

## 2018 Grange Law Policy Statement

Just as our Ritual provides the vehicle to present and understand our teachings and principles, our Constitution and By-laws provide the unified structure for our order to function with unity of action. Understanding why we have our code is as important as understanding the code itself. Over the past 150 years, many hours have been spent by many minds crafting a document that will serve and protect the interests of the Grange at all levels, as well as its individual members. It is with a great deal of respect and caution that we approach the task of amending these laws, and sincerely hope that the changes made are in the best interests of the Grange as a whole.

With today's political climate we want to stress how important it is to remain non-partisan, that we as the Grange do not support any nominee, appointee, candidate, or agency appointees, etc. The officers and staff of the National Grange should be reminded while a publicly released assessment of the qualifications of any cabinet or agency appointee is a positive; any endorsement or opposition statement by the Grange risks harming the public perception of our non-partisanship in dealing with the issues before the agencies of the federal government.

Social media has afforded the members the opportunity for instant communication of Grange activities and successes. We understand that not all will ever agree with all policies and undertakings of our Order, and that makes our organization unique. We strongly oppose the posting of personal grievances, the purpose of which is to divide and destroy. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution, makes us powerless to stop the negativity. We challenge our Grangers to apply the high standards demanded by our Fraternal bonds to conduct our personal participation on social media sites accordingly.

As members we all enjoy the protection of our Digest of Laws and our fraternal responsibility to abide by them and hold our brothers and sisters accountable. Failure to do so results in strife and discontent. Let us practice our motto - "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.

Recognition that the Grange is considered a 501c organization by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) gives us freedom from most taxes. Or by-laws Sec. 4.11.1 (G) limits the amount a Grange may retain after the sale of property to \$1,000 with the remainder to be kept in custodial account by the State Grange. The value of property has risen dramatically over those years and this section has not been reviewed during that time. We recommend that an in-depth study of IRS tax implications be conducted to determine if an update would comply with IRS regulations and minimize future potential tax liabilities.

We want to make sure that we are maintaining a fairness in electing the officers of the National Grange. Delegates should be mindful of maintaining equity among the regions of the country, including other factors when electing the Executive Committee.

The National Grange should communicate with the State Granges regarding all the entities that have entered into contractual trademark agreements in their state, so that they may act as agents for the National Grange. This will insure that the State Grange is aware of all the entities that use our trademark in that State Grange and that licensees are complying.