## Equal Treatment Under Law

A core social justice concept that Libertarians embrace is equal treatment under law, as stated in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

Clearly many government programs and policies of the past have not reflected that concept. Consider just a few: Jim Crow laws, housing and school segregation, unequal and unfair treatment of minorities by police and the prison industrial complex, redlining, The Chinese Exclusion Act, incarceration of Japanese citizens during World War Two, and denying the right to vote to women, and forbidding gay marriage.

In the future great care should be taken to design government programs and policies that do not treat various groups differently in violation of the 14th Amendment, even when addressing government unfairness and inequality of the past.

## Educational Justice

A key element of any attempt to provide social justice is to improve k-12 education provided by government schools, especially to the less advantaged and the aggrieved so they are better empowered to succeed.

Better civics education is needed, to enable more people to influence their government more effectively so that the well-to-do and corporations wield less political influence overall.

Also important is education that places greater emphasis on financial literacy – such as how to use 401ks and IRAs – so more people have the knowledge and wherewithal to build wealth and to keep more of their income.

Libertarians prefer use of school vouchers to encourage competition and to better enable parents and students to seek education that yields superior outcomes.

# Social Justice


LIBERTARIAN PARTY
of Alameda County
*Minimum Government • Maximum Freedom*

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## Introduction

Social justice is a philosophical concept emphasizing equality and compassion regarding various social constructs such as rights, wealth, health, well-being, justice, privileges, and opportunity, without regard to a person's legal, political, economic, or other circumstance.

Social justice also involves addressing historical mistreatment of various groups within society especially ethnic minorities.

To provide social justice many call for redistribution of wealth, income, opportunity, and political influence, from "privileged" groups to less privileged groups and groups that are/have been treated unfairly.

Some proposed responses are peaceful such as charitable and voluntary sharing while others involve less peaceful actions such as violent protests or government that uses force to require more fairness.

## Avoiding Government Non-solutions and Violence

Social justice, while a laudable concept in the abstract, is messy as a practical matter given the vagaries of politics and human nature.

Some proposed means to provide social justice involve "more equal" treatment of groups that have been treated unfairly in the past.

Worst of all, some social justice advocates support more violent means to take political influence, wealth, and income away from "oppressors" and those who gained advantage unfairly.

Many such efforts, while often based on good intentions, are unlikely to yield the desired results and may cause more harm than good.

First, many government programs meant to provide social justice are poorly run, poorly targeted and have a weak record of making matters more fair and more equal, especially regarding material well-being.

Furthermore, government and political accountability – regarding government programs' *outcomes* – is unusual so many such programs' poor effectiveness is rarely evaluated or fixed.

In addition to programs' lack of effectiveness, government *use of force* to *require* more social justice, including redistribution of wealth, is antithetical to the libertarian non-aggression principle and preference for peaceful, non-violent, and voluntary approaches to social needs of those who have been treated unfairly and unequally in the past.

Instead, libertarians prefer a smaller, less obtrusive government overall which leaves more prerogatives and resources in the hands of taxpayers, many of whom would be more sharing and generous, voluntarily, if they could keep more of their wealth and income.