

**DELAWARE** – The FIRST State for the FREE State  
Gary Snyder

I've rarely been to Delaware (just driven through, mostly) but I believe an OBJECTIVE analysis (see Jason Sorens' brilliant state comparison analysis at [www.freestateproject.org/stateanalysis2.htm](http://www.freestateproject.org/stateanalysis2.htm)) makes it the best candidate state for the following reasons:

1) **Population:** BY FAR the most important consideration. Deciding where best to place 20,000 activists is a numbers game. New Hampshire (nearly 1.3 million, and growing rapidly... by the time 20,000 will have signed up, NH will have about 1.5 million people ...nearly DOUBLE that of Delaware) and Idaho (1.3 million) simply have too many people for 20,000 to tilt the scales, relative to Delaware (800K). On this alone, Delaware deserves the nod over those two states.

2) **Coastline:** ESSENTIAL for a state seeking independence and autonomy. Wilmington is one of the most important ports in the country. On this alone, Delaware deserves the nod over Montana and Wyoming.

3) **Economics:** The FSP is ALL ABOUT economics, and NO OTHER STATE can match Delaware's economic potential. Delaware has the best job market of the candidate states for its population, when commuting opportunities are considered, and is very business-friendly (<http://delaware.gov/yahoo/Business>). It is a corporate haven, and UNIQUELY positioned to attract new and existing companies. This CANNOT be overstated. It is within commuting distance of job-centers like Philly and Baltimore. Its long coastline provides intrinsic opportunity in the fishing, boating, tourist, and import-export industries. It is the FRIENDLIEST state to retirees (<http://moneycentral.msn.com/articles/retire/basics/9838.asp>). And Delaware has the highest income per capita of ANY state in the WHOLE U.S., fostering economic opportunities for FSers and a populace adverse to wealth redistribution.

4) **Climate:** To attract another 15,000 (and more) libertarians to the FS, it would help SIGNIFICANTLY if the state chosen doesn't suffer thru brutal winters. Delaware's the only state on the list that fits that description. (It's also easier to campaign and do outreach when the temperature's not subzero.)

5) **Small Size:** Although a deterrent to many FS members, think about it. In a tiny state like Delaware, organizing, meeting, campaigning and ASSIMILATING is MUCH easier and cheaper.

6) **Location:** Proximity to DC and other media centers is a GOOD thing. In Montana or Idaho, we could be unjustly dismissed and ignored as "right-wing militia types" and isolationists. The media won't be able to do that in Delaware. We're too close to home. We will get attention, and our libertarian model will get a spotlight. Isn't that what we want? Isn't that what we CRAVE? Isn't that necessary to gain support, and spread freedom? We NEED this experiment to take place DIRECTLY beneath the noses of the eastern media elite establishment.

Also, these population centers ARE WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE. This is where more LIBERTARIANS are (at least TWICE as many people voted for Harry Browne in 2000 in Delaware's region than in any other candidate state's region), making it easy for them to relocate to Delaware, or take a second home as a primary residence. If we hope to attract 15,000 more, this is where our best chance lies. The other states are too remote to draw the necessary numbers. Delaware is the only LOW population candidate state in a high population REGION.

Do you really think NH, in the far NE part of the country, or any state in the remote Mountain West, will be able to pull in 20,000 libertarians from all over within three years? Or do you think Delaware, more accessible to more folks in the mid-Atlantic, offering a more varied and robust economy, and warmer climate, has a better chance?

THAT is the key question facing every FSP member holding a ballot. We are not choosing a state so much for us as we are for the 15,000 who follow us.

The major knock on Delaware is “lack of libertarian culture.” This notion that ANY state’s “libertarian culture” is significantly greater than any other is an exaggeration. Modern transportation, telecommunications (folks, everyone in 2003 gets CNN and MTV) and the fact that people move frequently have lessened the differences among states’ cultures. Culture doesn’t matter so much because the culture in EVERY state is VERY far from what we want it to be. Some states may be “more libertarian” than others, but even these states are not very libertarian at all compared to what we would consider to be ideal. I strongly question the relevance of the negligible differences in freedom between the states.

MOST people considering the FSP aren’t going to nitpick local laws. Regardless, the whole purpose of the FSP is to CHANGE those laws, to make our own laws; not to gather somewhere where the laws aren’t as bad. We want to bring about change, rather than “hunker down,” right?

For every Delaware “statist sentiment,” I could list one for any other candidate state. And for every “freedom sentiment” cited by another, I could list one for Delaware ([www.usatoday.com/news/graphics/statefinances/flash.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/graphics/statefinances/flash.htm)). For example, Delaware is #1 in the Economic Freedom of North America index put out by the libertarian Fraser Institute.

All the comparison of local laws serves to do is make us all dizzy.

And it says next to NOTHING about ANY state’s “political culture,” as most folks don’t vote. It only speaks to what Republicrats in office have been able to ram through to serve themselves and a few special interests, usually AGAINST the sentiment of most citizens.

THESE non-voters are the people we’ll need to reach. And these people (like most folks) will, for the most part, vote for whom they KNOW; not for who most resembles their “native culture” (whatever that means). Assimilation is the job ahead of us in whichever state we choose.

I also reject the notion that a vote for a Republican reflects a vote for more freedom. Liberal Democrats are not necessarily less freedom-friendly than authoritarian Republicans. Which group is more likely to embrace a change in drug prohibition?

Delaware is more or less evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, making it easier for a third party to prevail by grabbing as little as 33%. An entrenched RP or DP would be much harder to displace.

Delaware’s Senate has 21 members, 13 Democrats and 8 Republicans.  
Delaware’s House has 41 members, 29 Republicans and 12 Democrats.

Delaware has SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE ([www2.newszap.com/area/delaware.html](http://www2.newszap.com/area/delaware.html)): a high quality of life ([www.state.de.us/dedo/new\\_web\\_site/Publications/databook\\_2002/Quality%20of%20Life.htm](http://www.state.de.us/dedo/new_web_site/Publications/databook_2002/Quality%20of%20Life.htm)), quaint colonial villages, good farmland, isolated rural areas, state wildlife areas and forests, hunting, beautiful beaches, state parks, small cities and culture.

Check it out - consider **population, coastline, economics, climate, small size, and location** - and do the SMART thing for the FSP – vote DELAWARE.