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Chuck Baldwin, Constitution Party launch campaign in Grand Rapids

Posted by [Ted Roelofs](#) | [The Grand Rapids Press](#) June 24, 2008 08:50AM

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Press Photo/T.J. Hamilton

Trim work: Byron Center resident Dan Curtis works on cutting signs at the Constitution Party national headquarters on South Division Avenue in Kentwood. The party is backing Chuck Baldwin for president.

Of all the places to mount a campaign for president, Chuck Baldwin and the Constitution Party chose a former video store in West Michigan.

And yes, Baldwin insists, he is in it to win.

"This is not a symbolic campaign. This is a real campaign," said Baldwin, 56, who is to appear tonight at the party's newly opened national headquarters at 5500 S. Division Ave.

The conservative radio talk show host and founder of Florida's Baptist Church said it came down to Michigan and Missouri as a launching pad for his message of smaller government and traditional values.

"We finally felt that Michigan was the state we wanted to launch our campaign from. We feel Michigan is a crucial state, and we feel it is a state that would be very sympathetic to our message."

A nationwide draw

Backers from around the country are expected to convene at the remodeled Hollywood Video store over the next several weeks.

Grand Rapids resident Bill Mohr, 49, was among those who urged the party to consider West Michigan. The former truck driver and dispatcher is a candidate for 76th state House district for the U.S. Taxpayers Party, the Michigan affiliate of the Constitution Party.

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The former Republican precinct delegate said he turned to the party after he became disillusioned with the GOP.

"I kept getting more and more frustrated with their platform and their ideas," Mohr said. "Our national party was founded on constitutional principles. Really, for the last three, four decades, we have run away from those principles at lightning speed. The federal government needs to be limited."

A real alternative

Baldwin contends the two major parties are like "Tweedledee or Tweedledum. We are offering the American people a real alternative."

Baldwin said he would abolish federal income tax, slash government programs, seal the border with Mexico and get U.S. troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan "as expeditiously as possible."

"We will have a balanced budget. We will control spending," Baldwin said.

Asked how he would replace the revenue lost from eliminating the income tax, Baldwin replied: "We will replace it with freedom."

Baldwin said he would employ any means necessary to stop the flow of illegal immigrants across the border.

"Clearly, this is an invasion. We will use whatever physical force is necessary."

Byron Township truck driver Dan Curtis, 37, said he began looking for another candidate as soon as Arizona Sen. John McCain locked up the GOP nomination.

"I am not at all happy with McCain. I think his views are way too far left," said Curtis, who helped clean the store for the campaign.

He handed out party literature at last weekend's gun show at The DeltaPlex. Unlike Baldwin, Curtis acknowledged victory may be a long shot at best.

The party drew just 143,630 votes in 2004 -- or 0.12 percent -- with presidential candidate Michael Peroutka and Baldwin as vice president.

"To me, it's more about principle," Curtis said. "I would love to say he's got the greatest chance to win. I am voting with my heart for the first time in a long time. I am not going to feel one bit guilty about my vote this year as I have in the past."

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Posted by **stupidrednek** on [06/24/08 at 2:14PM](#)

on the way to .13 percent, count me in

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Posted by **sfrahm** on [06/26/08 at 12:50AM](#)

Hey Folks!

I was one of those 143,630 Americans who was able to look themselves in the mirror with a clear conscience, the morning after the election in 2004 on Wed. Nov. 3rd.

If we got 0.12% of the vote in 2004, from out of the blue, I would call that some real progress. In this election when our US satisfaction is polling at an all time low of 14%, there are 86% of folks looking for an alternative to the status quo. When the last election came out 50.7% to 48.3% the last 1 percent of tyhe vote is beginning to make a substantive difference, and both parties are beginning to have to pay attention to us. So I will certainly vote for liberty again in 2008. Will you be able to look yourself in the mirror on the morning of Wed. Nov 5th this year?

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Posted by **tjv** on [06/27/08 at 11:45AM](#)

Tip to Mr. Baldwin -

"Asked how he would replace the revenue lost from eliminating the income tax, Baldwin replied: "We will replace it with freedom.""
Don't make that type of question legitimate by answering it directly (and a bit of a silly answer at that). Cutting taxes does not require "replacing revenue" for the government. That is the whole point - it is forcing cuts! Businesses focus on replacing lost revenue but will make cuts when necessary as well, but government is NOT a business. People have no choice but to pay taxes, which is why the voters need to keep a close watch on how much is taken from our paychecks and where that money is going. There is a always a strong incentive for government to grow and grow. It only shrinks when forced to do so by the taxpayers (not politicians) - that is why I'm voting for Chuck in 08.

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