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Honors 201-50

October 18, 2016

Platform Positions: Abortion

In America today, abortion is a very controversial issue, especially regarding politics. This issue is one that the two major political parties generally disagree on—Republicans usually being against abortion while Democrats are usually for abortion. Third party candidates form their own opinion, so it is hard to make an accurate generalization of what they believe. The issue of abortion is sometimes the one issue that is the deciding factor for people choosing which political party they want to be affiliated with. Abortion is an issue that most young people and most women have a very partisan view on because it is most relevant for that age group and that gender. Currently, abortion is legal in America and Planned Parenthood is federally funded. Some of our 2016 presidential candidates have plans to change this current situation while others may enforce it even more strictly. All of these candidates—Democrat Hillary Clinton, Republican Donald Trump, and Libertarian Gary Johnson—have a personal stance on the issue of abortion.

The Democratic presidential candidate for the 2016 election, Hillary Clinton, is pro-choice, or for abortion, and believes that Planned Parenthood should continue to be federally funded (ProCon.org). Clinton says of being pro-choice: “Being pro-choice is not being pro-abortion. Being pro-choice is trusting the individual to make the right decision for herself and her family, and not entrusting that decision to anyone wearing the authority of the government in any regard” (OnTheIssues.org). On her website, it is stated that Clinton believes that “Women’s personal health decisions should be made by a woman, her family, and her faith, with the counsel of her doctor” (Hillary for America). Hillary also stated, of Roe V. Wade, it “is the touchstone of our reproductive freedom, the embodiment of our most fundamental rights, and no one—no judge, no governor, no Senator, no President—has the right to take it away” (Hillary for America). Hillary Clinton has supported women’s rights and women’s choice for abortion throughout her political career. She believes abortion should be “safe, legal, and rare” and supports adoption and foster care as other options as well (OnTheIssues.org). She believes that making contraception more accessible to women, and making adoptions easier will increase the rarity of abortions (OnTheIssues.org). Hillary has stated that she “can support a ban on late-term abortions...But if your life is at stake, if your health is at stake, if the potential for having any more children is at stake, this must be a woman’s choice” (OnTheIssues.org). If Hillary were elected president, the legalization of abortion and federal funding of Planned Parenthood would not change. Although, she does have plans to “repeal the Hyde amendment to ensure low-income women have access to safe reproductive health care” (Hillary for America). Since Clinton agrees with the current status of abortion, not much would change, but she would enforce these laws more strictly and promote sexual education in America’s schools. She says she will “never stop fighting to protect the ability and right of every woman in this country to make her own health decisions” (ProCon.org). On the other hand, the Republican candidate has completely different views on the issue of abortion.

The Republican presidential candidate for the 2016 election, Donald Trump, is pro-life, or against abortion, and believes that Planned Parenthood should no longer be federally funded (ProCon.org). Although, Donald Trump used to consider himself pro-choice, as he stated in 1999 (OnTheIssues.org). On his website, abortion is not listed under Trump’s concerns and policies, but you can find Trump’s views and beliefs on abortion using other sources (Donald J Trump for President). Donald Trump “believes abortion should be banned at some point in the pregnancy, with exceptions for rape, incest or life of the mother” (OnTheIssues.org). If Trump were elected president, he would try to change a lot on the current situation of abortion and federal funding for Planned Parenthood. When asked by Chris Matthews how one would ban abortion, Trump stated that “you go back to a position like they had where people will perhaps go to illegal places” (ProCon.org). He also believes that “there has to be some form of punishment” for women who get abortions, and would try to legalize this if he were elected as president (ProCon.org). Trump stated that although many women with cervical and breast cancer are helped by Planned Parenthood, he “would defund it because of the abortion factor” (OnTheIssues.org). This is another thing he would try to change if he were elected as president, unlike the Libertarian candidate, who seems to agree more so with Clinton than Trump.

The Libertarian presidential candidate for the 2016 election, Gary Johnson, is pro-choice, or for abortion, and believes that Planned Parenthood should continue to be federally funded (ProCon.org). On his website, Johnson states that his “approach to governing is based on a belief that individuals should be allowed to make their own choices in their personal lives” and that “abortion is a deeply personal choice” (Gary Johnson for President). As a governor, Gary Johnson “supported efforts to ban late-term abortions,” but now “recognizes that the right of a woman to choose is the law of the land” (Gary Johnson for President). His website also says that “despite his personal aversion to abortion, he believes that such a very personal and individual decision is best left to women and families, not the government” and that “women seeking to exercise their legal right must not be subjected to prosecution or denied access to health services by politicians” (Gary Johnson for President). Johnson says he is “opposed to cutting the funding, or eliminating funding, to Planned Parenthood” (ProCon.org). If Gary Johnson were elected president, not much would change as far as the current status of abortion and federal funding for Planned Parenthood. While he does not have plans for abortion policy changes on his website, he has stated before that he would “rather leave abortion policy to the states” (OnTheIssues.org). Essentially, Gary Johnson support women’s right to choose.

Overall, each candidate has their own opinion on the abortion policy. While Clinton and Johnson have similar views, they still have their differences, and Johnson’s beliefs are slightly more conservative than Clinton’s, but not nearly as conservative as Trump’s. Depending on who is elected president, the current abortion policy may change (or will be proposed to Congress to change) or it may stay the exact same. Being such a controversial issue, each candidate has a very distinct and prominent view on abortion.

Works Cited

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