



# Gig Economy Gets Shout-Out In GOP Platform

Insights

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For the first time in recorded human history, one of the major political parties mentioned the gig economy in its national platform. The future is here!

The Republican Platform, ratified by the party on July 18 during its National Convention, makes several mentions of the gig economy. In the opening section on “Restoring the American Dream,” focused on economic issues, the Platform presents a discussion about the “Start-up Century” and the importance of promoting small businesses and entrepreneurship. After promoting the concept of minimizing the regulatory burden faced by emerging businesses, the Platform states, “Indeed, the world of the app economy cries out for the comprehensive regulatory reform proposed elsewhere in this platform.” Well, OK, it didn’t specifically use the term “gig economy,” but “app economy” is close enough.

The GOP Platform then goes on to describe numerous ways in which regulations can be eased or reduced for gig companies (and others, obviously). The Platform also aims to be forward thinking about employment law in the 21st century, focusing thought on some of the same issues we’ve been covering on this blog. “Republicans believe that the employer-employee relationship of the future will be built upon employee empowerment and workplace flexibility.” For example, it encourages employee stock ownership plans to “energize” the free enterprise economy.

The final mention of the gig economy is more abstract, coming during a discussion about the American healthcare system. The Platform supports individuals who want to join together to form purchasing pools in order to expand healthcare coverage, an issue that has been on the forefront of gig workers. Also, discussing an issue that relates to gig workers and others in the modern workforce: “Today’s highly mobile workforce,” it says, “needs portability of insurance coverage that can go with them from job to job.”

The Democratic Platform, adopted a week later, does not mention the gig economy at all. However, demonstrating that the party is not stuck in the mud, it released an app of its own for its convention. Unfortunately, you couldn’t read the party platform from the app, and if you could, it wouldn’t mention the gig economy. My prediction: that will change by 2020, when both parties devote some substantive discussion of the gig economy (or “sharing economy,” or “app economy”) in their platforms.

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