about the candidates vote for the "endorsed" candidate just because they are disposed to support that Party's candidate.

6. **Primary endorsements are often made by the Party's "County Committee" (or Township Committee, etc.), which is elected by the Precinct Committeemen of the Party.**

Each political party has national state, county, township, and (in the big cities) ward organizations (usually called committees or central committees). The county and township committees frequently endorse candidates in the Primary, and that endorsement is often the key to a Primary victory.

The county chairman and the county central committee (or executive committee) are elected every two years (usually) by the Precinct Committeemen (sometimes called Precinct Chairmen) who, in turn, are elected in their individual precincts. Thus, the Chairman of the Madison County Republican Central Committee is elected at a county convention of the more than 200 Madison County Republican Precinct Committeemen who were themselves elected on the ballot in the previous Primary Election.

It's not necessary to have a majority of Precinct Committeemen to influence the endorsement process. In a typical county, some will be liberals and some conservatives, but the majority will be Party Regulars who are interested in patronage and power, not issues. They can be influenced to support your candidate if you can persuasively show that he has a good chance to win. For Party Regulars, winning is the name of the game.

7. **It's easy to be elected a Precinct Committeeman.**

The way you get elected a Precinct Committeeman is usually very simple. In a typical state, you can call your county clerk and get the necessary forms, get ten of your friends to sign a Petition requesting that you be on the ballot in the Primary as a candidate for Precinct Committeeman, and file the Petition by the required date.

Then you walk around your precinct, knock on one door after another, and say, "I would appreciate it if you would vote for me for Precinct Committeeman. You will find me on the Republican ballot in the Primary election on Tuesday, \_\_\_\_\_." If you win you are the elected Precinct Committeeman for your precinct.

Of course, if your precinct already has a good Precinct Committeeman who is doing his job, he may not take kindly to you as an upstart and he may defeat you. You should find out the situation and communicate before making your decision. Contested Precincts have their own ballot at the Primary Election. **YOU MAY BE KEPT IN THE DARK AS TO WHO YOUR OPPONENTS ARE ON THE PRIMARY BALLOT.** You find out by talking to your constituents and District Chair.

However, a typical county may have dozens of precincts without any Precinct Committeeman because no one has bothered to run. It is sometimes easy to be appointed to one of these positions by calling your Party Chairman. If you are recommended to the County by your District Chair appointed by the County Board of Supervisors, and if you are unopposed or the precinct is not contested (too many applicants for the allowable PC positions) you will not be on the ballot and are considered elected.

Many precincts have do-nothing Committeemen who can easily be defeated because they don't do their job.

- To change things, we must change the laws.
- To change the laws, we must change the people who make them.
- To get elected, your candidate must be on the ballot.
- To get on the November ballot you must win the Primary.
- To win the Primary, you must get the support of people who make endorsements in the Primary, who reliably vote in the Primary, and who get out the vote of others in the Primary. Those people are the Precinct Committeemen.

**Therefore, Precinct Committeeman is the most powerful office in the world because Precinct Committeemen determine who gets the chance to be elected to office at every level of government. Remember, if your candidate is not on the ballot, he or she will not be elected.**

**Party rules and titles vary widely from state to state, but usually the two parties in a given state use the same system. Where "Republican" is used, "Democratic" can be substituted. The term "Committeeman" is an office, not a person, so it can be a he or a she.**

### **Duties of the Precinct Committeeman**

The Precinct Committeeman is the person who is legally charged with getting out the vote on Election Day. If he does his job well, he will ring the doorbell of every household in the precinct and ask polite questions to find out the Party and other political views of every voter. (That's called canvassing.) Then, before each election, the Precinct Committeeman will personally deliver campaign literature (such as a marked sample ballot) to every voter who is expected to vote for your Party or candidate. Then the Precinct Committeeman makes sure that all his voters get to the polls on Election Day. This is the way elections are won.

### **Powers of the Precinct Committeeman**

1. ***Friendly access to neighbors.*** Most people are eager to know more about their government and the people who run it. When you introduce yourself as their "Republican Precinct Committeeman," they assume you have something to say. You can provide them with information on candidates and issues. Of course, you don't waste your time on those who would rather get their information from the Precinct Committeeman of the other Party.
2. ***Respect from elected officials.*** Since a Precinct Committeeman represents, on average, 500 voters, and has the power to vote for other Party officials and to make endorsements of candidates, any call or letter from a Precinct Committeeman gets the attention of elected officials.
3. ***Launching pad for other offices.*** You would be amazed at how many of our Presidents, Senators, Congressmen, and state and local officials started as Precinct Committeemen, and still serve as Precinct Committeemen even though they hold a higher elected office. That's because they know the power of a Precinct Committeeman.

***Direct influence over Party Platform, policies, and selection of candidates.*** At state, district, county, and township caucuses and conventions, the Precinct Committeeman is an active player. He can have a tremendous influence on the adoption of the Party Platform and policies, support of or opposition to issues, and selection of candidates.