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# CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

SENATOR ART TORRES (RET.), CHAIRMAN

# 2006 PLATFORM

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**Adopted At The Democratic Party State Convention  
Sacramento Convention Center  
April 30, 2006**

# 2005 - 2006 PLATFORM COMMITTEE

Thank you to the CDP Platform Committee Members for all their hard work and efforts in putting together the 2005 - 2006 California Democratic Party Platform.

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- SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 -

MAY THE MEMORIES OF THAT DAY KEEP US FIGHTING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

## 1 ■ OUR BLUEPRINT FOR THE GOLDEN STATE

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2  
3 California Democrats believe it is time to return to our country's founding principles. At our core, Democrats  
4 believe in people: poor and wealthy, old and young, woman and man, immigrant and American-born. We believe  
5 that this is America's strength: different people uniting, working together for the good of each and for the good of  
6 all. We believe that government's role is to protect the people and ensure justice, freedom and equal opportunity.  
7 We believe that by standing firm on these values, California and America can reclaim our vision as a land of  
8 optimism and unity.  
9

10 Our nation was built on the belief that hard-working Americans will be rewarded with economic prosperity. The  
11 people of California deserve a government that supports their hard work and shares their hopes for the future.  
12 California Democrats are committed to programs that will reinvigorate the economy and reinvest in our  
13 communities to provide for the common good.  
14

15 Our Platform represents the Democratic vision for our State, embracing and implementing the dreams of  
16 Californians. We stand behind these principles, and we expect our elected representatives to stand by them as well.  
17 California Democrats firmly defend our American beliefs, values, and traditions and preserve our right to life,  
18 liberty and the pursuit of happiness.  
19

### 20 **Among our long-cherished and most important commitments are:**

- 21
- 22 • Government that invests in peace, real security and the rule of law, nationally and internationally, and that
- 23 respects the human rights of all peoples;
- 24 • The fundamental right of quality public education;
- 25 • Universal comprehensive health care for all Californians;
- 26 • Smart, sustainable, safe, environmentally sound and caring communities;
- 27 • Senior services and protections;
- 28 • Social Security and Medicare for future generations;
- 29 • Public support for the arts;
- 30 • Protection -- now more than ever -- of a woman's right to choose how to use her mind, her body and her
- 31 time;
- 32 • Access and equality in employment, educational and economic opportunities;
- 33 • Fiscal common sense and responsibility on the part of our elected leaders.  
34

## 35 ■ BUSINESS & THE ECONOMY

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36  
37 California Democrats are dedicated to a robust economy and business climate that creates jobs and economic  
38 opportunity, grows small and large businesses, promotes innovation and entrepreneurship and encourages  
39 productivity. We want to ensure that California's economy continues to lead the nation and the world in  
40 agriculture, information technology, biotechnology, entertainment and aerospace.  
41

### 42 **To create jobs and prosperity, California Democrats will fight to:**

- 43
- 44 • Strive for a balance between business, management, labor and professional workers to realize competitive
- 45 and livable wages, a child tax credit for families, a health care tax credit for small businesses, safe work
- 46 spaces and efficient productivity;
- 47 • Increase the creation of socially and environmentally responsible jobs, particularly in the field of
- 48 alternative energy and hybrids;
- 49 • Encourage corporate social responsibility by working with business, environmentalists, social investing
- 50 firms, and labor to target pensions and other state funds toward ventures that provide solid returns to
- 51 shareholders; file clean, transparent financial statements; and, catalyze business development in low-
- 52 income communities by bringing retail vitality and economic opportunity to diverse neighborhoods;
- 53 • Oppose privatization of essential government services and the outsourcing of public and private sector
- 54 jobs, and support vocational retraining, income support and health care for workers who lose their jobs due
- 55 to globalization;
- 56 • Promote low-interest small business loans to provide the needed seed capital to launch and expand the
- 57 small business enterprises and incubation efforts that are so critical to California's economic growth;

- Provide incentives that neutralize competition from other areas, and highlight the benefits of incorporating and doing business in California in lieu of tax-haven countries and other states; and, invest in business, manufacturing plants and production within California;
- Provide universal comprehensive health care for all Californians as an incentive to business, by eliminating the burden on business of being the principal provider of health care insurance and workers' compensation insurance.

## ■ CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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California Democrats believe that children and young people deserve the chance to become thriving and productive members of society. To do so, we will work to provide them with a healthy start, a solid education, and a safe community in which to thrive.

### **To help children and young adults reach their full potential, California Democrats will lead the charge to:**

- Expand pre-natal, peri-natal, well-baby care and immunization efforts;
- Enhance childhood education and development through enriching experiences, educational television and other electronic programming/curricula for children;
- Provide quality education at all levels, including vocational counseling, job training and apprenticeships;
- Promote in-school efforts for educational development, access to reasonably priced childcare, and early development centers;
- Lift at-risk families and working poor families out of poverty so they can become independent and lead self-sufficient lives;
- Expand parks, recreation and mentoring centers for children and young people;
- Prosecute those who commit crimes against children, particularly sex crimes against minors, and strictly enforce the penalties for such crimes;
- Ensure that child abuse and neglect court proceedings are accessible and swift for all, and aggressively enforce child-support payment rulings.

## ■ CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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Californians deserve to live in safe neighborhoods. We must be tough, smart and just when dealing with crime, starting with prevention and through punishment and rehabilitation efforts. We are determined to put an end to family violence and gang activity, drug and alcohol addiction, unemployment, poverty and racism. We are dedicated to ensuring that our criminal justice system provides fair and equitable treatment for all.

### **To promote safe communities, California Democrats will:**

- Provide state-of-the-art equipment and training in the latest crime fighting techniques;
- Enhance victim-witness advocacy that respects the rights of crime victims and provides therapeutic assistance and financial compensation;
- Strictly enforce the existing penalties for all violent crimes, especially those against women, children, the elderly and disabled, and support comprehensive services for victims of crime;
- Reduce prison overcrowding and the drain on our economy by decreasing penalties for minor drug offenses and other victimless crimes, making the punishment fit the crime;
- Implement community-based policing to break down barriers between law enforcement officers and the people they serve, and to curtail police misconduct;
- Promote responsible gun ownership and reasonable gun safety and work with gun owners and sporting associations to promote gun safety education;
- Continue the efforts to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals;
- Continue to support the common sense ban on deadly assault weapons;
- Prosecute white-collar criminals and improve methods for recovering financial losses;
- Protect consumers against identity theft and violations of privacy and ensure they know what personal information is collected by businesses and government (such as social security numbers, financial data, phone numbers, street and email addresses) and how that information is used;

- Implement legal protection from unsolicited and unwarranted commercial phone calls, faxes and email spam;
- Employ DNA testing when appropriate to ensure that innocent people are not convicted and guilty people are not set free;
- Prohibit the use of so-called “secret evidence” in courts and tribunals;
- Challenge the practice of racial profiling;
- Strive for a state prison system that promotes inmate rehabilitation, education, and job readiness.

## ■ CULTURE AND THE ARTS

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In the spirit of President Lyndon B. Johnson, who remarked in 1965, “Art is a nation’s most precious heritage,” California Democrats believe in freedom of expression without compromise, public support of the arts, the principles of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). We further commit to involving artists and cultural workers in the planning and implementation processes.

### **In support of the arts, California Democrats will:**

- Celebrate the cultural diversity of our citizens, past and present, including California Indians, Native Americans and indigenous peoples, and encourage improved public knowledge about, and an honest portrayal of, their culture and history;
- Restore arts and humanities efforts at all educational levels;
- Promote multi-media public broadcasting, including community-based public radio and public access television;
- Expand the funding base for the arts by encouraging individual and corporate private sector grants to augment public monies.

## ■ DISABILITIES

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People with disabilities have a right to the necessities required to lead dignified lives and to pursue happiness and self-sufficiency. This requires strict enforcement and funding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), as well as federal and state disability and access laws and regulations. We will fight cuts to Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Efforts, and/or Federal Social Security Disability Income and we will oppose judicial nominees whose philosophies suggest they would dismantle the ADA and other civil rights laws.

### **To promote equality for people with disabilities, California Democrats will:**

- Improve accessibility to and full participation in academia and government;
- Enact a Sovereign Immunity Waiver for California;
- Promote early diagnosis and access to treatment as well as adequate homecare support for children with disabilities;
- Promote alternative forms of employment for persons with disabilities who cannot work standard 8-hour work days or 5-day work weeks due to disability limitations or insufficient transportation;
- Eliminate marriage penalties imposed on SSI recipients, including income parameters;
- End discriminatory policies and practices in health care based upon pre-existing conditions and abolish Medicare’s “Homebound” rules;
- Guarantee palliative care; support and enforce improvements to the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan by amending prohibitive costs; strongly oppose detrimental budget cuts in Medicare and Medicaid; and support and enforce the principle of informed choice;
- Improve respite care and in-home support services;
- Promote and broaden financial aid or loan assistance for accessible housing and vehicles and durable medical equipment;
- Eliminate housing discrimination that penalizes or denies persons with disabilities the right to interdependence through shared housing with a spouse or significant other;
- Enforce laws and regulations pertaining to para transit, public transit and taxis; promote legislation to require para transit to provide services that cross county lines; and penalize companies that deny services to persons using mobility devices.

## 1 ■ EDUCATION

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2  
3 California's children must have access to a free, individually appropriate, high-quality public education from  
4 preschool through grade 12. Education must provide a well-rounded curriculum including the arts, music and  
5 physical education. Teachers, as the stewards of our future, should be well paid and work in safe learning  
6 environments with up-to-date equipment and learning tools.

### 7 8 **To help educate California's leaders of tomorrow, Democrats will fight to:**

- 9
- 10 • Provide linguistically and culturally sensitive educational opportunities;
- 11 • Ensure equal and affordable access to vocational, technical, community college, or university-level
- 12 educational opportunities of the highest caliber at minimal personal expense, including opportunities for
- 13 lifetime learning and career retraining that enables Californians to participate successfully in the global
- 14 economy;
- 15 • Fund California's public education institutions to meet these requirements so that no person is denied
- 16 opportunity due to an inability to pay;
- 17 • Vest curricular decision-making responsibility in education professionals in conjunction with content
- 18 experts, including the means and methods of assessment and the decisions regarding the appropriateness
- 19 of educational placement;
- 20 • Ensure that California schools get full funding for any federally mandated programs;
- 21 • Set per-student public education funding at a minimum of \$1,000 per student above the national average
- 22 to keep California competitive in the global economy.
- 23

## 24 ■ ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

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25  
26 The environment is the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. Our world's beauty and complexity  
27 - the elegance of its inter-connectedness - is a foundation of our inspiration, creativity and spirituality. California  
28 Democrats have led the way towards bi-partisan solutions to problems arising from our industrial society -  
29 resource extraction, waste disposal, and pollution - and their disparate impact on the poor, on ethnic minorities  
30 and on indigenous people. We promote citizen participation in improving our environment and enhancing  
31 environmental consciousness.

32  
33 Democrats will ensure that American farmers have a strong safety net and can achieve profitability in the market  
34 place without endangering the health of workers, consumers or the land, and we will support incentives for farmers  
35 to use conservation practices and sustainable farming methods. Californians should be able to make the choices to  
36 raise their families in towns and rural communities. Democrats oppose the Bush Administration's proposals to  
37 sell off National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands to commercial interests.

### 38 39 **To safeguard our cherished environment, California Democrats will:**

- 40
- 41 • Create jobs by incentivizing the development, production and purchase of environmentally friendly
- 42 products and recycled materials through innovative public/private partnerships to keep America
- 43 competitive;
- 44 • Transition to renewable energy "Freedom Fuels" (solar, bio-fuel, wind, wave, hydrogen, geothermal),
- 45 freeing us environmentally and economically from dependency on fossil fuels and nuclear power;
- 46 • Address the growing crisis of global warming pursuant to the Kyoto Principles of significant carbon
- 47 emission reductions and alternative technology investments;
- 48 • By 2020: produce 40 percent of California's electricity from renewable energy sources and reduce
- 49 electricity and natural gas use by 20 percent through conservation and energy efficiency; by 2030 produce
- 50 40 percent of the state's transportation fuels from non-petroleum sources;
- 51 • Respect our beautiful coast by rejecting any attempt for new offshore oil or gas development, preserving
- 52 coastal access and protecting the mandates of the California Coastal Act;
- 53 • Oppose any attempt to weaken the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act or the Clean Air Act;
- 54 • Resist weakening the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in any new infrastructure programs;
- 55 • Preserve the health of the Delta, which protects our fisheries, farms and people, and bring the Delta levee
- 56 system to 200-year flood protection;
- 57 • Curtail and phase out pesticides which pose threats to our farmworkers, consumers and diesel fuels whose
- 58 particulates have resulted in a rapid rise in respiratory illnesses;

- Conserve natural resources and public lands to combat suburban sprawl and reject any sale of public forestry and park lands;
- Safeguard the future of California's forests through sustained yield best practices forestry and preservation of heritage trees;
- Maximize the benefit of new infrastructure spending by ensuring a balance between roads and public transportation and by smart-growth development where jobs and housing are close together.

## ■ EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

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The California Democratic Party believes that all persons deserve the opportunity to fully participate in the economic, cultural, political and social facets of society. We take pride in and celebrate our diversity and work to foster the common values and commitments that unite all people regardless of their age, cultural heritage, national origin, disability, socio-economic status, gender, race, sexual orientation or views on religion.

### **To fight for all people to live with dignity and equality, California Democrats will:**

- Speak out in a unified voice against hatred, racism and violence directed against any minority group;
- Encourage, support and defend voluntary and mandatory affirmative action measures to enhance access and equity in employment, education and business opportunities;
- Affirm that the decision to accept or reject any religious belief, to bind oneself to any religious creed, or to hold no religious belief at all is a private matter, and should always remain a matter of individual conscience, and we oppose giving any government funding to organizations that discriminate;
- Protect the constitutional rights of Native Americans and the sovereign rights of Indian nations as well as the tribal sovereignty and well-established rights and jurisdictions of California Native/Indian nations;
- Support nondiscrimination and equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people in all aspects of their lives.

## ■ HEALTH CARE

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California Democrats believe that health care is a right not a privilege. Sadly, one in five Californians live without health insurance and millions more are underinsured -- just one accident, diagnosis or illness away from physical and financial crisis. This is unconscionable. All persons should have universal comprehensive health care that provides coverage for all Californians - individuals and families as well as businesses, small and large -- and which covers the full range of necessary benefits, including prevention and prescriptions; and establishes quality standards and embraces efficiencies to reduce waste and administrative costs and assure affordability.

### **To build a healthy future for all Californians, Democrats will:**

- Support and implement universal comprehensive health care for all Californians, that includes medical and dental care, full reproductive health services, preventive services, prescription drugs and mental health counseling and treatment;
- California should lead the nation in providing comprehensive quality health care to all our people by transitioning to a single-payer public health care system;
- Oppose efforts to privatize Medi-Cal and Medicare;
- Expand and strengthen respite care and in-home support services including adequate background checks prior to licensure, and promote an in-home support services system;
- Ensure economic and physical access to multilingual health care services;
- Support the full funding of community clinics and health centers that serve low-income and homeless populations;
- Enforce the Patient's Bill of Rights;
- Affirm that medical decisions must be made with respect for patients' rights to privacy and freedom to have control over their lives with fully informed consent;
- Lead the fight against diseases by supporting and expanding stem cell and other groundbreaking research.

## ■ IMMIGRATION

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As Californians, we are proud to live in the most diverse state in the nation. We recognize our cultural diversity as the core of our nation's strength, and promote inclusion as a means of achieving individual excellence and national

1 unity. Democrats believe that our immigration system should be safe, legal and consistent with American values of  
2 freedom, opportunity and fair play.  
3

4 **In a state enriched by immigrants, California Democrats will:**  
5

- 6 • Affirm that we can make America stronger – not only at our borders – but in upholding our values and  
7 principles and by honoring the tradition of providing a safe haven to immigrants seeking a life of freedom  
8 and opportunity;
- 9 • Encourage increased and expedited processing of applications for citizenship, family reunification and  
10 naturalization;
- 11 • Support comprehensive bi-partisan reform that combines toughness, fairness, family reunification and a  
12 path to legal residency for undocumented immigrants who now live in our communities;
- 13 • Support new citizen outreach efforts that promote civic conscience and encourage participation in the  
14 political process;
- 15 • Ensure culturally sensitive intervention for domestic violence, decreasing apprehension to report for fear of  
16 deportation;
- 17 • Oppose scapegoating or other xenophobic actions which polarize communities;
- 18 • Promote community and neighborhood understanding by speaking in a unified voice against hatred,  
19 racism, and violence directed against ethnic and religious groups.  
20

21 **■ LABOR, ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND POVERTY ELIMINATION**  
22

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23 California Democrats have always been close partners with Labor and strong supporters of workers' rights. The  
24 "glass ceiling" for people of color and women must be shattered and there must be equal pay for equal or  
25 comparable work. Our strong workforce, coupled with a work ethic second to none, is among our nation's most  
26 valuable resources.  
27

28 California's prosperity depends on ensuring a minimum standard of living for all its residents. Food, shelter,  
29 clothing, health care and education are among the basic human rights of all individuals. We are determined in our  
30 commitment to safeguard these basic human rights and to support public services designed to eliminate poverty,  
31 hunger and homelessness among the poor, the elderly, the blind and disabled in order to strengthen all California  
32 communities.  
33

34 **To meet the basic human needs of all Californians, Democrats will:**  
35

- 36 • Support a living wage, especially in areas where the high cost of living renders it impossible to afford the  
37 basic necessities of life even though working a full-time job, to lift the working poor out of poverty and  
38 achieve self-sufficiency;
- 39 • Fight for public assistance programs which allow individuals to support themselves and their families;
- 40 • Guarantee Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for CalWorks and Supplemental Security Income / State  
41 Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP) recipients in state and federal budgets;
- 42 • Support the full funding of food stamp programs to relieve hunger;
- 43 • Promote expansion of emergency food networks, senior and school meal programs to end starvation;
- 44 • Encourage business and preference for firms that employ California workers whenever public funds  
45 finance bridges, highways and other public works construction;
- 46 • Pay prevailing wages to protect the economic base of the communities where government-funded projects  
47 are undertaken, thereby ensuring that government is not lowering the standard of living;
- 48 • Support the 8-hour workday and daily overtime and fight any efforts to repeal the 40-hour workweek;
- 49 • Enhance the strong workers' safety programs with adequate and appropriate penalties for injurious and  
50 unsafe working conditions;
- 51 • Boycott employers who have permanently replaced strikers and protect the collective bargaining rights of  
52 workers in both the public and private sectors;
- 53 • Fight anti-worker initiatives that seek to undermine the ability of union leaders to carry out the will of their  
54 members and engage in political activities.  
55  
56  
57  
58

## 1 ■ NATIONAL SECURITY

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2  
3 California Democrats are unwavering in our commitment to safety and security. We continue to strive to  
4 implement the unanimous recommendations of the bi-partisan 9/11 Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon  
5 the United States in order to ensure that our ports, nuclear and chemical plants, and other sensitive facilities are  
6 secured against attack. We must invest in national security and fighting terrorists, while ensuring civil liberties  
7 and human rights are uncompromised.

8  
9 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita – natural disasters compounded by sorely inadequate responses by the current  
10 administration – remind us that in a state prone to earthquakes, floods and wildfires -- in addition to helping the  
11 victims, we must be ever-vigilant in preparing our communities and reforming our government's emergency  
12 management, and we must build programs to assist evacuees and other persons displaced as a result of natural  
13 disasters.

### 14 **To protect and defend California and our Constitution, Democrats will:**

- 15 • Support our police officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel who keep us safe and secure by  
16 providing the necessary training and equipment -- including major equipment and communications  
17 capabilities -- and by assisting state and local governments and public health agencies, particularly those  
18 responsible for planning for the possibility of terrorist attacks involving weapons of mass destruction;
- 19 • Tighten security at airports, seaports, rail tunnels, terminals, transit facilities, and other targets vulnerable  
20 to terrorists, taking a comprehensive, unified approach in protecting our nation, and using tax incentives  
21 so that American companies can best manage and protect our critical infrastructure;
- 22 • Enhance disaster preparedness planning by insisting that FEMA and state agencies be led by directors  
23 possessing experience in emergency management who will operate in accord with the emergency  
24 management "cycle" system requiring the re-unification of preparedness, response, recovery and  
25 mitigation efforts;
- 26 • Develop a secure system, in coordination with other nations, for profiling, inspecting, sealing, labeling and  
27 tracking all U.S.-bound containers;
- 28 • Fight to repeal the USA-PATRIOT Act.

## 29 ■ POLITICAL REFORM

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30  
31 California Democrats believe that a healthy democracy is based on clean elections: public financing of political  
32 campaigns at all levels of government, campaign spending limits, restoration of the fairness doctrine and a strong  
33 role for political parties. We will fight the culture of corruption, cronyism and incompetence in politics that has  
34 inflicted a great cost upon the American people. We demand open and fraud-free elections and incontrovertible  
35 government accountability to the electorate. We will ensure that all eligible voters can vote, and that all votes are  
36 counted accurately and can be verified by the voter. We support public ownership of all election processes,  
37 software and equipment. We will insist that officeholders respond honestly and effectively to constituent needs  
38 through transparent and open public service.

### 39 **To promote honest leadership and open government, California Democrats will:**

- 40 • Enhance the democratic process by ensuring an educated citizenry, equal opportunity for influence, honest  
41 public debate, competitive elections and robust civic participation;
- 42 • Support and implement clean money legislation;
- 43 • Renew the Voting Rights Act and improve voter outreach and education efforts, including vote-by-mail  
44 projects, especially for youth and underserved communities;
- 45 • Increase voter participation by advocating for extended voting hours and/or days, scheduling elections on  
46 weekends, or by declaring Election Day a holiday;
- 47 • Investigate and prosecute any and all forms of voter intimidation, including improper solicitation of  
48 documentation;
- 49 • Demand transparency in voting system software (including open-source software); national standards for  
50 electronic voting machine certification; external, non-partisan certifying groups that publicly disclose  
51 testing results; reliable voter-verified paper trail systems; robust auditing procedures that include absentee  
52 ballots; and updated recount procedures;
- 53 • Support candidates who pledge full accountability to the electorate, and hold them to that pledge;

- Encourage, where feasible, instant run-off elections.

## ■ SENIORS

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California Democrats recognize the importance of our seniors, the fastest growing age group in the nation, and believe they enrich our everyday experiences, connect us with our past and forecast our collective future. Our seniors deserve the highest standard of care from the health care industry and a prescription drug program that helps them get the medicine they need. We are committed to protecting homeownership and hard-earned pensions as well as the support services and assistance that collectively help seniors maintain independence and quality of life.

### **To honor California seniors, Democrats will:**

- Strengthen Social Security and preserve hard-earned pensions as the bedrocks of a dignified retirement;
- Continue Medicare as the Defined Benefit Plan;
- Work toward universal, comprehensive health care; until that is achieved, reform Medicare Part D to make it clear, affordable and easily accessible to people of all incomes levels, specifically addressing the numerous eligibility problems encountered by pharmacists and the confusing number of private drug plans from which millions of retirees have been forced to choose;
- Affirm the right of all seniors to manage their attendant care so they may live with dignity in their own homes and communities;
- Investigate and prosecute crimes against seniors, including white-collar and financial schemes as well as elder abuse, and strictly enforce all existing penalties for crimes against seniors;
- Increase counseling, emergency and permanent senior housing, and the number of senior centers that provide services, including day care efforts and help for seniors with Alzheimer's, as well as support for their families;
- Provide public transportation and other transit services to support seniors on limited incomes with or without health concerns to travel freely and enjoy a quality lifestyle.

## ■ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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California Democrats seek to build healthy, livable and sustainable communities that conserve natural resources, promote smart growth, are economically prosperous, and socially equitable. Planning for sustainable communities involves conserving our natural resources for an environmentally healthy community. Current consumption rates are not sustainable and exacerbate global warming and continued urban/suburban sprawl. We are committed to environmental justice and a sustainable lifestyle.

### **To promote sustainable communities, California Democrats will:**

- Reward local governments and regions for completing voluntary, sub-regional comprehensive planning processes that stem the tide of urban and suburban sprawl and that reduce dependence upon the automobile as a primary means of transportation;
- Create greenbelts around our urban areas, thereby reducing traffic gridlock, wildfires and erosion, and promoting efficient land use;
- Promote regional tax revenue sharing in order to decrease local governments' dependence upon sales tax revenue and minimize sprawl;
- Increase the construction of affordable housing to alleviate and prevent homelessness, and develop supportive housing with continuum of care services to help homeless people re-establish themselves as self-sufficient contributors to society;
- Protect and promote affordable housing to alleviate and prevent homelessness;
- Protect existing homeowners' property rights by limiting eminent domain to reasonable public uses, and oppose the practice of using eminent domain to take private property without the consent of the owner and conveying it from one private person to another or to any corporation merely to increase its tax revenue;
- Encourage incentives to reclaim and redevelop old abandoned buildings and brownfields;
- Provide a homestead floor with absolute minimum protection for homeowners when they are forced into bankruptcy, due to unanticipated health care costs or predatory lending schemes.

1 **■ VETERANS**

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2  
3 All veterans from all components of military service should receive equal treatment, including those veterans of  
4 operations-other-than-war undertaken by the United States, and should be provided all the entitlements given to  
5 veterans of earlier service, including education and training benefits, health benefits, home loans and other  
6 financial assistance. We support the G.I Bill of Rights for the 21st Century and believe that earned benefits should  
7 be readily available to all service members, eligible veterans and their families on a timely basis within their own  
8 communities on a timely basis.

9  
10 **Through the shared sacrifice of all Californians to leave no veteran behind, Democrats will:**

- 11 • Demand truth in recruiting and open enlistment for all;
- 12 • Provide support services for active duty military personnel and their families without cost to the service
- 13 member;
- 14 • Provide our troops with the latest in protective equipment and weaponry and provide total training prior to
- 15 deployment;
- 16 • Support enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)
- 17 ensuring that activated Reservists and National Guard can resume their jobs upon return, without
- 18 exception, with the state being the employer of last resort when necessary;
- 19 • Provide payment from the state for veterans and military benefits earned if the federal government is
- 20 unwilling to pay;
- 21 • Use a presumption of service-connection on all claims for benefits and services;
- 22 • Grant citizenship for non-citizen veterans who have served honorably in the military of the United States.

23  
24  
25 **■ WOMEN**

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26  
27 California is the proud home of pioneering women who have blazed new trails in business, entrepreneurship,  
28 culture and politics. Democrats respect women as full partners in family and society. We proudly and vigorously  
29 support a woman's right to choose how to use her mind, her body and her time.

30  
31 **As part of our commitment to empowering California women, Democrats will advocate:**

- 32 • Promote equal access to training, jobs, promotion, capital, equity and contracts;
- 33 • Support affirmative action, Equal Pay for Equal Work, Title IX, and the U.N. Convention on the
- 34 Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- 35 • Preserve confidential, unrestricted access to affordable, quality and culturally appropriate health and
- 36 reproductive services, including contraception and emergency contraception, without requiring guardian,
- 37 judicial, parental or spousal consent or notification;
- 38 • Support the many lifesaving programs of the Violence against Women Act (VAWA), including the
- 39 educational and preventative programs, especially for those who are at higher risk for sexual and domestic
- 40 violence;
- 41 • Increase early breast cancer detection, treatment and supportive services;
- 42 • Enhance education and support services to women with dependent children in order to increase parenting
- 43 and job skills;
- 44 • Expand workplace rights associated with pregnancy and emergency family leave.

45  
46  
47 **■ WORLD PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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48  
49 America's security requires an effective military and a commitment to enduring alliances. We must have a strong  
50 national defense based on protecting and defending our country and our Constitution and on telling the truth to  
51 our civilians and our soldiers before we send troops abroad to defend America. American foreign policy was built  
52 on a bi-partisan foundation of engagement in the world: fostering multilateral institutions such as the United  
53 Nations and NATO, and using our economic might to support the foreign aid institutions, such as the Marshall  
54 Plan. We must change our domestic policy to ensure that our need for energy supply and our current  
55 extraordinary debt dependence do not drive our foreign policy.

56  
57 We call upon the Bush Administration and Congress to bring our troops home starting now. This war of choice has  
58 squandered America's standing in the world and our alliances against al Qaeda, especially considering the

1 failure to find weapons of mass destruction, the basing of decisions on cherry-picked intelligence, and the lack of  
2 proper planning and equipment for our troops. American must be a light to the world, a beacon of freedom and  
3 democracy, which respects and promotes international cooperation and sovereignty, and promotes human rights  
4 in our deeds as well as our words. We honor our troops best by returning them home to their loved ones to protect  
5 against the real threats to America. We honor the valor of those who have sacrificed their lives, by bringing home  
6 their colleagues safely to their families, and we honor the men and women of our military when we only place them  
7 in harm's way against the real and immediate threats against our beloved country they so nobly serve. We must  
8 also properly provide for this new generation of veterans upon their return.  
9

10 We must turn Iraq over to the Iraqis: starting immediately, end the wrongful occupation of Iraq and re-establish a  
11 commitment to the rule of international law and human rights; provide for the financial security of the Iraqi people  
12 during Iraq's transition toward self-governance; return the national territory of Iraq to the sovereign control of the  
13 people of Iraq with no permanent U.S. bases in that country; support international diplomatic efforts to assist in  
14 peaceful reconciliation amongst the Iraqi people; and, contribute financial resources to rebuild Iraq's physical and  
15 economic infrastructure.  
16

17 **California Democrats support an international policy that will:**  
18

- 19 • Collaborate with other nations to promote peace, fight terrorists, increase literacy and child survival rates,  
20 combat poverty, disease and malnutrition, bolster existing and new democracies and developing  
21 nations, and reduce the support and demand for narcotics;
- 22 • Condition aid to governments upon respect for human rights;
- 23 • Ensure that the world's most dangerous weapons stay out of the hands of terrorists by expanding the pace  
24 and scope of programs to eliminate and safeguard nuclear materials and enhancing efforts to keep these  
25 and other deadly materials out of the hands of terrorists;
- 26 • Perform a national threat assessment and reallocate our nuclear arsenal and missile defense expenditures  
27 in a manner commensurate with actual threats;
- 28 • Comply with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Hand Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons  
29 Convention, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and all other international agreements ratified by the  
30 U.S. Senate;
- 31 • Reduce our nation's huge trade deficit and restore America's global economic leadership by designing  
32 policies that maximize the benefits and minimize the negative consequences of globalization;
- 33 • Structure fair trade agreements requiring countries to adopt and enforce core, internationally-recognized  
34 labor standards, including rights to associate and bargain collectively, as well as prohibitions on child  
35 labor, discrimination in employment and forced labor;
- 36 • Promote population planning world-wide through education and support for family planning  
37 organizations;
- 38 • Tailor United States foreign policy to eliminate the worst pockets of poverty by targeting an additional one  
39 percent of our federal budget to aid and development;
- 40 • Strengthen the United Nations and regional organizations to achieve global security;
- 41 • Affirm the mission of the State Department as the promotion of world peace;
- 42 • Support the U.S. joining the International Criminal Court;
- 43 • Follow the Geneva and Hague Conventions. No torture. No exceptions.  
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