

Democratic Party on the Issues

<http://www.democrats.org/a/party/platform.html>

Abortion

- ❖ The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports *Roe v. Wade* and a woman's right to choose a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay, and we oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right.
- ❖ The Democratic Party also strongly supports access to comprehensive affordable family planning services and age-appropriate sex education which empower people to make informed choices and live healthy lives. We also recognize that such health care and education help reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and thereby also reduce the need for abortions.
- ❖ The Democratic Party also strongly supports a woman's decision to have a child by ensuring access to and availability of programs for pre- and post-natal health care, parenting skills, income support, and caring adoption programs.

Marriage

- ❖ We support the full inclusion of all families, including same-sex couples, in the life of our nation, and support equal responsibility, benefits, and protections. We will enact a comprehensive bipartisan employment non-discrimination act. We oppose the Defense of Marriage Act and all attempts to use this issue to divide us.

Environment

- ❖ We will invest in efficient and clean technologies at home while using our assistance policies and export promotions to help developing countries preserve biodiversity, curb deforestation, and leapfrog the carbon energy-intensive stage of development.

Energy

- ❖ We will make it a top priority to reduce oil consumption by at least 35 percent, or ten million barrels per day, by 2030. This will more than offset the amount of oil we are expected to import from OPEC nations in 2030.
- ❖ We can't drill our way to energy independence and so we must summon all of our ingenuity and legendary hard work and we must invest in research and development, and deployment of renewable energy technologies—such as solar, wind, geothermal, as well as technologies to store energy through advanced batteries and clean up our coal plants.
- ❖ We will call on businesses, government, and the American people to make America 50 percent more energy efficient by 2030, because we know that the most energy efficient economy will also gain the competitive edge for new manufacturing and jobs that stay here at home.
- ❖ We'll dramatically increase the fuel efficiency of automobiles, and we'll help auto manufacturers and parts suppliers convert to build the cars and trucks of the future and their key components in the United States.

Health Care

- ❖ Families and individuals should have the option of keeping the coverage they have or choosing from a wide array of health insurance plans, including many private health insurance options and a public plan. Coverage should be made affordable for all Americans with subsidies provided through tax credits and other means.
- ❖ All Americans should have coverage they can afford; employers should have incentives to provide coverage to their workers; insurers and providers should ensure high quality affordable care; and the government should ensure that health insurance is affordable and provides meaningful coverage.
- ❖ No one should have to worry about losing health coverage if they change or lose their job.
- ❖ Health insurance plans should accept all applicants and be prohibited from charging different prices based on pre-existing conditions. They should compete on the cost of providing health care and the quality of that care, not on their ability to avoid or over-charge people who are or may get sick.
- ❖ All Americans should be empowered to promote wellness and have access to preventive services to impede the development of costly chronic conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension.

Civil Liberties

- ❖ As we combat terrorism, we must not sacrifice the American values we are fighting to protect.
- ❖ In recent years, we've seen an Administration put forward a false choice between the liberties we cherish and the security we demand.
- ❖ We support constitutional protections and judicial oversight on any surveillance program involving Americans. We will review the current Administration's warrantless wiretapping program. We reject illegal wiretapping of American citizens, wherever they live.
- ❖ We reject the use of national security letters to spy on citizens who are not suspected of a crime. We reject the tracking of citizens who do nothing more than protest a misguided war.
- ❖ We reject torture.

Crime

- ❖ As Democrats, we are committed to being smart on crime. That means being tough on violent crime, funding strategic, and effective community policing, and holding offenders accountable, and it means getting tough on the root causes of crime by investing in successful crime prevention, including proven initiatives that get youth and nonviolent offenders back on track.
- ❖ We will support communities as they work to save their residents from the violence that plagues our streets. We will reverse the policy of cutting resources for the brave men and women who protect our communities every day
- ❖ We support and will restore funding to our courageous police officers and will ensure that they are equipped with the best technology, equipment, and innovative strategies to prevent and fight crimes.
- ❖ We will end the dangerous cycle of violence, especially youth violence, with proven community based law enforcement programs such as the Community Oriented Policing Services.
- ❖ We believe that the death penalty must not be arbitrary. DNA testing should be used in all appropriate circumstances; defendants should have effective assistance of counsel. In all death row cases and thorough post-conviction reviews should be available.
- ❖ We must help state, local, and tribal law enforcement work together to combat and prevent drug crime and drug and alcohol abuse, which are blight on our communities. Ending violence against women must be a top priority. We will increase funding to domestic violence and sexual assault prevention programs. We will strengthen sexual assault and domestic violence laws, support the Violence Against Women Act, and provide job security to survivors.

Education

- ❖ Graduation from a quality public school and the opportunity to succeed in college must be the birthright of every child—not the privilege of the few.
- ❖ We will make quality, affordable early childhood care and education available to every American child from the day he or she is born.
- ❖ We will make an unprecedented national investment to provide teachers with better pay and better support to improve their skills, and their students' learning.
- ❖ We support full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- ❖ We also support transitional bilingual education and will help Limited English Proficient students get ahead by supporting and funding English Language Learner classes.
- ❖ At community colleges and training programs across the country, we will invest in short-term accelerated training and technical certifications for the unemployed and under-employed to speed their transition to careers in high-demand occupations and emerging industries.
- ❖ We will make college affordable for all Americans by creating a new American Opportunity Tax Credit to ensure that the first \$4,000 of a college education is completely free for most Americans. In exchange for the credit, students will be expected to perform community service.

Taxes

- ❖ Encouraging new industry and creating jobs means giving more support to American entrepreneurs. We will exempt all start-up companies from capital gains taxes and provide them a tax credit for health insurance. We will provide a new tax credit for small businesses that offer quality health insurance to their employees.
- ❖ We must reform our tax code. It's thousands of pages long, a monstrosity that high-priced lobbyists have rigged with page after page of special interest loopholes and tax shelters.
- ❖ We'll eliminate federal income taxes for millions of retirees, because all seniors deserve to live out their lives with dignity and respect. We will not increase taxes on any family earning under \$250,000 and we will offer additional tax cuts for middle class families.
- ❖ For families making more than \$250,000, we'll ask them to give back a portion of the Bush tax cuts to invest in health care and other key priorities.

Immigration

- ❖ We cannot continue to allow people to enter the United States undetected, undocumented, and unchecked. The American people are a welcoming and generous people, but those who enter our country's borders illegally, and those who employ them, disrespect the rule of the law.
- ❖ We need to secure our borders, and support additional personnel, infrastructure, and technology on the border and at our ports of entry.
- ❖ We need to crack down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants. It's a problem when we only enforce our laws against the immigrants themselves, with raids that are ineffective, tear apart families, and leave people detained without adequate access to counsel.
- ❖ We must also improve the legal immigration system, and make our nation's naturalization process fair and accessible to the thousands of legal permanent residents who are eager to become full Americans.
- ❖ We support a system that requires undocumented immigrants who are in good standing to pay a fine, pay taxes, learn English, and go to the back of the line for the opportunity to become citizens.