

Early in 1990, Rittberg called a meeting of a group of Florida LROC members at a Young Republicans Convention, including Phil Blumel, Tom Walls, and Rex Curry, who agreed to develop a national RLC organization. Alan Turin and Curtis Dietrich joined the group shortly thereafter and it was initially listed, with North Carolina, as a state chapter of LROC.



Eric Rittberg

A few months later, Rittberg says he obtained the complete list of 450 LROC members and agreed with Ayeres to make the RLC an independent national organization.

Other LROC members, Fred Stein of New Jersey, Alan Lindsay in Texas, Earle Smith of Georgia, Norm Singleton (now Legislative Aide to Congressman Ron Paul) of Pennsylvania and Gene Berkman of California were among the first RLC State Coordinators. Lindsay operated an RLC national office in Texas for several of the early years.

On April 6, 1991, recalls Turin, Roger MacBride invited Turin, Alan Lindsay, Eric and Barbara Rittberg, Rex and Susan Curry, as well as Tim Condon, to his Naples, Florida estate to formally organize the national RLC and plan for a “coming out party” at the National YR Convention in July 1991. MacBride agreed to fund the RLC newsletter “Republican Liberty”



Clifford Thies

and to head an RLC “Council of Trustees” with Clifford Thies and William Hunscher as members. Michael Holmes of Texas was recruited as Senior Editor of the newsletter and RLC Treasurer. At that July meeting, officers were elected, including Chairman Rittberg, Vice-Chairman

Thies, Secretary Norm Singleton and Treasurer Mike Holmes. Other National Committee members were MacBride, Wainwright Dawson, and Richard Duprey.

For most of the past 15 years, Clifford Thies has served as Chairman, Mike Holmes as Treasurer, and Rob Booth as Secretary.

Other RLC Chairs include Roger MacBride in 1992, Ron Paul in 1995, Chuck Muth of Nevada in 2000, Douglas Lorenz of California in 2002 and William Westmiller of California in 2004. Many others have been long-term members and made major contributions to the RLC national and state-level organizations.

### RLC National Conventions

1994 Gatlinburg, Tennessee  
1996 Alexandria, Virginia  
1998 Las Vegas, Nevada  
2000 Atlanta, Georgia  
2002 San Antonio Texas  
2004 Fresno, California

## Republican Liberty Caucus

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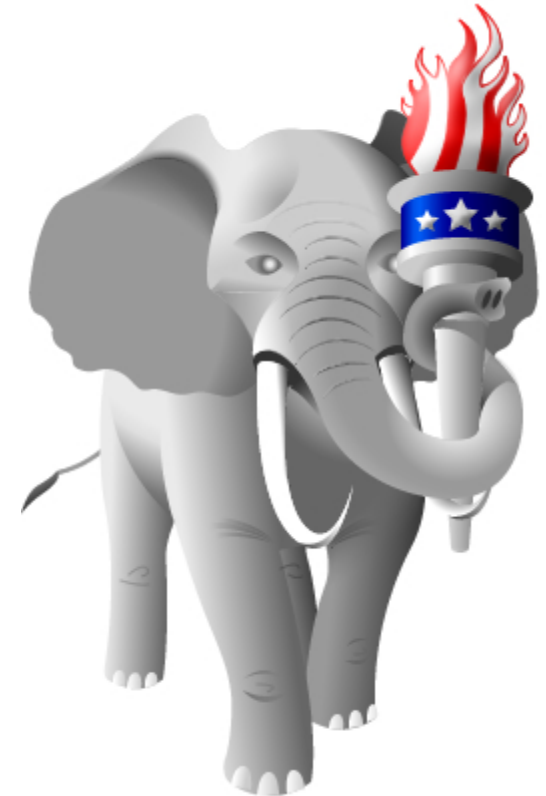
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# Republican Liberty Caucus



## Background & Early History

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The Republican Liberty Caucus is one of many elements within the general libertarian movement, focused on the specific objective of bringing the Republican Party back to the principles of individual rights, limited government, and free enterprise. The Caucus embodies the unique strategic vision of working within a major party to achieve liberty. Although we share our basic principles with many other libertarian groups, we welcome constitutionalists, classical liberals, tolerant conservatives, and free market advocates who support our objectives.

The movement finds its roots in the ideals of the founding fathers, expressed in the Declaration of Independence, but also in the writings of many pre-revolutionary political thinkers. The Caucus is the result of the activities of several organizations that were active in the 1980s, but the concept of developing libertarian principles within the GOP could be traced back to the 1964 Presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater. Although he labeled his position as “conservative”, he espoused the “classical liberal” principles that we champion today.



Goldwater's defeat discouraged his supporters, who tended to gather in the Young Americans for Freedom [YAF] in the late sixties. David Nolan, a Chairman of the Colorado Young Republicans, founded the Libertarian Party [LP] in 1972. Many libertarians abandoned other efforts to participate in the LP during the early years, while many prominent LP officers and candidates have left the party to join the RLC effort.

The earliest libertarian to gain standing within the Republican Party was Dana Rohrabacher. Historian Sam Konkin III says Dana was “the most successful and most beloved libertarian activist,” critical to the development of YAF, the Libertarian Alliance, and the Society for Individual Liberty [SIL] in the late 60s and early 70's.

“There would not have been a libertarian movement without him,” says Konkin. With the financial support of David Koch (later an LP Vice Presidential candidate), Dana twice ran unsuccessfully for the GOP congressional nomination in Southern California. Later, he worked as a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan and was subsequently nominated by the GOP and elected to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of California. His early years earned him ‘libertarian’ ratings in the RLC Liberty Index, but he has recently tended toward a more conservative philosophy.



Dana Rohrabacher

Roger MacBride, heir to the Laura Ingalls Wilder estate (“Little House on the Prairie”), may have been the first candidate to explicitly describe himself as a “libertarian-Republican” while he served as a Vermont GOP Assemblyman and ran for Governor in 1964. As a GOP Presidential Elector for Nixon in 1972, MacBride cast a rebel ballot for the LP Presidential candidate, John Hospers. MacBride gained the LP Presidential nomination in 1976, but later returned to the Republican Party and was critical to the early formation of the RLC.



Roger MacBride

Dr. Ron Paul was strongly influenced by Austrian economists and advocated clearly libertarian positions after his election to Congress in 1976. He served as a Texas GOP Congressional Representative until 1984, when he was defeated in a race for U.S. Senate. He joined the LP as their Presidential candidate in 1988, then returned to Congress as the 14<sup>th</sup> District Republican Representative in 1997, where he continues to serve. Dr. Paul has served as Honorary Chairman of the RLC and has earned the highest lifetime rating of any federal representative in the history of the RLC's Liberty Index of Congress.



Ron Paul

There were at least three precursor organizations to the RLC, from which it derived most of its early membership: the Libertarian Republican Alliance [LRA], founded by Joe Gentili, Larry Penner and Gerry O'Brien in Brooklyn, New York in 1972 with Professor Clifford Thies of Virginia as a prominent member; the “Radical Caucus” of the LP, which included Murray Rothbard and Williamson ‘Bill’ Evers of California (who has recently been active in the Bush Administration), which evolved into the Libertarian Republican Organizing Committee [LROC], founded in 1988 by Justin Raimondo, Eric Garriis, and Colin Hunter.

The LRA disbanded in 1981, in light of the growing successes of the LP during that period. The “Radical Caucus” members split from the LP, but failed to develop a viable organization. The LROC group developed a large mailing list and supported several Republican federal campaigns in California. Efforts to expand the organization nationally were not productive.

The first use of the name “Republican Liberty Caucus” was by a group of libertarians supporting the election of Republican Art Pope (a former LP member) to the North Carolina State House in 1986, recalls Alan Turin. Organized by Stan Ayeres, the group included Bobby Eberle, Vernon Robinson (a successful State House candidate in 1988 and a recent GOP candidate for Congress, both with RLC support and endorsement), and a dozen others. According to Eric (Dondero) Rittberg, Ayeres credited Robinson with suggesting the name. For a time in the late 1980s, the North Carolina RLC was listed as a state chapter of the national LROC organization.



Vernon Robinson

Although LROC was active for seven years, publishing “The Libertarian Republican” newsletter with Reason Magazine advertising, participation dwindled and the founders pursued other interests when Hunter withdrew his financial support (Raimondo and Garriis now operate the popular AntiWar.com website).