

The Party of Big Government

Written by Mike McCabe, Blue Jean Nation
Monday, 27 April 2015 15:45

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/dems-v-repub-s5.jpg>



Distrust of government is in our country's DNA. The GOP has successfully passed themselves off as the party of less government, but the truth is that both major parties want big government to work for a privileged few at the expense of the many.

MADISON - Suspicion and distrust of government is a core American value. It is in our country's DNA.

Republicans have proven far more capable than Democrats at both recognizing and capitalizing on this fact, taking great pains to pass themselves off as the party favoring less government while their opponents are for more government.

The GOP has successfully created a perception.

Then there is reality. The truth is that both major parties want big government. Both have worked persistently to expand government's size and reach.

The truth is that the [biggest expansion of the federal government](#) in the last half-century was the doing of a Republican administration with near-universal support of Republicans in Congress. That would be the creation of a vast new federal bureaucracy devoted to domestic surveillance and a radically enlarged police presence.

Today's Republican Party also favors a very activist and intrusive government with respect to our personal lives, morality and sexuality. Republicans talk a good game about trusting in individuals to make their own life choices and in families to serve as the moral backbone of our society. But there is a big gap between word and deed. Modern-day Republicans have repeatedly supported interventions that effectively put government everywhere from the bedroom to the doctor's office. They have repeatedly sought to dictate who can love and marry

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whom, and have not hesitated to meddle in doctor-patient relationships and medical decision making.

Democrats are known as the architects of the welfare state. Republicans are devoted to the public dole, too. In fact, the kind of welfare Republicans favor [dwarfs](#) the Democrats' welfare programs. The truth is both parties like to fill the public trough. They just have very different ideas about who should be allowed to feed from it. The debate we should be having is how to create an economy where both kinds of welfare are unnecessary and can be eliminated. Neither major party has shown much interest in that conversation.

Blue Jean Nation [believes](#) government is necessary to a civil and just society and prosperous economy. But we insist on a limited government – one that is as small as possible and only as big as required to do what society needs done collectively. Government programs that work should be supported and ones that do not should be reformed or ended. Most importantly, what government does must serve the broad public interest and promote the common good, not just benefit those who lavishly fund election campaigns or have high-priced lobbyists advocating on their behalf.

So much time and energy is wasted fruitlessly arguing over which party wants more government and which one wants less, when the plain evidence shows that both are equally skilled at making government bigger. If we spent half as much time zeroing in on government's purpose – what it does and for whom – as we spend assigning blame for its size, then we would really get somewhere.

Both major parties have proven they are for big government. And both have shown a distressing tendency to put government to work for a privileged few at the expense of the many. That's what needs to change. We need a repurposed government, one that is serving the whole of society both consistently and well.

Mike McCabe is the founder and president of Blue Jean Nation and author of Blue Jeans in High Places: The Coming Makeover of American Politics. [Comment here](#) .