

Political Ideology Paper

American Government has been essentially split into two ideologies, those who are conservative and those who are liberal. A conservative is “One who believe that a government is best that governs least and that big government should not infringe on individual, personal, and economic rights” and a liberal is defined as “One who favors governmental involvement in the economy and in the provisions of social services and who takes an activist role in protecting the rights of women, the elderly, minorities, and the environment. (*American Government: Roots and Reform*). Conservatives typically favor more government intervention when dealing with social conduct. For example, they strongly support harsher penalties on criminal activity and encourage the government to step in and have an active role in reducing crime. However, conservative prefer little to no government involvement when it comes to economic decisions. On the contrary, liberals support an active government in the economy as they believe the government can help get people back on their feet through unemployment and social security benefits. Liberals oppose government involvement when they deal with abortion restrictions and religion in the classroom Regardless of the fact that we are the United States, our government is split on many issues which make it surprising we pass any important laws.

Liberals tend to associate themselves to the Democratic Party and favor an active government. Liberals support generous unemployment, welfare, and Social security benefits. Liberals believe that it is necessary as a society to support those who recently lost their jobs or are unable to work anymore. Because of this, liberals tend to support higher taxes than conservatives as this helps distribute the wealth and not leave the bottom part of our country alone without income. In an ideal world, those who pay taxes and are able to work are able to support those who cannot find employment or are incapable of holding a job. Liberals envision a

nation where society as a whole supports those who find themselves in a time of crisis.

Moreover, liberals support alternative lifestyles such as homosexuality and progressively work to protect civil rights. Liberals see fit that it is a person's own choice and right to love whomever and express themselves in any way under the restrictions of the law. As a whole, liberals strongly support civil rights and work towards a strong central government that actively pursues to better society.

Conservatives generally associate themselves with the Republican Party and usually oppose strong government actions. Conservatives support government intervention in regulating the social conduct of our residents. Our criminal justice system serves as a deterrent towards a life of crime and at one extreme condones the death sentence. A conservative tends to favor the death sentence as it is the ultimate deterrent as the criminal cannot violate the law again.

Furthermore, conservatives strongly oppose government interference in the economy. Conservatives support lower taxes, limited social welfare programs, and minimal government regulatory activity. Conservatives argue that social welfare programs can create a sense of entitlement to those who do not work and provides an incentive not to find a job as quickly. Also, conservatives argue that lower taxes allow consumers to spend more money into the economy and therefore help stimulate economic growth. The driving theory behind these opinions comes from the basic rule of economics that eventually the market will reach equilibrium on its own and we should not interfere. Lastly, conservatives support school prayer. From the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, America has been founded on Christian morals. Because of this, conservatives justify school prayer claiming that it is a staple of American history and should be allowed in educational facilities. Proponents to this argue that

school prayer does not force non-Christians to participate, but gives those who are a chance to pray in class. Conservatism finds its support largely from the south and argues for a small government without a lot of power.

Having come more familiar with politics in the recent year, I have come to realize that I lean towards conservatism. Shockingly, I align myself with a lot of policies liberals want to push such as not making abortion restrictions tougher and allowing gay marriage, however, I find that I move in the political ideology when it comes to taxes. Coming from a middle to upper class family, taxes take a large portion of my family's money. Although I am not complaining about my current lifestyle, I feel that taking close to forty percent of a person's made money is absurd. For example, if a person makes 200,000 dollars a year, they only take home roughly 120,000 dollars. Obviously 120,000 is a large amount of money, but this can take a large toll on what a person can afford as far as luxury items. For my family, it was college. I found myself getting into great schools across the nation, but was unable to afford the 50,000 dollars per year because I could not qualify with financial aid nor receive an academic scholarship.

Moreover, I strongly support government involvement in regulating criminal activity. Although I personally do not support the death penalty, I do support adding more law enforcement in order to reduce the amount of violent crimes occurring and create a stronger deterrent for people considering crime. As far as the issue of keeping church and state separate goes, I find myself neutral on this issue. I personally do not oppose or support school prayer, but I will address the argument of saying it makes people feel awkward and forced. Attending a Catholic high school and not being catholic had no effect on my religious beliefs. Every class began with a prayer and as I did every time I simply respected the time and took it as a moment of silence. Overall, I find myself swinging towards conservatism on more issues than liberalism

but make an attempt to stay neutral and look at the issue at hand objectively rather than answer based on my political affiliation.