

**2019-2021 Platform of the Young Democrats of America**  
DRAFT AS SUBMITTED BY PLATFORM COMMITTEE

**PARTY STRUCTURE AND CORE VALUES**

We Believe:

America's strength derives from people coming together and working for the common good. Acceptance of diverse viewpoints is fundamental to a well-functioning democracy and an inclusive society where we stand up for antiracist, feminist, and workers' legislation. We are proud of our values, especially in the face of opposition. There is no campaign we cannot win, and there is no issue we must sacrifice in the fight for our nation's future.

We the Young Democrats of America Will:

1. Support implementation of a nationwide campaign approach, leaving no Democrat, no voter, and no young person behind. As there are Young Democrats in every state in the Union, we will never concede their political futures to Republican domination but will instead proudly carry our shared message of hope and progress into every state and territory.
2. Support recruitment of Democratic candidates for all 535 voting seats and the 6 non-voting seats. Support recruitment of Democratic candidates for the congressional representation of U.S. Territories.
3. Support Young Democratic candidates who are running in local and state office races, so that no election goes uncontested and no chance to build young leaders is missed. To do this, we must recruit, fund, and train those candidates, while helping local chapters find races in which to run young candidates.
4. Increase peer-to-peer communication by speaking with progressive and democratically allied issue groups, by locating new voters in our local communities, by speaking out to our friends and family members, and by taking our message for the future to the people.
5. Building of strong, lasting relationships among local Democratic clubs, labor unions, and other progressive organizations; accept and encourage the role of progressive and grassroots organizations with common goals in guiding our party, and welcome their involvement in both primary and general elections.
6. Demand inclusion at all levels of the Democratic Party, including state and local executive committees and as party delegates, allowing the voice of the future leaders of the Democratic Party to be heard and listened to.
7. Help recruit and support Democratic candidates who reflect the very best of their local character and values.
8. Ensure Democratic organizations, including labor unions, national, state and county committees,

political campaigns and other allied organizations are actively recruiting and hiring individuals from underrepresented populations who reflect the communities they serve.

## **GOVERNMENT AND ELECTORAL REFORM**

We Believe:

Free and Fair elections are fundamental to democracy in our country. Young people often find themselves disenfranchised due to residency laws, lack of education, and the transitory nature of youth. The federal government should encourage young people to participate in the democratic process. We further believe the federal government should set realistic and reliable standards for election administration to ensure fair, accurate, and accessible vote casting and counting, coupled with federal grants to state and local governments to assist with compliance. We reject collusion with foreign entities and oppose any foreign interference in the fair administration of our elections, as fair elections the very core of our democracy.

We Support:

1. Fair and free elections.
2. Early voting, same-day registration, no-fault absentee voting, and vote by mail.
3. Voting systems that ensure accuracy, fairness, and transparency while safeguarding privacy and accessibility.
4. The formation of independent, non-partisan commissions to draw district lines that are an accurate representation of a diverse electorate.
5. Campaign finance laws that ensure that ideas, not money, are the deciding factor in elections.
6. Expanded implementation of the National Voter Registration Act, which requires federal agencies to provide voter registration opportunities.
7. Efforts by states to restore voting rights to citizens that have been convicted of crimes and who have served their sentence.
8. Passage of the DC Voting Rights Act as a necessary but insufficient step toward full representation and the eventual statehood of the District of Columbia; and the abolishment of the tyrannical practice of taxation without representation wherever it exists.
9. Strict penalties for people who impede access to polling places, buy votes, intimidate voters, and purposefully distribute false information about voting procedures.
10. Reasonable efforts to ensure there are adequate, well-staffed polling locations serving all areas where voting occurs, and that these polling locations are accessible to all voting populations, including, but not limited to, college campuses, rural populations, and Native American reservations.

11. We believe Congress must act on the will of the people of Puerto Rico and approve an enabling act with terms for Puerto Rico's admission as a state of the Union. The people of Puerto Rico have exercised their right to self-determination, resulting in overwhelming support for Statehood. Thus, we support granting the full admission of Puerto Rico as a state of our Union.

12. Barriers to fraudulent or deceptive third-party voter registration.

13. Transparency in government and rigorous compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and state-level public records laws.

14. Extension of Section Four of the Voting Rights Act to cover all jurisdictions within the United States, thus allowing Section Five to be fully used once again.

15. The creation of a federal holiday on Election Day to allow an equal opportunity to vote.

16. Automatic voter registration of eligible voters and allowing the opportunity to opt-out.

17. The reunification of Democratic caucuses and factions within state legislatures and localities in the United States to prevent rogue factions from denying Democrats the majority in these legislative bodies and preventing progressive legislation from being passed by these bodies.

18. Partnerships with organizations who seek to make the following more accessible under current policy: (i) vote casting; (ii) voter education; (iii) community discussion on propositions / measures / candidates; (iiii) and voter confirmation of ballot receipt from the appropriate e states or county election offices.

19. All federal campaigns with more than 10 paid staffers to be accessible to persons with disabilities by having a 508/ADA Coordinator and/or an Access Coordinator.

We Oppose:

1. Voting impediments, voter intimidation, and voter fraud.

2. Any law that would require identification to vote or register to vote.

3. Any politically-motivated attempt to purge voter rolls.

4. Corruption, to include taking bribes, kickbacks, nepotism, or any other uses of public office for personal gain.

5. The Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling, and reject the idea corporations are living, breathing human beings, and the idea that money is free speech.

6. The inclusion of a citizenship question on the census survey or any other similar scare tactic aimed at suppressing minority representation.

## **ECONOMIC POLICY**

We Believe:

Free and fair trade offers a course for sustainable growth throughout the global economy to the benefit of the United States, our allies, and the impoverished nations of the world.

We Support:

1. Including rigorous labor and environmental standards in all trade agreements to improve the living and working conditions throughout the world.
2. Investing in the creativity of American workers and businesses to maximize the competitiveness of the United States in the global economy.
3. Retraining American workers who are displaced by trade liberalization so that they can quickly return to the workforce, by focusing on future technologies such as manufacturing and clean energy jobs.
4. New trade agreements and existing deals that open agricultural markets to American farmers.
5. **Ending subsidies to companies that outsource American jobs.**

We Oppose:

1. The abuse by multinational corporations of worker's rights, labor policies, and the environment.
2. Oppose the efforts of all nations to manipulate currency and dump cheap goods into the market.

## **LABOR**

We Believe:

In expanding collective bargaining throughout our modern, service-based economy to maintain economic flexibility and to build economic opportunity, while vigorously defending a century's worth of hard-fought progress and protections won by the American worker united in purpose and organized in action.

We Support:

1. The right of workers to organize unions without employer intimidation or interference, including a ban on coerced "captive audience" meetings.
2. Pro-worker legislation such as the Employee Free Choice Act that strengthens the rights of workers in the US.
3. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2021, and indexing wage to inflation.

4. Legislation designed to protect the employment and legal rights of corporate and governmental whistleblowers, to ensure that those who expose malfeasance have an open and safe forum to do so.
5. Any effort to allow greater access to unemployment and worker's compensation benefits.
6. The expansion of federal employment programs for veterans, the homeless, the formerly incarcerated and the disabled.
7. Efforts to eliminate gender inequalities in pay and benefits for equal work.
8. The vital role of the American Labor Movement in maintaining America's middle class.
9. Efforts to revitalize American manufacturing as a cornerstone of our economy and the creation of middle-class jobs.
10. OSHA and other federal efforts to secure safe workplaces for all Americans.
11. Broad application of Davis-Bacon worker protections to all federal projects, and little Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements to state and local projects.
12. Any effort to protect workers, documented and undocumented, from suffering the injustices of wage theft
13. The enactment of Buy America provisions for publicly funded infrastructure projects in this country
14. Policies to protect the pensions of workers
15. Ensuring that workers have the ability to accrue Paid Sick Time at a reasonable rate so a worker will never have to choose between their livelihood and their family's health.
16. Implementing fair workweek scheduling legislation so workers will have advance warning of their schedule and will not be penalized or terminated if the schedule is not workable.
17. Encouraging and incentivizing employee-owned, democratically-managed businesses through worker cooperatives to retain and create jobs, strengthen communities, expand economic growth, guarantee safe workplaces, and increase wealth for a broad sector of workers.
18. The Davis Bacon Act which guarantees a prevailing wage in federal construction work.
19. Economic tax breaks, directly proportional to a minimum wage increase, to small businesses who employ no more than eight (8) individuals.
20. The decision of political workers in organizations, parties, and campaigns who seek to unionize, as well as the voluntary recognition by their respective managers of their right to collective bargaining.

21. Codetermination legislation that would enable workers to elect a percentage of corporate board members.

21. The right of labor unions to organize un-unionized industries

22. Protections for domestic workers which includes other important rights that should be afforded to them.

23. Economic tax breaks, directly proportional to a minimum wage increase, to small businesses who employ no more than eight (8) individuals.

We Oppose:

1. Any effort to silence labor's voice through "paycheck protection" legislation.
2. Any effort to restrict the right of workers to organize through "right to work" legislation.
3. Any effort to restrict, diminish, or eliminate in any way the rights of public or private sector employees to bargain collectively.
4. The block **granting** of any current or future federal program that is meant to provide social welfare to the public
5. The expansion and the existence of the "right to work" laws in states
6. Efforts to eliminate federal rules that increase the federal wage threshold to qualify for overtime
7. Efforts to eliminate the federal program to help private workers without IRAs or 401ks save with federal retirement savings accounts
8. Business decisions made to avoid honoring union agreements by creating 1099 workers and under- the- table employees
9. Any preemption laws that block the passage of minimum wage, sick leave, fair scheduling, no cause termination, non-discrimination protections, and other worker-friendly laws at the local level.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

We Believe:

Social Security has been the most successful and visionary social program in American history. We are proud to claim its legacy and its compact with the American people as our own, and we will fight to ensure that Americans enjoy the benefits of this program for generations to come, defending it from all efforts to weaken the social safety net and to render the system any less secure.

We Support:

1. A Social Security system that protects the funding, benefits, and long-term viability that Social Security provides for all Americans.
2. The elimination of the income cap on the payroll tax, to ensure fiscal stability and maintain the system's progressive character.

We Oppose:

1. The privatization of Social Security.
2. Any reduction of Social Security benefits that would break the trust and expectations of the American worker.
3. Reducing benefits to beneficiaries during national economic distress.

## **THE FEDERAL BUDGET**

We Believe:

Leadership requires responsible stewardship of public resources on behalf of our nation's future that restrains growth in government spending while protecting the adequacy and sustainability of government revenue. We believe that an individual's tax burden should be tied directly to his or her ability to pay, progressive in character and in spirit, with reasonable checks within the system to avoid fraud and abuse.

We Support:

1. Continued and increased Federal investment in our country's aging infrastructure and in alternative energy.
2. Refraining from the passage of tax cuts benefiting only the wealthy.
3. Enacting long-term budget plans that are designed to balance the Federal budget over the course of the business cycle, offsetting deficits during economic slowdowns with surpluses during periods of growth.

4. Allowing the Bush tax cuts to expire for individuals earning over \$250,000 per year.
5. A broad-based, progressive tax system that fully funds all of the functions of the Federal Government.
6. A restoration of the estate tax, which is vital both to restoring balance to the federal budget as well as ensuring that wealth does not become concentrated in too few hands.
7. A Carbon Tax to provide the revenue necessary to fund research into alternative energy sources and provide incentives for sustainable growth.
8. Transparent and accountable government budgeting.
9. Detailed disclosure of congressional office expenditures in the federal budget.
10. A closure of loopholes in corporate tax codes and off-shore tax havens, ensuring hidden profits made by hedge funds and private equity managers are accounted for, requiring government contractors pay their full taxes, and the creation of a more efficient and fair tax code.
11. Implementation of a federal financial transaction tax, which would place a small fee on all transactions occurring within a domestic financial market.
12. Tax cuts for middle and lower-income individuals in order to create a vibrant middle class in which we all prosper.

We Oppose:

1. Using off-budget spending and undisclosed earmarks to circumvent proper channels and to avoid accountability and oversight.
2. The use of accounting gimmicks to conceal the true costs of policies and programs.

## **POVERTY**

We Believe:

Government is a valuable tool in addressing and ultimately eliminating the worst forms of economic hardship in modern society. We believe the government has an indispensable role in empowering individuals with the tools to take responsibility for bettering themselves. Moreover, through investment in education, community building, and targeted efforts to expand economic opportunities for children from impoverished backgrounds, we believe government can be a powerful force in alleviating the destructive cycle of poverty that traps so many in hopelessness and despair from too young an age.

We Support:

1. Increasing the minimum wage, and passage of federal, state, and local living wage legislation to help Americans rise out of poverty.

2. Section 8 housing programs, which provide alternatives to traditional public housing projects.
3. Vocational training, financial education, and adult education to provide opportunities for the disadvantaged to better their lot in life.
4. The promotion and implementation of microlending practices aimed at high poverty areas.
5. The recognition of housing as a basic human right and a necessity for families and individuals to move forward in life; therefore, we support housing subsidies based on need relative to the cost of living in their community.
6. Food stamps, WIC and TANF which provides financial assistance to Americans who require it.
7. Welfare reform as long as this reform provides comprehensive job training, child care, and significant federal support in the transition from welfare to work.
8. Programs that provide communities the resources to fight food deserts through the development of farmers markets, urban farms, and public-private partnerships for grocery stores and grocery delivery.
9. An expansion and improvement of the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Care Tax Credit to ensure that working families are able to support themselves and that workers are incentivized to find employment

We Oppose:

1. Predatory lending practices, especially those that feed upon lower-and middle-income families.
2. Redlining, which prevents financial mobility of low to moderate-income communities.
3. Any HUD or Government Assistance Policy that negatively impacts people based on the basis of race, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, familial status, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background, national origin or disability.

## HOUSING

The cost of housing has made it too expensive to live a secure and stable life in many of the nation's urban and rural areas, centers, leading to skyrocketing homelessness and financial insecurity. We demand the government take swift action to fund the construction of affordable housing built near accessible public near transit. lines, along with the return of strong rent control to stabilize communities. We demand that this is done in a way which prioritizes low-income and marginalized minority population's needs over the financial interest of developers. Housing is a human right.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL SECURITY

We Believe:

The U.S. foreign policy should promote liberty, democracy, and opportunity throughout the world in a truly collaborative fashion with our allies, shunning unilateralism and living up to our responsibility to the international community as its last remaining superpower. We believe in the power of diplomacy as the surest means of advancing our strategic goals and our national interests, while placing enormous hope for a more peaceful global existence by leading and by 270 working faithfully within such international institutions as the United Nations.

We Support:

1. Supporting NGOs and IGOs sponsoring microloans to the developing world.
2. Efforts to achieve long-term peace in the Middle East by encouraging reconciliation efforts between Israelis and Palestinians, including programs like the Israeli-Palestinian partnership fund that promotes economic development and people-to-people programs between Israelis and Palestinians.
3. Policies that support U.S. trade relations with and the provision of aid to nations that uphold democratic values.
4. Encouraging our trading partners to uphold safe and fair working conditions, workers' rights, and a living wage.
5. Increased U.S. support for programs promoting equal access to opportunities for women throughout the world.
6. Increased international efforts to address the broad health, social, economic, and political effects of all known and future pandemics, including making generic medicines available to underdeveloped nations.
7. Giving underdeveloped nations the tools they need to confront the challenges faced by poverty, hunger, starvation, and disease.
8. A strong commitment to the concerns of human rights, labor, religious freedom, environmental, and health issues in the negotiation and implementation of all international agreements.
9. Continued efforts of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations to further diplomacy, peace, and justice in the global community.
10. Restricting the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and securing poorly guarded nuclear, chemical and biological materials.
11. Increasing soldier pay and veterans' benefits out of respect for the vital sacrifice that members of the military willingly undertake on behalf of all Americans.
12. Strengthening our cooperation with allies to prevent terror attacks at home and abroad.
13. The right of a sovereign people to national self-determination.

14. The continued withdrawal of US forces from Iraq.
15. Engagement with China on matters of mutual interest, while maintaining pressure in such areas as human rights, the environment, and Tibet.
16. Stronger sanctions on Russia, due to their involvement in cyber attacks on the United States and our democratic process.
17. Protecting and continuing the positive diplomatic changes in the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba.
18. Enhancing our economic, political and social cooperation with established and emerging democracies.
19. The strengthening of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Darfur to end the conflict that has taken hundreds of thousands of lives.
20. Strong federal and state policies that welcome refugees from war-torn nations, especially Syria and other nations currently facing conflict.
21. Israel's right to exist as a Jewish Democratic state and an independent sovereign Palestinian state with mutually agreed upon borders.
22. Unrestricted, universal access to contraceptives and information about family planning methods in order to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, improve worldwide health, and raise the standard of quality of life.
23. A One China policy, the Taiwan Relations Act, and the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues that is consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan.
24. Policies that, through global cooperation, aim to curb sea level rise.
25. The concept of the President of the United States coming to the US Congress to seek approval on new Authorizations for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) in the conflicts with ISIS and other enemies that are not directly related to the 2001 AUMF on Terror (Al-Qaeda).
26. Efforts to ensure that the South China Sea is a free and open region in the world for international economic purposes.
27. Strong and punitive sanctions or other retributive actions against the Russian Federation for their cyberattacks against the United States during the 2016 election, and against any other nation, group, or individual that carries out, participates in or assists any past or future cyber attack against our nation and our democratic process.
28. Safeguard the rights and welfare of indigenous communities around the world."
29. The right of refugees to request and receive asylum without imprisonment, discrimination, and/or abuse from the country(s) they are entering.

30. The right of those fleeing natural disaster, climate change, poverty, or other devastating phenomena to enter countries in which they will be safe.”

31. Increase funding for the State Department to retain our best diplomats

We oppose:

1. The efforts of rogue regimes to acquire weapons of mass destruction, and their proliferation in general.
2. The suppression of peaceful protests and the undermining of popular will in Iran and all other nations similarly situated.
3. The continued Chinese occupation of Tibet.
4. The allocation of money to support outdated and unnecessary weapons systems.
5. Continued violations of UN resolutions or any member of the UN.
6. The interference of the United States of America in the elections of sovereign nations.

## **IMMIGRATION**

We Believe:

That the United States must continue to stand as a beacon of hope for those yearning for freedom and opportunity around the world. We are proud of America's history and tradition as a nation of immigrants and believe it essential to our vitality and character that we maintain our openness and our welcoming spirit to those from every walk of life who come seeking the promise for which our country stands. Discrimination has no place in the laws of our country, especially in determining who is permitted to immigrate. Nevertheless, we believe secure borders and enforcement of labor laws are absolutely essential if the United States is ever again to have a functional immigration system. Liberal immigration policies bring benefits both economic and cultural, but we believe these benefits will not be enjoyed to their fullest without immigration policies that are more reliable, fair, and secure than in their present form.

We Support:

1. Humanizing and dignifying immigration laws so that they reunite families and allow immigrants to seek work, a better life for their families, and a commitment to the United States.
2. Immigration laws that are not discriminatory, including equal human rights for immigrants and an earned path to citizenship.
3. Temporary legal status for undocumented higher education students through direct support of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act.

4. The rights of undocumented immigrants to remain united with their families.
5. Increasing immigration quotas to bring them more in line with reality.
6. A path to citizenship through service in the United States military and demand the immediate apology and the automatic granting of citizenship to those fellow veterans that have been deported from the United States of America solely based on their legal status of residency.
7. Common-sense immigration reform that includes provisions for foreign guest workers and an opportunity to bring the 11 million undocumented immigrants out of the shadows and into society, and immediate overhaul of our immigration system to not only provide a pathway toward citizenship by granting amnesty of the unauthorized entry or stay, but access to government programs and resources.
8. The rights of individuals to report crimes without facing criminal retribution for undocumented status.
9. Any and all efforts of state and local officials to develop and create programs for immigrants who currently live within their communities to achieve citizenship through local government-sponsored programs that will help them meet the requirements to be a U.S. citizen with complete anonymity.
10. The de-privatization of immigration detention centers and the eventual eradication of such centers, such that these dehumanizing and demoralizing institutions cease to exist.
11. Abolishing ICE (i.e. the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.)
12. The right for municipalities and states to declare “sanctuary” status without the fear of federal and state reprimands.

We Oppose:

1. Human Trafficking in all of its forms.
2. Immigration laws directed at penalizing children.
3. States and municipalities unconstitutionally enacting their own immigration policies- particularly the permission of officers to behave like federal immigration agents. We oppose 287g contracts.
4. Abuse and exploitation of undocumented workers.
5. The hiring exploitation of undocumented immigrants in order to avoid paying market wages and further burdening taxpayers with the cost of health care.
6. Penalizing victims of human trafficking for unwilling participation in prostitution.
7. The continued use of the obsolete federal E-Verify program, which will offshore jobs, hurt the

agricultural industry, and hurt American security

8. Family separation at the border.

9. Any effort to prevent people from seeking asylum at the border.

## **HOMELAND SECURITY**

We Believe:

That the concept of homeland security extends beyond terrorism to include natural disasters, maintaining and improving critical infrastructure, and citizen education. Our government must fulfill its obligation to protect its citizens from foreign and domestic dangers while upholding the freedoms and ideals on which this nation was founded and on which it still stands.

We Support:

1. Funding homeland security operations in states and localities in proportion to the risk that is faced therein.
2. Policies that take affirmative steps to ensure the safety of America's public and infrastructure.
3. Raising the level and quality of inspections at all points of entry into the United States, including commercial shipping ports.
4. Ensuring adequate funding of and preparation for evacuations of populous areas in the event of an attack on the homeland or natural disaster.
5. Properly funding, training, and equipping first responders to deal with large scale emergencies.
6. Full funding of the Army Corps of Engineers levee building programs to protect our citizens from natural disasters.
7. Increasing investments in programs and systems that protect public and private entities from threats to cybersecurity, foreign and domestic
8. The use of diplomacy over war, especially when nuclear arms may be used.
9. The Iran Nuclear Deal.

## **LAW AND JUSTICE**

Criminal Justice

## We Believe:

Laws are the foundation of an orderly society and that abiding by them is beneficial to all Americans and essential to the functioning of a civil society. We also recognize that there are currently more people incarcerated in the United States than in any other nation in the world. We strive to create a society where laws are applied with consistency and equality, and with rehabilitation, not incarceration, as the primary focus. We support the expansion of restorative justice programs.

We believe in the importance of acknowledging the systemic and institutional racism beholden since the foundation of this nation, and seek to remove such explicit and implicit racism; inasmuch, we proclaim that black lives matter, and that the actions of police brutality disproportionately impact marginalized and underrepresented populations.

## We Support:

1. Our safety and law enforcement professionals and recognize that their services are vital to a safe and secure America.
2. Police forces that use the least intrusive methods of investigation necessary to uphold the law.
3. Increased training of police and law enforcement officials, especially regarding mental illnesses with an emphasis of conflict de-escalation techniques and disabilities that affect communication.
4. The individual right of every law-abiding citizen to own and possess firearms, as established by the Second Amendment and upheld by the Supreme Court.
5. Strict background checks prior to any firearm purchase, including purchases at gun shows and mandatory waiting periods for all gun buyers.
6. Firearm safety training prior to the first firearm purchase.
7. Calling on the federal government to invest the necessary resources to accomplish instant background checks.
8. The legalization, regulation, and taxation of marijuana, in a manner similar to that of tobacco or alcohol. We also support prioritizing social justice by expunging any cannabis-related criminal records and helping those communities hit hardest by the so-called “War on Drugs.”
9. The housing of juveniles convicted of criminal offenses separately from adults and the establishment of juvenile justice commissions that ensure that juveniles are neither unfairly prosecuted nor fall victim to corruption in the justice system.
10. Programs focusing on the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders rather than mere incarceration.
11. Laws that ensure that all incarceration facilities are safe and clean.

12. Treating enemy combatants held by the US Government in a manner consistent with international human rights standards.
13. Reforms in the sentencing procedure that allow greater judicial flexibility regarding sentences, alternative punishment, and community or victim redress, particularly for non-violent offenders.
14. The repeal of the portions of the Patriot Act that violate civil liberties and Fourth Amendment protections.
15. The reinstatement of voting rights for offenders who have completed the terms of their sentence, including parole or probation. (We support efforts like Florida's Amendment 4.)
15. Promoting interaction between communities and police forces so that communities understand the operations of police and feel we are all equal and vital partners in making sure our neighborhoods are safe.
16. The abolition of capital punishment.
17. Reasonable restrictions on firearm ownership including a renewal of the assault weapons ban, a ban on high-capacity magazines, gun-free zones in schools, colleges, and government buildings, and the right of property owners to refuse entry to armed patrons.
18. The retraining of police officers, using federal funds, to de-escalate situations that they respond to.
19. Efforts to diversify the headcount of the local police departments, both rank and file, and leadership, to ensure that they do more to reflect the communities that they serve.
20. Efforts to strengthen laws that relate to gun trafficking, to reduce gun violence.
21. Efforts to provide transparency, efficiency, and reduction in the civil asset forfeiture programs administered by law enforcement agencies.
22. Efforts to reform and improve pre-trial discovery policies, to provide the defense with equal opportunity to get information before trial.
23. The abolishment of the use of solitary confinement for all ages and all situations, as it has been deemed a form of torture by the UN, and abuse is both well- documented and rampant.
24. The decriminalization of marijuana at the federal level with the ultimate determination made by the states. Additionally, we support fresh start legislation for one-time offenders of current marijuana laws who have been negatively impacted.
25. The de-privatization of Federal and state prisons.
26. Providing mental health and other services at a local level so police officers are not the first call

for non-law enforcement problems.

27. Voting rights should never be revoked due to a criminal conviction.

28. A minimum wage for those incarcerated in the prison system who engage in voluntary or mandatory labor. Laws that ensure that all incarceration facilities are safe and clean and that allow inmates a meaningful opportunity to challenge human rights violations.

29. Comprehensive sentencing reform that allows greater judicial flexibility to allow for more lenient and non-punitive sentences, alternative punishment, and community or victim redress, particularly for non-violent offenders. We also support second-look legislation to reevaluate the length of sentences for people currently incarcerated.

30. Legislation requiring affirmative consent, given by words or actions, to engage in sexual activity.

31. Expansion of post-conviction remedies to prove innocence, including mandatory video recording of interrogations, access to DNA testing, strict regulation of jailhouse informant testimony, and adequate funding for indigent representation.

32. Compensation for those wrongfully convicted.

33. Banning questions regarding arrests or convictions from individuals seeking employment and/or housing.

We Oppose:

1. Any statute that criminalizes assisted suicide by a medical professional.
2. The use of secret evidence being used in connection with any criminal proceedings.
3. Police brutality and corruption, and we support programs that prevent and punish such actions.
4. The use of national security to justify the widespread violation of constitutional rights in the United States and abroad.
5. The predatory nature of “Stand Your Ground” laws anywhere they are practiced and consider these laws to be a gross violation of human rights.
6. Policies that seek to circumvent gun control laws in the states that have more stringent rules and regulations on carrying weapons
7. A repressive bail system that forces individuals to spend time in jail simply because they cannot

afford to pay bail. We oppose cash bail.

## **8. Excessive Legal financial obligations and interest rates.**

### **CIVIL JUSTICE**

We Believe:

That all Americans should have the opportunity to achieve the American Dream. We recognize, however, that systematic discrimination continues to plague our country.

We Support:

1. Local, state, and federal laws which promote justice for oppressed or disadvantaged people by prohibiting discrimination, based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background, national origin, or disability.
2. Affirmative action programs which enable institutions to address systemic discrimination and inequity.
3. The safety and protection of sex workers.

We Oppose:

1. Tort reform legislation that unduly burdens a citizen's right to redress in the judicial system.
2. The use and promotion of disparaging mascots, symbols, logos, or other imagery.

### **CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

We Believe:

All Americans deserve equal rights and equal treatment under the law. We are a pluralistic society where all people should be treated with respect and dignity.

We applaud the work of the Obama Administration and the United States Supreme Court in working to recognize that basic human rights should be attributed to all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression. We also understand that those protections do not go nearly far enough in protecting LGBTQ individuals.

We will fight for the continued development of legislation protecting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender individuals in the areas of employment, housing, healthcare, education, marriage and adoption, and will actively lobby our legislators to do the same.

We recognize the contributions of the Transgender Community to the gay rights movement and stand firmly behind transgender individuals. We will challenge people to respect all individuals, regardless of gender identity and expression. We will stand up for the protection of Transgender youth, both at home and in the classroom.

We are concerned about the rise of antisemitism and Islamophobia. We stand in solidarity with anyone facing oppression, and will fight to defend them. We oppose all forms of prejudice and bigotry.

We Support:

1. Upholding the religious freedoms set forth in the First Amendment.
2. Passage of legislation that acknowledges the fundamental injustice of slavery and establishes a commission to study slavery's effect on U.S. society and the residual effects of slavery.
3. Extension of official U.S. recognition of Native Hawaiian political rights similar to the status held by Native American and Alaska Native groups.
4. Equal and compassionate treatment for those living with HIV/AIDS.
5. Protection of LGBTQ Americans from discrimination, including the rejection of so-called "religious freedom" legislation; protection of marriage equality, as decided by the US Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.
6. Local, state and federal employment non-discrimination laws that outlaw bias in hiring and housing on the basis of race, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, familial status, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background, national origin, or disability.
7. Policies that promote gender equality in the fields of science, mathematics, technology, government, trade professions, and other fields in which women are under-represented.
8. Increased funding for assistive technology and interpreters.
9. Adopting legislation to create programs promoting the smooth transitioning of young persons with disabilities to higher education and career opportunities according to their interests and goals.
10. Legislation to remedy the institutional bias in the Medicaid program affecting young people with disabilities.
11. Increased support for programs and curricula that raise awareness about civil rights.
12. The enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
13. The sovereign rights of Native American Nations including the rights of self-determination, freedom of worship, to engage in commerce, and to provide for their citizens, without undue interference or intervention from the United States Government, and the recognition and respect of all applicable treaties made between the United States government and the various tribal nations.
14. The repatriation of cultural and sacred items back to Native American Tribes and lineal descendants.
15. The removal from publicly owned spaces of confederate monuments and memorials, which are

antiquated and painful reminders of a dark chapter of America's history.

16. The implementation of policies that allow trans individuals access to public accommodations that conform to their gender expression, as trans inclusivity is at the forefront of modern civil rights and society is judged by its treatment of its most vulnerable citizens. Also, whereas trans military personnel have been on the front lines of America's fight against terrorism, we support trans individuals' right to serve honorably in our nation's armed forces.

17. A Carcieri fix to allow more fee land be placed into trust

18. An Oliphant fix allowing tribes full criminal jurisdiction within Indian country

19. All rights reserved in treaties signed by the Tribes and the United States

20. Resources to address the epidemic with murdered and missing indigenous women.

21. Electing more Indigenous candidates to congress.

We Oppose:

1. All efforts to align public policy around the tenets of any specific religion or to discriminate against elements of our citizenry based on religious doctrine.
2. All efforts to undermine the separation of church and state as it is essential to defending religious freedom for all Americans.
3. The use and promotion of disparaging mascots, symbols, logos, or other imagery.

## **FAMILY**

We Believe:

Our society and government should treat all families equally, whether traditional or non- traditional, and support them to build stronger communities.

We Support:

1. Quality childcare and preschool for every American child.
2. Adoption and foster parenting laws that do not discriminate based on the attributes of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.
3. Daycare programs for federal employees, and encourage all employers to create such programs for their employees.
4. Strict sentencing for convicted domestic violence offenders.
5. Parental involvement in children's education and development of life and social skills.

6. Creating a culture that values balancing family time with work.
7. The value of faith as a driving principle behind our nation's highest ideals such as kindness, family values, grace, self-sacrifice, and community service.
8. Family values that include moral principles that are guided by choices of fairness and tolerance.
9. Reform of the Family and Medical Leave Act to include expanded length, paid maternal and paternal leave, stronger job security, and coverage for same-sex and adoptive families.

We Oppose:

1. Any favor given in child custody cases when they are based upon a parent's/guardian's gender or sexual orientation.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

We Believe:

Securing a health care system that values people before profits is vital to the general welfare of our nation. We believe in universal access to affordable, quality health care, reflecting patient preferences and sensitivities, and the fierce protection of the gains made in this area under President Obama.

YDA supports Planned Parenthood and their efforts to provide high-quality, affordable reproductive healthcare through its health centers. With millions of individuals across the country receiving services it is important to continue and expand federal and state funding for their efforts. No person facing one of the hardest decisions of their life should be without safe access to legal abortion services. All people deserve the right to access birth control, reproductive health care, other preventive care, sex education, methods to prevent sexual assault, and reliable and accurate information.

We Support:

1. An increased focus on preventative and clinical care.
2. An individual mandate for health insurance, with subsidies for those who have difficulty affording insurance.
3. A government health plan to compete with private insurers and provide Americans with a low-cost option that increases competition in the markets producing better products and lower costs and that covers areas where private insurers have withdrawn from markets.
4. Medicare
5. Medicaid
6. The State Children's Health Insurance Program.

7. Continued funding for comprehensive, science-based HIV/AIDS treatment, education, prevention, and research.
8. Expansion of state and federally funded embryonic stem cell research.
9. Parity in coverage by health insurers, and efforts to de-stigmatize mental illness.
10. Proper funding by the local, state and federal government of the medical establishment, emergency personnel- first responders, EMT's, firefighters, and police - in order to be able to respond to crisis situations.
11. The recognition of drug addiction as a public health crisis issue, and rehabilitation for those struggling with drug addiction drug offenders, and increased federal funding for addiction treatment.
12. Funding for home health, hospice care, and Medicaid buy-in options.
13. Policies that foster the creation and protection of programs to assist small businesses in the provision of health insurance.
14. Increased Funding for Autism research.
15. Regulation of pharmaceutical benefit managers.
16. Comprehensive, science-based public education focused on family planning - a vital component of universal health care - which includes factual information on biology, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, reproductive choices, and abstinence education for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or socio-economic status.
17. The use of secure digital medical records, established with the assistance of government funding to increase the efficiency, reduce costs, and lead to better collaboration between health professionals and a higher quality of care.
18. Access to a full range of options, including education, contraception, and abortion when necessary, regardless of socioeconomic status.
29. Access for all people to emergency contraception without a prescription. We further believe that all contraceptive methods should be included in medical coverage with no copay required. We believe that reforms are necessary to protect the individual while ensuring that skilled medical professionals may continue to practice and maintain affordable malpractice insurance.
20. The Constitutional right of a woman to safe, legal and accessible abortion. We believe that decisions regarding reproduction, contraception, and abortion are private decisions between a woman and her doctor.
21. The creation of a single-payer healthcare system that provides for adequately- funded, universal, affordable, competitive, quality healthcare for all Americans. We support the Medicare for All Act

of 2019. (H.R.1384)

22. Reform of Native American health services which improves quality and access to health for all Native Americans.

23. We support the participation of people with disabilities in healthcare reform, especially in the need for accessible diagnostic equipment. Additionally, we support cultural competency in medical and nursing schools.

24. The aid and benefits given to veterans and current members of the military who suffer from PTSD.

25. Clean needle exchange programs.

26. Repeal of the blood donation ban on LGBT individuals.

27. The full expansion of Medicaid as outlined in the Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act.

28. Allowing Medicare to use its purchasing power to negotiate drug prices for recipients, like Medicaid can,

29. The importation of drugs from Canada to lower prescription drug costs for the American people.

30. A commitment to work with state legislatures and members of the United States Congress, to prohibit licensed mental health practitioners from subjecting minors to harmful "conversion therapy" practices.

31. Real commitments to combating substance addiction such as establishing more treatment centers, encouraging treatment first, opening a dialogue about seeking help, de-stigmatizing the idea of professional help, and increasing funding for grants that allow law enforcement to supply naloxone.

32. Efforts to curb the over-prescription of opioid pain medications, and of other prescription drugs with a high tendency to lead to dependency, with the exception of those suffering chronic illness. We also support further enforcement action against pharmaceutical companies shown to use deceptive marketing practices or otherwise exert undue influence on physicians and consumers and against physicians who improperly prescribe opiates to patients.

33. A constitutional amendment ensuring abortion rights.

34. A single-payer health care plan.

35. A removal of tax incentives and subsidies for employers with large numbers of employees on Medicaid and public assistance.

We Oppose:

1. Discrimination against any persons with HIV/AIDS for health care coverage, or medical care, especially in the use of waiting lists for the Ryan White safety-net program.
2. The application of the "global gag rule" to funds allocated for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs in at-risk countries.
3. Any attempts to weaken provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act regarding the rescission of insurance, discrimination due to preexisting conditions, or lowering the age under which a dependent may remain under a parent's insurance plan.
4. The practice of pharmacists of denying provision of a prescription written by a doctor.
5. Abstinence-only sex education, which excludes information on the effectiveness of contraception and condoms.
6. Laws that require unnecessary medical procedures, including ultrasounds, exams, and/or counseling, as a precursor to obtaining legal medical procedures.
7. The passage of laws that would restrict the ability of women to access healthcare services, either through structural, regulatory, or financial means.
8. Any legislation that allows healthcare professionals to withhold services against anyone based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, familial status, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background, national origin or disability.
9. The Global Gag Rule that prevents foreign organizations receiving U.S. global health assistance from providing information, referrals, or services for legal abortion or advocating for access to abortion services in their country, and therefore undermines important efforts to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS
10. The Hyde Amendment that bars the use of federal funds for abortions and overwhelmingly harms low-income Americans and people of color
11. Changes to Title X intended to block patients from care at Planned Parenthood health centers and to make it illegal for health care providers in the program to refer patients for an abortion.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

We Believe:

Scientific progress has fundamentally changed and will continue to improve the quality of human life. We advocate the continued responsible use and advancement of technology as a force for good in the world. We reject those who refuse to consider scientific consensus in the creation of public policy.

We Support:

1. A manned space program which will return Americans to beyond the Earth's orbit, including the lunar surface, and which will send humans to Mars.

2. Continued governmental support of space exploration, the use of space travel experience to improve many aspects of society, and efforts to protect and respect the environment of space.

3. Increased federal funding in areas of cutting edge research including nanotechnology, alternative energy, genetics and biotechnology, and aerospace.

4. The extension of the right of privacy and free speech to encompass all activities in the digital world.

5. The preservation of the right to fair use of intellectual property, while maintaining appropriate protection for copyright holders and content owners.

6. The extension of free speech protections to the open release of modern encryption and security advances, to enable continued research in technology security.

7. Limitations on patent rights where restrictions on new technology put lives in danger, with special emphasis on pharmaceutical products.

8. The principles of net neutrality that all Internet traffic be handled and prioritized on an equal basis.

9. The expansion of broadband technology into every American home.

10. The development of increased efficiency and reduction of harmful emissions from fossil fuel-burning industries.

11. The end of the use of lead in aircraft fuels.

12. Collaborative efforts of the Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration to develop and deploy a full scale, cooperative transportation plan for the 21st century, which incorporates one site airport-rail stations and regulates commercial airlines to best promote efficient and effective service to all metropolitan areas.

13. The review and modernization of the patent process.

14. The reestablishment of human spaceflight launch capabilities within the continental United States.

15. A recommitment of spaceflight infrastructure, funding, and oversight to publicly owned and managed agencies instead of profit-seeking private corporations.

We Oppose:

1. Actions that would contribute to an escalating international space arms race.
2. Companies and Corporations using Intellectual Properties researched by the United States to participate in anti-competitive practices in their Industries.

## **Environmental Justice**

We Believe:

That climate change is a national emergency and poses an existential threat to humanity. That climate change demands a massive-scale mobilization--a green new deal--to halt, reverse, and address its consequences and causes. That in order to achieve net-zero global emissions the United States must de-carbonize by 2030 due to the historically disproportionate amount of greenhouse gas emissions emitted by our nation. That human activity is the primary cause of climate change over the last century. That a warming climate is causing sea levels to rise and an increase in wildfires, storms, droughts, and numerous extreme weather events that pose a threat to every aspect of our economy, society, communities, and infrastructure. That global warming at or above 2 degrees Celsius beyond pre-industrialized levels will cause mass migration, a massive loss in annual United States economic output, and a risk of extensive damage to public infrastructure and coastal real estate in the United States. That climate change is a direct threat to national security. That climate change and related, contributing activities have and will continue to disproportionately affect frontline communities, including but not limited to young people, indigenous peoples, people of color, LGBTQ+ peoples, and the poor. That through tackling climate change we must ensure that clean air, clean water, and healthy food are basic human rights and that everyone who wants one has access to a good, livable-wage job. We further believe that increased environmental protections can be achieved in ways that create jobs and benefit all levels of the economy.

We Support:

1. United States de-carbonization by 2030.
2. 100 percent of United States energy sourced from renewable and or zero-emissions power through a just transition for all communities and workers.
3. The creation of millions of good, livable wage green jobs.
4. Upgraded, energy-efficient buildings.
5. Universal access to clean water.
6. The decarbonization, repair, and overhaul the nation's infrastructure through investment in high-speed public rail and clean, affordable, and accessible public transit.
7. job training and economic development for a just transition for workers in frontline communities who will be most affected by climate change and the transition to a clean energy economy.

8. Building energy-efficient power grids throughout the United States.
9. Decarbonizing manufacturing and implementing regenerative agricultural practices.
10. Funding massive investment in the drawdown and capture of greenhouse gases.
11. Restoring and protecting threatened, endangered, and fragile ecosystems.
12. Collaborative work with farmers and ranchers to remove greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture sector including the support of family farming and investment in land-use practices that increase soil health.
13. Policies that encourage the adoption of these goals to make the United States a leader in green technology, industry, and products to create exports that would assist transitions for other countries and benefit our economy.
14. A just transition to a new, sustainable energy sector for regions of the country with economies dependent on fossil fuel extraction and production, including providing incentives for new sustainable energy producers to locate jobs in formerly fossil fuel-dependent communities, investment, and business development initiatives for communities impacted by a transition to sustainable energy, and the funding of education and career retraining initiatives for fossil fuel workforces.
15. The commitment to repair any and all antiquated tracts of infrastructure that are produced with lead-based materials, to ensure that these materials do not harm the health and well-being of the public.
16. Policies that promote energy independence and aggressively protect our natural resources, including our air, water, soil, forests, biodiversity, wetlands and open spaces.
17. Policies designed to promote environmentally responsible business practices, such as tax incentives for green businesses, as well as aggressive enforcement of existing environmental statutes.
- 18.. Reform of environmental statutes to make penalties for violation more costly than the expense of compliance.
19. Efforts to promote environmental justice, including increased federal funding of Superfund programs and revitalization of brownfields.
20. Incentives to encourage environmentally- sustainable farming practices including water conservation, methane capture, and land use that balances food and energy needs.
21. Policies that encourage domestic carbon sequestration through the establishment of strong carbon caps, detailed standards for verification of sequestration, and economic policies that reduce atmospheric carbon at a net economic benefit to the country. Sequestration efforts should be monitored and should provide for long-term storage.
22. The development of policies and procedures to provide the highest standards of safety and security for our nation's nuclear and chemical facilities.

23. The personal responsibility of executives in all industries to certify that their companies are in compliance with all environmental laws, and personal legal and financial consequences for executives who fail to uphold this responsibility.
24. The further inclusion of scientists and highly- trained or educated individuals in the decision-making process of all government agencies and committees charged with making environmental policy decisions; all such decisions should be based on scientifically sound, peer-reviewed research.
25. Policies that reward corporations that pursue environmentally- sound business models and hold accountable corporations whose activities have an adverse impact on the environment; because protecting the environment is an investment in our collective future, environmental concerns must become as integral to the considerations of corporate America as fiscal matters currently are.
26. The U.S. government in taking the lead in an international effort to clean up the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.
27. Funding and support of low-cost, high-impact conservation techniques, such as recycling, white roofs, and the adoption of energy-efficient devices.
28. We support full funding for the EPA and other environmental watchdog organizations.
29. Local agriculture and U.S. grown and manufactured goods because of their ability to lower greenhouse gas and other hazardous emissions.
30. Policies to address, mitigate, and reverse sea-level rise in low-lying coastal areas

We Oppose:

1. Policies that allow for the transportation of nuclear waste and highly toxic chemicals through large population centers.
2. Federal policies that preempt environmental protection measures taken at the state and local level that exceed standards set by those policies.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

We Believe:

Our national parks, seacoasts, coastlines, and waterways are among our greatest assets. The government has a responsibility to maintain and to protect these national treasures and to encourage long-term sustainability.

We Support:

1. Reinstatement of the "roadless rule" in national forests and other public lands.

2. Aggressive efforts to protect water resources and ecosystems of the nation, as well as efforts to conserve water resources and restore waterways damaged by overuse, pollution, or development.
3. The management of public lands according to the principles of and responsible stewardship, including preservation of open spaces, in recognition of the fact that our public lands are vital to the social and economic lives of all Americans.
4. The preservation and restoration of coastal marshland to mitigate the destructive potential of hurricanes, such as Hurricane Katrina.
5. The federal government taking a leading role in clean-up and restorative efforts to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.
6. Preservation of coastal areas and waterways from oil and resource extraction.

**We Oppose:**

1. Any initiative that irreparably damages our nation's natural habitat, including lifting moratoria on offshore drilling.
2. Any policies that systematically subject public lands to use by destructive industries and interests to the exclusion of other Americans.
3. Any attempt to weaken the Endangered Species Act through legislation or lax enforcement of existing regulations. Americans have expressed a desire to preserve biodiversity by protecting the health and welfare of endangered species; we, therefore, call for ample funding and aggressive enforcement of all related statutes.
4. We oppose all oil exploration and mineral extraction in areas with fragile ecosystems, particularly the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.
5. Any action by government or private enterprise to repeal, relax or bypass safety standards and regulations in the underground and surface mining industry.

**ENERGY**

**We Believe:**

That our future lies with clean, energy which will reduce pollution, promote national security, create jobs and investment, and provide Americans with huge cost savings. Thus, we urge a strong national commitment to a clean energy future.

**We Support:**

1. The consensus of the scientific community that climate change is real, caused by human activities, and is affecting the world today.
2. Ratification of the Kyoto protocol, participation in the Paris Climate Accord, and active participation by the United States in future climate-related protocols, which are important steps towards global reduction of greenhouse gas pollution, in recognition of the fact that environmental decisions have transnational effects.
3. Aggressive efforts to reduce energy use through increased efficiency throughout all sectors of the economy.
4. Efforts to reduce and eliminate greenhouse gases, including aggressive promotion of and investment in public transportation and renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, biomass, natural gas, fuel cells, and tidal energy. These new energy sources benefit not only the environment, but also American farmers, workers, employers, educators, families, and industries for which such new technologies represent untapped markets.
5. Efforts to reduce mercury pollution.
6. The elimination of the "grandfather" provisions of the Clean Air Act that exempt certain legacy coal-fired power plants from complying with current emissions standards.
7. The use of emissions-free nuclear power based on current technology to supplement clean, renewable energy sources in order to reduce carbon emissions. We urge vigilance to ensure the safety of existing nuclear plants, storage and disposal sites, and other facilities.
8. long-term efforts to conserve energy and reduce pollution by complementing our clogged interstate highway system with efficient regional and national high-speed rail and mass transit systems.
9. Efforts to conserve energy spent extracting, transporting, and delivering water.
10. Job-training programs that educate or retrain American workers to create the green-collar workforce necessary for a clean energy future.
11. Legislation that encourages the purchase of energy and fuel-efficient vehicles and equipment.
12. Increasing CAFÉ standards to 45 mpg by 2020.
13. Adopting a federal zero-emissions mandate requiring that 20% of all passenger vehicles sold by 2020 will be in compliance.
14. The development and deployment of smart grid technology.
15. The development of marketable vehicles and the technology that will allow advances in that area.
16. Policies that say natural gas drilling should not take place within 2,500 feet of a primary public

source of water.

17. An investigation into the safety and costs of hydraulic fracturing and a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing as it harms drinking water reservoirs and fragile ecosystems. Ban fracking.

18. The expansion of public infrastructure projects relating to hydroelectric and tidal power

19. Efforts by state and local governments to meet or exceed internationally-recognized greenhouse gas emission goals within their own jurisdictions.

20. Transitioning as rapidly as possible to renewable sources of energy and away from the extraction and use of carbon polluting sources of energy.

We Oppose:

1. The building of such projects as the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL Pipeline in the United States of America.

2. Any efforts to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

3. Methods of extraction including but not exclusive to fracking, offshore drilling, and any other initiatives that irreparably damage our nation's natural habitat, and recommend halting these procedures in areas that have already experienced especially damaging effects.

## **RURAL ISSUES**

We Believe:

That as the party of opportunity for all Americans, we must work to build strong rural communities that are vibrant places to live, work and play. That rural communities, which cover the overwhelming majority of our country's landmass and serve as America's breadbasket and powerhouse, hold an irreplaceable position in our cultural consciousness and shared history. As the party of working people, we support a policy agenda that preserves and maintains a vibrant rural way of life.

We Support:

1. Efforts to encourage the development of small businesses that are positioned to serve the needs of rural communities.

2. Measures to protect the unique character of rural communities, including smart growth policies that preserve farmland and open space while expanding economic opportunity for community residents.

3. Measures to encourage community involvement in the development process to ensure it benefits the community in the best way possible.

4. The development of confidential medical services, including mental health, and urgent care in

rural areas so that needed medical care is available as quickly as possible and to provide reproductive medical care as well as drug and alcohol treatment in establishing clinics.

5. The right of every law-abiding citizen to own guns for hunting and sport.
6. Expanding broadband Internet access that does not interfere with licensed users of the radio spectrum, to bridge the digital divide, attracting young professionals to raise families, and business investment to create more economic opportunity.
7. Efforts to encourage the development of arts and culture programs in rural communities.
8. Expanding public transportation opportunities to rural communities.
9. Increase funding for advance warning systems for natural disasters.
10. Increase access to VA facilities inclusive of mental health in rural areas.
11. Educational tools for all students in rural communities.
12. Federal funding to allow rural areas to sustain current emergency facilities, and to allow communities to expand access to care for residents for the purpose of safety and overall health
13. Healthcare legislation which considers, protects, and prioritizes the financial viability of rural hospitals and addresses the deleterious impact of Medicare's presently inadequate reimbursement rate. Such measures are critical to the equal rights of rural communities to access quality and affordable healthcare.

## **URBAN ISSUES**

We Believe:

Urban areas and communities are economic, cultural, and social epicenters, which are vital to our country's well being. Urban centers have the highest population density and they contain the highest percentage of poverty. These areas are rich in history and diversity, and we support their continued preservation.

We Support:

1. Downtown and neighborhood revitalization efforts through public and private partnerships, bringing community activists, business leaders, and government officials together to rebuild and reinvest in urban communities.
2. Funding and implementation of public transportation systems to reduce congestion and improve air quality.
3. Smart growth policies to promote urban renewal while keeping racial and ethnic concerns in mind and attempting to preserve the character of a community.

4. The continued development and improved quality of government-sponsored low-income housing.
5. The government sponsorship of urban mental health and substance abuse clinics to support urban residents in under-served communities.
6. More vigorous enforcement of the Fair Housing Act to prevent discriminatory practices.
7. The use of inclusionary zoning to ensure that urban neighborhoods reflect the full socioeconomic diversity of their cities.
8. Government policy that promotes the use of inclusive design principles in housing projects receiving federal funds, since the Americans with Disabilities Act has not sufficiently addressed the lack of accessible housing for persons with disabilities.
9. Legislation that addresses the disparate economic challenges of urban dwellers such as insurance redlining, predatory lending, and abusive subprime lending.
10. Funding programs and education, which reduce public school drop-out and illiteracy rates in urban centers.
11. Ensuring the availability of quality health care and healthcare facilities in urban centers.
12. Active employment programs from local, state, and federal governments that help low and moderate-income, unemployed and underemployed Americans in our urban areas to find long-term and sustainable work at a living wage.
13. Efforts to decriminalize and eliminate homelessness.
14. Policies that eliminate law enforcement brutality and racial profiling.
15. Cities in maintaining sidewalks that are safe and accessible for everyone.
16. Efforts to promote healthy eating in urban areas including adequate food resources.
17. Affordable housing policies that make this vital resource available to all age groups and family sizes.

**18. Abolishing single-family zoning and parking minimums with cities facing a current or impending affordable housing crisis**

We Oppose:

1. The use of eminent domain to take private property unless such taking is for traditionally public use, such as the building of public facilities or roads.
2. Cities that zone out supervised living homes for the disabled by trying to create a quasi-

restrictive covenant.

## **EDUCATION**

We Believe:

High- quality education is fundamental to a vigilant democracy and a strong economy. Further, public schools bring together families of diverse experience, ability, and backgrounds for the common purpose of learning. Public education should be the ultimate equalizer. As Democrats, it is our top priority to mobilize all communities to eliminate the socio-economic achievement gap apparent in America today.

We Support:

1. The encouragement of new and innovative approaches to address educational challenges and needs.
2. Mechanisms that help students, parents, educators, and the community to have a significant voice in the education process.
3. Financial policy that ensures consistent education funding regardless of economic cycles.
4. Adequately funding public education on the state and federal level.
5. Fully funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act on the national level.
6. Increased funding for need-based grants, and changes to federal financial aid programs to ensure that taxpayers' investments are used efficiently to maximize benefits for all students. Financial obstacles should not interfere with any American's right to higher education.
7. Comprehensive, fact-based, age-appropriate sex education that includes abstinence, contraceptives, HIV/AIDS and other STI prevention programs.
8. Enabling every child to attend pre-K, full-day Kindergarten, and Head Start programs.
9. Bilingual and multicultural education programs for everyone starting at an early age.
10. A fair wage and benefits for teachers and annual cost of living wage increase for all levels of education.
11. Smaller class sizes, which in turn improve the quality of education.
12. Increasing the high school dropout age to 18.
13. A comprehensive financial literacy education, including responsible use of credit, basic

knowledge of investments, and the importance of savings.

14. A renewed effort to improve schools and quality of education

15. Efforts to keep rural schools open and locally autonomous.

16. Drastic reforms to No Child Left Behind that encourage high standards for students and teachers without relying on destructive and punitive measures that further undermine our public schools and their mission.

17. The provision and adequate funding for the fine and performing arts, physical education, health, and sports sciences, and vocational and career and technical education programs in the curriculum of public schools.

18. In-state tuition to undocumented students who graduated from a state's high school and filed an admission application to that state's post-secondary institution.

19. Expanding English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in areas with immigrant populations and non-English speaking persons.

20. Policies that expand the community college system.

21. Mainstreaming of students with disabilities whenever possible.

22. School health clinics that serve the basic needs of students including the distribution of and advice on methods of contraception. We further support voluntary counseling on different issues concerning sexuality.

24. Expanding opportunities by funding vocational education and alternatives to college programs.

25. The elimination of the burden caused by college tuition and fees, and the overhaul of our student loan system that would result in the cutting of interest rates and creation of other protections for students at public colleges and universities. The opportunity to attain higher education should be a right for all, not a privilege for few.

26. Increasing the maximum dollar amount provided through Pell Grants and indexing automatic increases to inflation so it matches the needs of students today, as intended.

27. Complete access to public education regardless of the status of residency.

28. Ensuring curricula for students includes nonpartisan basic civics, including but not limited to: the role of government, how a bill becomes law, and the importance of voting in all elections, in order to break down barriers between government and our generation.

29. Fully funded Title I program that provides financial assistance to public school districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families.

30. A fair wage and benefits for teachers, support staff, counselors, nurses, psychologists, and all

other education workers, and an annual cost of living increases for all levels of education.

31. Forgiveness of all student loans for all public universities and community colleges.

32. Transparency and accountability measures for schools that are publicly funded, but operated independently of a public school system.”

33. Truancy reform focused on non-punitive methods to keep students in school.

We Oppose:

1. Any funding or voucher program that would withdraw funding from public schools and redirect it to private and/or parochial institutions.
2. The imposition of unfunded mandates on our public schools by state and federal government.
3. The use of standardized testing as the primary basis for funding decisions and as a limiting qualification for promotion within and graduation from the public school system.
4. Primary and secondary school policies that weaken curriculum promoting cultural diversity and awareness.
5. Exempting public schools, including charter schools, from their obligation to provide meals and transportation to students from low-income families.
6. The permitting of guns on the campuses of all public and private educational institutions, with the exception of law enforcement.
7. Profiting from loans offered to students through programs underwritten by the federal government as morally wrong and reprehensible.
8. Firearms in schools.
9. Any funding or voucher program that would withdraw funding from public schools and redirect it to private or privately-managed, institutions.”

## **AGRICULTURE**

We Believe:

Agriculture is a vital part of the lives of all Americans and directly impacts the health and security of the nation. It is a fundamental piece of the United States economy and an important cultural asset.

We Support:

1. A Farm Bill that provides a well-funded safety net for rural families, preserves family farms and provides for those who need it most.

2. A realignment of farm subsidies to support small, medium, and organic farms.
3. Protecting family farms and their ability to make a living off the land and successfully compete on a fair playing field with large agribusiness corporations.
4. Providing resources to farmers in the struggle against the effects of climate change.

We Oppose:

1. The prosecution and criminalization of farmers whose crops have been contaminated by GMO products as patent infringers.