2014 Platform

Adopted At The Democratic Party State Convention
Los Angeles Convention Center
March 9, 2014
Thank you to the CDP Platform Committee Members for all their hard work and efforts in putting together the 2014 California Democratic Party Platform.

**LEAD CHAIRS:** Lyn Shaw Hilfenhaus
Howard Welinsky

**COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS:** Norman Chramoff
Julie Soo

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Kerri Asbury
Michael Barnett
Farid Enrique Ben Amor
Nicholas Carlin
John Connelly
Elspeth Farmer
Molly Fleischman
Janet Gastil
Bob Handy
Sandy Hester
Dotty LeMieux
Clark Lee
Justin Meyers
Daniel Ortiz
Robert Rowen
Heidi Shink
Jeremy Smith
Markhum Stansbury, Jr.
Michael Sweet
Matt Tuchow
Sunny Zia

**CDP STAFF:** Andrew Drabkin
Table of Contents

I. Preamble .......................................................................................................................... 2

II. Business and Economy .................................................................................................. 2

III. Children ....................................................................................................................... 4

IV. Civil Justice .................................................................................................................. 4

V. Criminal Justice ............................................................................................................. 6

VI. Culture and Arts .......................................................................................................... 7

VII. Death with Dignity ..................................................................................................... 7

VIII. Disabilities .................................................................................................................. 7

IX. Education ..................................................................................................................... 8

X. Energy & Environment ................................................................................................. 9
   i. Energy ......................................................................................................................... 9
   ii. Environment .............................................................................................................. 10
   iii. Agriculture & Food Safety .................................................................................... 10
   iv. Transportation ......................................................................................................... 11

XI. Equality of Opportunity .............................................................................................. 11

XII. Freedom of Speech, Communication, and the Internet .............................................. 11

XIII. Healthcare ................................................................................................................. 12

XIV. Immigration ............................................................................................................... 13

XV. Labor, Economic Justice, and Poverty Elimination ..................................................... 14
   i. Anti-Human Trafficking ......................................................................................... 15

XVI. National Security ...................................................................................................... 15

XVII. Political and Governmental Reform ........................................................................ 16

XVIII. Seniors .................................................................................................................... 17

XIV. Sustainable Communities .......................................................................................... 18

XX. Veterans and Military Families .................................................................................. 19

XXI. Women ..................................................................................................................... 20

XXII. World Peace and International Relations ............................................................... 20
California Democrats Present Our Blueprint for the Golden State
The California Democratic Party presents our Platform for the Golden State. Our Platform is a blueprint for respect, justice, and equality for all who live, work, and visit in California.

California has led the nation with a vision developed and promoted by our Democratic Party. This document, which embodies the vision and principles embraced by the California Democratic Party, is meant to inform our citizens, our Party leaders and members, our elected officials, and candidates who seek endorsement.

America’s strength derives from collective action for the common good. Our vision includes a plan for communities that are environmentally clean, energy efficient, well educated, healthy, economically strong, and secure. We will promote energy self-sufficiency and renewable energy to counter global warming and pollution, and protect our natural resources. Our economy must be built on a diverse workforce educated in quality public schools. We believe in universal, comprehensive, and affordable health care.

We believe in the fundamental equality of all persons and devote ourselves to the defense of their inherent dignity, collectively and individually. We believe that justice for all minority groups and the rights of women require constant vigilance and a thorough examination of laws that disproportionately impact minorities and women. Our state and our nation must respect the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and marriage for all its residents.

This Democratic Platform represents a vision based on resolutely defending these American values and supports working people’s hopes and dreams for the future. We will work with elected officials and activists to achieve this vision in government and in our communities.

This Platform is presented in a series of Planks embodying our cherished principles for our citizens, our elected officials, and those we seek to elect.

Business and Economy
The Obama administration began with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. The Democratic Party, with no minority party support, gave our country the greatest economic stimulus package in history, which has created and saved millions of jobs.

California Democrats are dedicated to a robust economy and business climate that creates jobs and economic opportunity for all as well as the tax base for the programs and policies we champion. We recognize that America has always been the Land of Opportunity. This is largely due to the fact that an individual can start a small business and with hard work and good ideas can share in the American Dream. Government must work to preserve that opportunity for citizens to start small businesses and have a reasonable opportunity for success. We support the development of programs by Cities, Counties, States, and Federal agencies to provide greater contracting opportunities to small businesses. We support direct lending programs to small businesses by government agencies including the SBA.

To grow jobs and assure a prosperous future for all Californians, California Democrats will:
• Not shrink in our duties to create sustainable jobs for future generations but instead support the research, development and implementation of green electrical generation and transportation and communication technologies with some combination of tax credits, low-interest loans/loan guarantees and grants and that encourage the conservation and sustainability of natural resources in order to prevent future conflicts regarding scarce resources;
• Take steps to encourage the sustainable growth of small businesses, which will serve as the backbone of California's economic recovery. Promote and guarantee low-interest small business loans to provide
the seed capital to launch and expand job-creating small businesses and provide for the growth of already successful businesses;

• Prevent irresponsible lenders from doing business in California. Promote the investigation of the viability of the creating State-owned bank while also educating the public about credit unions and promoting the expansion of existing community bank and credit union programs for state and local funds;

• Facilitate improved banking services for small businesses and consumers by supporting legislation that offers community banks and credit unions incentives for implementing new technologies;

• Defend consumer banking free choice by supporting legislation to eliminate out of network ATM fees and to prevent the imposition of bank fees for use of debit cards;

• Demand accountability from banks that received TARP funds deliver on providing foreclosure relief. Support a legislative initiative to provide foreclosure relief to borrowers who were the victims of unscrupulous loan brokers or unconscionable banking practices. In addition, the state needs to investigate and fund prosecutions, where appropriate, into private lender and/or mortgage broker abuses, including but not limited to redlining and the unauthorized bait and switch tactic of replacing fixed rate financing with ARMs;

• Support the separation of retail and investment banking in order to safeguard Californians with current deposits in such banks from speculative investment activities and to free-up capital for loans to businesses and individuals. Strengthen the state agencies that provide regulatory oversight of banks as well as utilities;

• Support the rights of all employees to organize, select a bargaining representative of their choice through card check recognition, work in a safe environment and be free from intimidation and retaliation tactics;

• Oppose privatization of essential government services and outsourcing of public sector jobs, promote the development and purchase of goods that are made in America, and support the modification of the US tax code so that corporations are incented to hire workers in the U.S. instead of abroad;

• Encourage an investment in California’s infrastructure in a way that will support the state’s growth through the 21st Century and beyond; including supporting the efforts to bring high-speed rail to the state, facilitating the movement of Californians around the state while securing thousands of jobs for our workers;

• Reward employers that, instead of moving out of state, choose to remain in California and can show a reasonable likelihood of significant sales and job growth, by giving the California Treasurer/Board of Equalization the right to negotiate a competitive package of discounted state-based fees and/or taxes to offset some of the employer's anticipated cost savings from moving the business out of California;

• Support the adoption of a Universal Health Care plan for all Californians so that California employers will not have to bear the cost burden of being the principal providers of health care and medical care to injured workers through the workers compensation policies they purchase;

• Support the implementation of tax policies that provide a higher degree of tax equity;

• Continue to support and fund job retraining and/or vocational rehabilitation programs to meet the manpower needs of California’s changing economy;

• Oppose new and unfair trade agreements and renegotiate existing agreements;

• Provide new funding mechanisms and legislative support for the promotion of progressive big businesses to foster the legitimate democratic aspirations of individual investors and employees to build strong, profitable corporations with elected accountable leadership, separation of powers, checks and balances, and other tools of an economically democratic society;

• Promote and guarantee low interest small business loans to provide the seed capital to launch and expand job-creating small businesses and/or cooperative member/worker owned small businesses and provide for growth of already successful businesses;

• Facilitate sustainable economic development by introducing strategies for peace, and green technologies, and to improve the business environment and conditions that are hampered by violence in its many forms in the United States and internationally;
• Provide low interest start up loans to National Defense contractors to convert their products and/or services to meet the needs of a Sustainable Peacetime Economy;
• Schedule a phase out of unwarranted corporate farm subsides to create a more equitable and local food market system;
• Maintain and enforce food labeling and strict production standards for organic and GMO products (Genetically Modified Organisms) grown or marketed in California; promote government research on long-term environmental and health effects of genetically engineered food and unicrop production; and support policy change to address issues of food safety and humane treatment of animals in food production; support a uniform criteria for determining what is truly a "small business" and eliminating loopholes that allow large corporations to benefit from preferences intended for small businesses;
• Address the crisis of long-term unemployment by supporting efforts to extend by 14 weeks federal unemployment benefits to those who have exhausted their benefits; and,
• Target resources to the communities of interest who have been most impacted by the economic recession.

Children
California Democrats believe that we must invest in the well-being of children and young people in order for them 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 commit to:
• Expand pre-natal, peri-natal and well-baby care, as well as provide comprehensive immunization services;
• Lift at-risk families and working poor families out of poverty so that they can become independent and lead self-sufficient lives;
• Support the passage and implementation of nutritionally-healthy school lunch and breakfast programs;
• Promote policies and support agencies that are responsible for providing mental health services, domestic violence prevention, gang prevention, anti-bullying programs, substance abuse prevention, parenting skills, and other social services that are critical to the health and well-being of children and families in need;
• Ensure Child Protective Services and social workers have the resources needed to protect children and support foster youth;
• Enhance education and development with community-based enriching experiences; promote early childhood education by providing hands-on learning opportunities in enriching environments which engage parents, caregivers, and educators as partners in all relevant domains of early learning and development including language, math, social-emotional, and self-regulation;
• Ensure access to high quality, affordable childcare, preschool and early development centers and strong, community-based after school programs;
• Value the important work of child care providers in caring for and educating our children so that they are Kindergarten ready by supporting their right to choose a union representative and foster quality improvements that will benefit all of our state’s children and their families;
• Expand parks, recreation, and mentoring centers for children and young people;
• Improve the foster care system and ensure that child abuse and neglect court proceedings that protect the welfare of children are accessible and swift, and aggressively enforce child-support payment rulings; and,
• Support the removal or ban of toxic substances from all toys, equipment, and materials sold or used in California.

Civil Justice
California Democrats support a strong and accessible civil justice system to defend public health, safety and the environment, and to vindicate the rights of consumers, injured persons, employees, and all Californians equally. The Seventh Amendment right to trial by jury in civil cases was intended by the Framers to put a
check on the potential abuse of power by the government and place control in the hands of “the common people.”

In recent years, our civil justice system has come under concerted attack by corporations shielding themselves from civil liability for wrongful conduct by using their money and power to deny everyday people fair access to the courts. The attack on Seventh Amendment rights has come under the false and misleading cloak of “tort reform.”

**California Democrats are committed to reversing these attacks on the rights of our citizens to seek full and fair justice through the courts and will:**

- Oppose forced arbitration and support passage of the Arbitration Fairness Act that provides that “no predispute arbitration agreement shall be valid or enforceable if it requires arbitration of an employment dispute, consumer dispute, or civil rights dispute;”
- Support of the right of the people to join together in class actions and condemn the recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings in *AT&T Mobility v. Concepcion* and *American Express Co. v. Italian Colors Restaurant* that gave corporations the right to prohibit class actions against them by consumers and employees and force such individuals to arbitrate all claims;
- Trust juries to determine the appropriate level of compensation for a prevailing plaintiff in a lawsuit, oppose any arbitrary limits on damages that a jury may award, and support review of the impact on raising current limits on pain and suffering damages on victims and providers in medical malpractice; and,
- Seek to end the use of confidentiality clauses in settlements involving matters of public health and safety.

‘Justice delayed is justice denied’ is the reality that California’s civic justice system will continually face without budget reforms and state budget reprioritization. Budget cuts to California’s Judicial Branch means extended waits for civil lawsuits and legal issues that touch everyday lives – divorces, child custody hearings, conservatorships, probate, traffic hearings, and small claims – in extreme examples from several months to several years.

Multi-lingual legal assistance for people who represent themselves as well as for family law centers which provide assistance in divorce, child custody, child support, and domestic violence cases have been cut, effectively eliminating access to the courts for immigrant communities.

California Democrats believe that fair and equal access to justice is a right in a democratic society. The undue delays in the current civil justice system means that only the wealthy will be able to afford to utilize the civil justice system and families already in crisis will face insurmountable circumstances that are likely to place the most vulnerable family members in continuing volatile living conditions.

**To restore fair and equal access to the civil justice system for all Californians, Democrats will:**

- Support restoration of full funding for the Courts;
- Support reforms to the Administrative Office of the Courts that will place more resources to helping individuals and reduce managerial operations;
- Support fair and reasonable alternatives to litigation such as alternative dispute resolution so long as such alternatives are fully voluntary and not coerced;
- Support expedited trial tracks; and,
- Support giving higher priority to cases involving individual and small business plaintiffs over cases involving corporate plaintiffs, including family law and probate cases, until full court funding is restored.

**Criminal Justice**

Crime prevention and rehabilitation are essential to our families, our communities, and our state’s budget. Current law enforcement-supported research demonstrates that, historically, a ten percentage-point
increase in graduation rates correlates with a twenty percent reduction in murder and assault rates. In light of this, we support increasing high school graduation rates through evidence-based methods that include structured pre-school for all, anti-truancy measures, and after-school programs. We are dedicated to ensuring that our criminal justice system provides fair and equitable treatment for all. "Smart on crime" must include evidence-based criminal justice prevention programs as the best use of taxpayer funds.

To promote safe communities, California Democrats will:

- Provide state-of-the-art equipment and training in the latest crime fighting techniques to law enforcement;
- Enhance victim-witness advocacy that respects the rights of crime victims and provides therapeutic assistance and financial compensation, and support comprehensive services for the victims of crime;
- Support the establishment of a non-partisan sentencing commission to review inequitable sentencing laws;
- Work to reduce prison overcrowding and the drain on our economy by decreasing penalties for minor drug offenses, implementing state law provisions for compassionate release and releasing older and low-risk, long-term prisoners, and support community service as an alternative sentence for non-violent offenders;
- Implement community-based policing to break down barriers between law enforcement officers and the people they serve; support community-based groups to work within existing social and criminal justice programs to foster communication with law enforcement; and, require greater accountability from law enforcement organizations to the communities they serve;
- Work with gun owners and sporting associations to promote responsible gun ownership and gun safety education;
- Strengthen efforts to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals; strictly limit access to firearms for those with a record of domestic violence and/or mental health issues; require that all stolen, lost, or misplaced firearms be reported to law enforcement immediately;
- Continue to support the common sense ban on deadly assault weapons;
- Improve methods for recovering financial losses in the prosecution of white-collar crimes;
- Support strong protections for all Americans who lawfully disclose waste and fraud in government spending, violations of law or threats to the public health and safety by providing all whistleblowers with adequate remedies for unlawful retaliation, and rewards for employees who risk their careers by disclosing such activity;
- Protect consumers against identity theft and violations of privacy and require disclosure by businesses and government of what personal information is collected and how that information is used;
- Support the use of DNA testing when appropriate to protect the wrongfully accused and set free the wrongfully convicted;
- Prohibit the use of so-called "secret evidence" in courts and tribunals;
- Challenge the practice of profiling, from detainment through charging and sentencing;
- Resist the establishment of "Stand Your Ground" laws in the State of California and the implementation of "stop and frisk" policies that are disproportionately applied to persons of color;
- Oppose using prisons and jails as de facto mental health facilities and fight to adequately fund community mental health and substance abuse programs;
- Promote strong families and communities by reducing prison recidivism and making rehabilitation, education, and job readiness priorities within our state prison system;
- Promote dialogue that examines decreases in public school funding and concomitant prison expansion in California, and support efforts to address high school dropout rates;
- Oppose privatization of prisons;
- Advocate that the state adopt concrete measures to eliminate the use of solitary confinement;
- Support the development and implementation of restorative justice that bring together offenders, victims, and community members in a effort to repair the damage caused by criminal activity through accountability and rehabilitation;
- Oppose sentencing juveniles to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole (LWOP);
• Support abolishing capital punishment; and,
• Support the legalization, regulation and taxation of marijuana, in a manner similar to that of tobacco or alcohol.

Culture and the Arts
California Democrats believe in freedom of expression without compromise, public support of the arts and the principles promoted by the California Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). We further commit to involve artists and cultural organization workers in the planning and implementation processes of artistic endeavors.

In support of the arts, California Democrats will:
• Celebrate the cultural diversity of our residents, past and present and encourage improved public knowledge about and an honest portrayal of our diverse cultures and histories;
• Restore arts and humanities efforts at all educational levels;
• Encourage participation, display, and attendance in all types of public art and performance;
• Promote multi-media public broadcasting, including community-based public radio and public access television;
• Promote greater financial inclusion for all artists in the Internet use of their intellectual property; and,
• Recognize the importance of creative workers to the California economy and strongly support the Film and Television Industry in its efforts to retain California as the film production capital of the world.

Death with Dignity
To ensure death with dignity, we support the right of any competent adult, suffering intractable pain as a consequence of a fatal illness to obtain the assistance of medical doctors in painlessly ending her or his own life. We support safeguards to ensure that this right of patient self-determination will not be misused by either family members or health care personnel, to precipitate the demise of any disabled person who desires to continue living.

We support reimbursement to doctors, including Medicare doctors and other healing professionals, who may utilize holistic treatment modalities when administering pain management protocols, including reimbursement when patients request voluntary consultation about end-of-life care.

Disabilities
Persons with disabilities have an inalienable right to participate as self-sufficiently as possible through employment and equal opportunity for political expression. The California Democratic Party supports and upholds the enforcement and funding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), the Lanterman Act, and all federal and state disability and access laws and regulations. All Democrats must fight cuts to Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Efforts and Federal Social Security Disability Income. Democrats desire that all people with disabilities have a sustainable quality of life in the least restrictive environment.

To ensure equality for people with disabilities, California Democrats will:
• Encourage elected officials to have one staff person well-versed in disability civil rights issues;
• Urge participation and employment of people with disabilities in all levels of the Party;
• Ensure that all Democratic organizations have the training necessary to reach out to voters with disabilities;
• Ensure that all political headquarters are fully accessible;
• Encourage more balanced participation of people with disabilities on state and local commissions;
• Work with unions to promote alternative forms of employment for people with disabilities who cannot work standard 8-hour work days;
• Eliminate marriage penalties imposed on SSI recipients, including income parameters;
• Guarantee palliative care; support improvements to the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan by amending prohibitive costs; oppose detrimental budget cuts in Medicare / Medi-Cal; support the principle of informed choice;
• Improve respite care and in-home support services and support higher pay and better training programs for home care workers;
• Broaden financial assistance for accessible housing, vehicles and durable medical equipment to give much-needed monetary assistance for individuals to pay for improvements to their equipment beyond the Medicare / Medi-Cal rate;
• Eliminate housing discrimination that penalizes or denies persons with disabilities the right to interdependence through shared housing with a spouse or significant other;
• Promote a universal health care plan that will provide every Californian the right to choose his or her own physician; and,
• Promote parity of services for mental health and substance-related disorder benefits, medical and dental health for people with developmental and other disabilities under all public and private health care and delivery plans.

Education
California's education system was once the envy of America. Our K-12 schools were among the best funded in the country. The California Master Plan for Higher Education made our community colleges, California State Universities, and University of California institutional systems models to emulate throughout the world. Disinvestment from education, along with rising tuition and educational costs, threatens our ability to offer our youth the education they require to usher our state into the future. California's students must have access to free, fully accessible, and equitable world-class public education. Early childhood education and postsecondary education must be available and affordable to all interested students and families. Our early childhood, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions must be well-resourced and they must provide a well-rounded, balanced curriculum, which will prepare students for success in a globally interconnected world.

To help educate California's young leaders for the 21st century, Democrats will fight to:
• Provide an excellent and equitable education for all California's students, in which they have access to quality instruction in all content areas, including math, science, English, history, social studies, health, physical education, the arts and music, and foreign languages; are assessed through multiple means that are valid and reliable for all students; and have the resources they need to be prepared for postsecondary education, career technical education, and active citizenship in the 21st century;
• Provide linguistically and culturally relevant educational opportunities so that our diverse students can draw upon their knowledge and experience as they acquire academic content knowledge and master essential skills;
• Ensure adequate preparation of students and affordable access to career technical education, community college, or university-level educational opportunities of the highest caliber at minimal personal expense, including opportunities for lifelong learning and career retraining to enable all Californians to succeed in the global economy;
• Target reforms and resources to close the achievement gap, with specific emphasis on promising practices supporting English learners, students from generational poverty, and special populations;
• Ensure that districts' local accountability plans for Local Control Funding Formula Supplemental and Concentration Grant monies reach the students with the greatest needs (English language learners, foster youth, and low-income students) for which they are intended and not to expand reserves;

• Support multiple measures in evaluating efficacy of administrators, teachers, schools, and districts;
• Ensure that educators and classified staff receive a living wage, and have opportunities for professional growth and training, and will be able to work in safe learning environments in modern facilities with access to up to date curricular materials and technology for students;
• Ensure data and accountability measures are transparent for ALL schools receiving public funds so that these schools are held to the same set of standards, and are open to all students regardless of their race, skill level, economic status, and/or special needs;
• Ensure that educational policy and practices are research based and derived from educational professionals, and free from the influence of corporations and donors lacking expertise in education;
• Invest in per student funding at or above the national average in order for California school districts to have the necessary resources to provide a quality education that meets the individual needs of all students;
• Ensure that teachers and classified staff be involved in and play central roles in the selection and creation of curricula, and be able to adapt curricula as appropriate for the needs of their students;
• Ensure a safe educational environment and school culture where students and staff do not feel threatened, and are free from bullying and harassment, by providing training and education in, tolerance, mediation, peaceful conflict resolution, and counseling;
• Ensure that California's four-year-old children have universal preschool;
• Support existing criteria for Pell Grants and Cal Grants; expand financial aid to students from "middle class families;"
• Support comprehensive, medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education designed to help stem the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and to prevent teen pregnancy; and,
• Protect the inclusion in Pre-K to Higher Education curriculum of age-appropriate, factual information about social movements, current events and the contributions of both men and women, people of all races and ethnicities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans, persons with disabilities, and other historically underrepresented groups, and discard materials that perpetuate stereotypes or reflect adversely on persons or groups based solely on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or other characteristics.

Energy & Environment
All Californians, urban, suburban and rural, hold a shared interest in preserving and protecting the environment that sustains us. California Democrats have led the way toward effective bi-partisan solutions to problems arising from our industrial society – resource extraction, waste disposal and pollution – and their disparate impact on our forests, family farms, the poor, ethnic minorities, and indigenous people.

To reverse the real and imminent threat of global warming and to protect public health and our planet, Democrats will:

Energy
• Urge Congress to pass a comprehensive energy security and climate protection law that includes national requirements for renewable electricity generation, reduced reliance on dirty forms of energy such as coal, and a rigorous greenhouse gas emissions cap;
• Urge Congress, the California Legislature, the California Public Utilities Commission, and the California Energy Commission to reduce long-term reliance on non-renewable nuclear power including the phaseout of reactors that cannot be shown to be economically viable, to ensure the safety and fully evaluate the economic viability and full lifecycle costs of nuclear power, to quickly decommission and withhold funding for license renewal for Mark 1 nuclear reactors that cannot be made safe, and to provide emergency plans and adequate liability protection for populations within 50 miles of reactors and in the event that nuclear reactors are decommissioned due to safety or economic concerns that there shall be a comprehensive employment plan that includes Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) for workers affected by plant closures;
• Support a generous and unlimited minimum price guarantee as a method of promoting domestic and entrepreneurial renewable energy production and to increase the percentage of renewable energy in California's power mix. Support government initiatives that allow property owners to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for their homes and commercial buildings;
• Provide research grants that encourage conservation, sustainability of natural resources, and development of green technologies in transportation and alternative energy production;
• Support the implementation of a fossil fuels extraction tax; and,
• Develop comprehensive regional community conservation and sustainability plans to prevent depletion of natural resources.

Environment
• Create green collar jobs by providing incentives for the development, production, deployment and purchase of environmentally friendly products, renewable energy systems, high speed rail, energy efficient goods and services, and recycled materials through public-private partnerships;
• Oppose any attempt to rollback or weaken the state's landmark Global Warming Solutions Act. By 2020, return to the state's 1990 greenhouse gas emissions levels; produce 40 percent of California's electricity from renewable and sustainable energy sources; and, reduce electricity and natural gas use by 20 percent. By 2030, produce 40 percent of the state's transportation fuels from non-petroleum sources and support Low Carbon Fuel Standards that take into account long-term sustainability;
• Reject any attempt for new offshore oil or gas development, preserve coastal access, protect the mandates of the California Coastal Act, and support the recovery and preservation of our ocean ecosystems;
• Restore the clarity of Lake Tahoe and preserve California's inland lakes by preventing the intrusion of new aquatic invasive species and by protecting watersheds and surrounding forest ecosystems;
• Work to improve, and oppose any attempt to weaken the federal Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, or the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
• Support a comprehensive statewide water resource management plan that promotes safe drinking water for all and includes the upper watershed areas and preserves the health of the Delta by bringing the Delta levee system to 200-year flood protection levels;
• Promote sustainable utilization and conservation of natural resources and public lands through appropriate taxation for extraction of non-renewable natural resources and thoughtful land use planning to combat suburban sprawl; reject any sale of public forestry and park lands; support dedicated funding for state parks; and, safeguard California's forests through sustained yield best practices forestry, the elimination of clear cutting (and subsidies for roads to enable clear cutting) to preserve natural habitat diversity and connectivity, soil conservation measures, the preservation of heritage trees, and carbon sequestration techniques;
• Encourage the goal of "Net Zero Energy Emissions" in new home construction by 2020, and "Net Zero Energy Emissions" in new commercial construction by 2030, and encourage the use of fire resistant, termite-proof, and energy efficient building materials in all new residential and light commercial construction; and,
• Support an immediate moratorium on fracking, acidizing, and other forms of oil/gas well stimulation, with such a moratorium to remain in effect until legislation and regulations are put in place that repeal the exception in the Safe Drinking Water Act, guarantee public health and safety, mitigate the effects on climate change, protect the environment and allow government access and testing of the chemicals used in all sites;

Agriculture and Food Safety
• Provide innovative incentives that will encourage agricultural water conservation and the retention of lands for agricultural production and encourage low impact/sustainable agricultural practices;
• Curtail and phase out pesticides that pose threats to farm workers, consumers, and pollinators, such as bees; and,
• Promote food safety, eat local movement, small family farms, urban gardens, healthy food alternatives, safe working conditions for farm workers, appropriate food labeling to include those foods containing GMO products, the humane treatment of animals in food production, and provide low interest loans for local farms that can produce fresh locally grown produce and provide local employment opportunities.
Transportation

- Support light and heavy duty vehicle regulations to help provide healthier air for all Californians, support strong and workable low-emission and zero-emission vehicle standards that will continue to be a model for the country, support Clean Vehicle Incentive programs to include the installation of charging infrastructure, and provide assistance to small businesses to meet the low-emission standards;
- Support strategies and infrastructure to reduce driving, such as promoting smart growth, creating "complete streets;" teaching bicycle traffic skills; and improving transit, from local systems to high speed rail;
- Work for equitable and environmentally-sound road and parking operations; and,
- Provide support for driving reduction targets shown to stabilize the climate at a livable level.

Equality of Opportunity

The California Democratic Party recognizes the growing disparity between the top two percent and the rest of Americans. We understand that institutionalized racism, classism, sexism, and anti-gay bias contribute to that disparity, and we believe that all Americans deserve the opportunity to participate fully 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 age, sexual orientation, cultural heritage, national origin, disability, socio-economic status, gender, race, or personal views on religion.

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

- Speak in a unified voice against hatred, racism, and violence directed against any minority group;
- Encourage, support and defend voluntary and mandatory affirmative action measures aimed at enhancing equality in employment, education, and business opportunities;
- Affirm that the right to accept or reject any religious belief, to bind oneself to any religious creed, or to hold no religious creed whatsoever, is a private matter, and should always remain a matter of individual conscience. Therefore, we oppose any government funding to organizations that fail or refuse to respect these rights;
- Protect the constitutional and sovereign rights of Indian Nations, and well-established rights and jurisdictions of California Native American tribes;
- Support nondiscrimination for the LGBTQ community in all aspects of their lives, including housing, employment, healthcare, and family/adoption, and our continued support for their legal right to marry; support clergy of all religious denominations in their freedom to solemnize these marriages in accordance with their respective beliefs;
- Support the use of gender neutral language;
- Support wage equality, thus allowing individuals to achieve upward mobility and economic equality in our communities; and,
- Work to ensure that government (especially our legal system) works for all citizens, not just the privileged.

Freedom of Speech, Communications, and the Internet

In the 21st century, civil liberties, especially freedom of speech and expression, are bolstered by unfettered and uncensored access to wired and wireless telecommunication infrastructure and its many applications, voice, video, and the Internet. In order to promote vigorous exercise of civil rights, California Democrats support policies to preserve and expand an open, accessible, content-rich, and fast Internet infrastructure.

To promote and support Free Speech, Communications, and the Internet, California Democrats will:

- Protect the privacy and personally identifiable information of Internet consumers;
- Ensure that all communications will be protected from warrantless search and seizure as guaranteed under state and federal constitutions;
• Encourage build-out of gigabit wired and wireless networks to all homes and businesses so that everyone, especially underserved areas, can access, upload, and download content at high speed and fully participate in e-commerce;
• Reassess all broadcasters transmitting over public spectrum to ensure that they meet their legal obligation of serving the public interest;
• Protect American creativity and jobs by combating online piracy and enhancing cybersecurity;
• Promote new content and jobs by preserving the generative qualities of the Internet;
• Guarantee equal access online to all legal content by preventing connectivity degradation and requiring full transparency of any service provider that chooses to offer lower-cost tiered data services; and,
• Encourage new Internet services and content applications by ensuring that telecommunication regulations promote innovation and fair competition between traditional and online providers.

Healthcare
California Democrats believe that healthcare is a human right not a privilege. The CDP recognizes the health and well-being of Californians cannot continue to be based on arbitrary private and public financial decisions and therefore advocates legislation to create and implement a publicly funded (single-payer), privately delivered, fiscally tractable, affordable, comprehensive, secure, high-quality, efficient, and sustainable healthcare system for all Californians.

To build a healthy future for all Californians, Democrats will:
• Support and implement universal comprehensive healthcare for all Californians that includes medical and dental care, full reproductive health services that respects a woman’s right to choose, preventive services, prescription drugs, and mental health and substance abuse counseling and treatment;
• Support generally accepted holistic healing practices and alternative medicine, particularly those areas licensed by the state such as acupuncture and medical cannabis and utilized to relieve intractable pain without the side effects of conventional controlled drugs;
• Enact legislation to remedy any uncertainty concerning dispensing of medical cannabis with regard to state law that will provide for the rights of medical cannabis patients and specify the means and manner of dispensing to qualified patients;
• Lead the nation in providing comprehensive quality healthcare to all our people by enacting SCHIP (State Children’s Health Insurance Program) coverage for all children in California;
• Enact legislation to provide for doctor-directed levels of rehabilitation for brain injuries in all private healthcare plans and public healthcare programs, including injuries sustained through repeated trauma as in sports that manifest at a much later date;
• Work to strengthen Medi-Cal and Medicare and oppose efforts to privatize such safety net programs;
• Simplify language and plan choices for ease of understanding to individuals making health coverage decisions;
• Support a requirement that all HMOs and health insurers obtain prior approval from the state before rates can be increased and when such time as all Californians are covered by publicly funded healthcare, support an independent panel free of healthcare industry conflict to oversee rate increases, cost-effectiveness, and quality of care;
• Ensure that loss of employment does not cause a loss of healthcare;
• Fight to eliminate ostensible denial of coverage because excessive rating based on pre-existing conditions;
• 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 healthcare services;
• Support addressing healthcare disparities and promote the goals of the Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health;
• Support the full funding of community clinics and health centers that serve low-income and homeless populations;
• Protect funding for healthcare services as mandated by voters from being transferred or redirected for any other purpose [e.g., Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63)];
• Enforce the Patient's Bill of Rights;
• Affirm that transgender Californians have access and insurance coverage for all medically necessary treatments;
• 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;
• Invest in education, incentives, and other means to prevent disease and promote healthy living; and,
• Lead the fight against diseases by supporting and expanding stem cell and other groundbreaking research.

Immigration
California is the most diverse state in the nation; her vibrant diversity reflects the foundation of America’s strength. She emphasizes the fundamental principles of inclusion and national unity that respect the rules of law and human dignity. California Democrats believe that the American immigration system should be inclusive, fair, and just. Immigration must be consistent with American values of freedom, opportunity, compassion, and respect for human rights.

As citizens of a state built upon the successes of immigrants, California Democrats will:
• Affirm that we can strengthen America’s borders while upholding our values by honoring the tradition of providing a safe place for immigrants seeking a life of freedom and opportunity;
• Ensure that the fundamental rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution are applied to every person within U.S. borders;
• Support efforts to safeguard America’s security while respecting the principles of the American Dream;
• Support comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform that addresses fairness; family reunification; family unity, including giving full faith and credit to families of same sex marriages and same sex couples; and, a path to earned legal residency for undocumented immigrants in our communities;
• Encourage increased and expedited processing of applications for family reunification and naturalization while supporting reasonable and fair application fees;
• Support our elected officials in seeking timely information with regard to status of immigration paperwork for constituents, particularly for those constituents who have suffered hardship from backlogs and undue delays;
• Support efforts to improve the naturalization process and make citizenship more accessible and affordable by increasing transparency on application fees, providing uniform administration of the naturalization exam, and assisting immigrants prepare for citizenship;
• Support efforts providing undocumented immigrants with a transitional path to earned legalized residency and citizenship, including methods to pay back taxes; learn English; register with the federal government for work permits; contribute to the U.S. through education, work, military service, or other community service; complete criminal and security background checks; and acquire driver licenses and insurance coverage;
• Support efforts to provide assistance in English learning and educational opportunities for cultural immersion;
• Support efforts that maximize educational opportunities for all immigrant students, including access to public education and financial assistance as an investment for our common future;
• Affirm efforts to provide equal access to housing to all immigrants and condemn any xenophobic or racist conduct that denies equal housing to all, including a landlord’s inquiry into the citizenship or immigration status of a tenant or a prospective tenant;
• Support efforts to provide health care and access to insurance for all immigrants to ensure the well-being of our communities;
• Support efforts to promote available government services to immigrant communities;
• Support outreach efforts that promote civic engagement and participation in the political process among naturalized citizens that reflect the diversity of our communities, such as voter registration and voter
education, and support effective legal safeguards and protections for access to voting and voting materials in letters, spirit, and practice;

• Oppose scapegoating, racial profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions, by government or otherwise, that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society;

• Affirm immigration rights based on human rights and support the goals of the Violence Against Women Act, petitioners for U Visas for victims of crimes, and petitioners for T Visas for victims of human trafficking;

• Ensure intervention for abuse, discrimination, and crime among or against immigrants and removing the fear of arrest and deportation for reporting such abuse;

• Encourage the cooperation of local law enforcement with immigrant communities in the interest of public safety for all;

• Oppose efforts by law enforcement agencies in abusing discretion by unfairly targeting, threatening, intimidating, or otherwise harassing immigrants because of their immigration statuses; and,

• Oppose local law enforcement agencies acting as federal immigration law enforcement.

Labor, Economic Justice and Poverty Elimination
California Democrats continue to be close partners with labor and strong supporters of workers’ rights. The ‘glass ceiling’ for people of color and women must be shattered and there must be equal pay for equal or comparable work. Our strong workforce is what has made California among our nation’s most valuable resources.

As we pull ourselves out of this devastating economy, California’s future prosperity will depend upon jobs that ensure a minimum standard of living and that improve the quality of life for all its residents. Food, shelter including affordable housing, clothing, health care, and education are among the basic human rights of all individuals. We are determined in our commitment to safeguard these basic human rights and to strongly support public services designed to eliminate poverty, hunger and homelessness, the elderly, and disabled in order to strengthen all California communities.

To meet the basic economic needs of all Californians, Democrats will:

• Support a minimum wage indexed for inflation, including living wages in areas where the increasingly high cost of living and rising inflation renders it impossible to afford the basic necessities of life;

• Support creating and maintaining public and private sector jobs that permanently lift the working poor out of poverty and achieve self-sufficiency and a secure retirement; support employer-provided, defined benefit pensions as an essential part of retirement security and support the establishment of a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Poverty to carry out a national plan to eliminate poverty in America;

• Fight for public assistance programs that allow individuals to support themselves and their families;

• Support the development of new affordable housing units for families and individuals with low incomes;

• Fight for meaningful tax reform which eliminates corporate welfare and achieves a more equitable tax system for working families;

• Guarantee Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for CalWorks and Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP) recipients in state and federal budgets;

• Support the full funding of food stamp programs;

• Promote expansion of emergency food networks, senior and school meal programs to end starvation;

• Encourage business and preference for firms that employ California workers whenever public funds are used for public works construction;

• Pay prevailing wages to protect the economic base of the communities where government-funded projects are undertaken, thereby ensuring that government is not lowering the standard of living;

• Promote Project Labor Agreements for private and public sector infrastructure projects that provide for local hire, that help assure our returning veterans a job on a project, and that partner with viable state approved apprenticeship and other training programs for the community;
• Support the 8-hour workday and daily overtime and fight any efforts to repeal the 40-hour workweek; advocate for paid sick days and vacation days for all workers; and, protect California’s Paid Family Leave law;
• Enhance workers’ safety programs with adequate and appropriate penalties for unsafe working conditions;
• Support employee rights to organize and collective bargaining and support enforceable organizing agreements that include employer neutrality, card check recognition, and binding arbitration for first time contract disputes, in particular, where industries request governmental approval and/or taxpayer subsidies in to expand;
• Boycott employers who have permanently replaced strikers, protect the collective bargaining rights of workers in both the public and private sectors, and support binding arbitration for police and firefighters who cannot strike; and,
• Fight anti-worker initiatives that undermine the ability of union leaders to carry out the will of their members and engage in political activities;

Anti-Human Trafficking
California Democrats believe every person is endowed with inalienable human rights, including the right to individual autonomy and to be free from violence and exploitation. California, as one of the most diverse states in the Union, is a magnet for domestic and global labor and sex trafficking. While predominantly affecting girls and women, human trafficking also includes boys and men. The CDP is committed to working with state and federal lawmakers to enhance anti-human trafficking efforts that do not criminalize victims and survivors, to provide sex trafficking victims an affirmative defense against solicitation and related charges, and to provide a procedure for survivors to vacate any such prior convictions so that they can pursue a future livelihood with a clean record. We will also urge lawmakers to budget for direct services to aid such victims and survivors.

National Security
California Democrats support a strong national defense that includes considerations for all aspects of defense, not just defense provided by the Armed Forces. We recognize that our national security depends primarily upon a strong economy, a stable federal budget, a stable environment and our perception in the world as a responsible member of the world community. We are opposed to the notion of world domination and are committed to a foreign policy that holds the use of military force as the last option for national defense, to be used only when available diplomatic and preventive options have been exhausted, in conformity with the United Nations Charter. In that regard, we recognize that the current level of military and security spending is:
- unsustainable and unnecessary, and is crippling our government's ability to deal with our many serious problems, including unemployment, massive debt and looming catastrophic global warming;
- almost entirely spent for projection of power overseas through over 700 military bases and preparations for foreign wars, rather than for actual defense of the country (approximately $66 billion); and,
- grossly out of proportion with the rest of the world, in which the U.S. spends more than the rest of the world combined.

We will heed President Dwight Eisenhower’s admonition that: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children." In that spirit, we recognize that every $100 billion per year reallocated from the military to civilian employment would support some 4 million jobs at the median wage.

To protect and defend California and our Constitution, Democrats will:
• Reduce the DOD budget by 25% - 30% — in line with historic drawdowns after major conflicts — primarily by cutting back on that portion of the DOD budget dedicated to bases in foreign countries, projection of military power overseas and development of weapons of mass destruction, and reallocate the savings
to other priorities including assistance to state and local governments to maintain and rehire laid off employees, building out the renewable power grid and rebuilding the nation’s infrastructure, investing in technology and manufacturing jobs in the U.S., and deficit reduction;

• Consolidate all aspects of the national defense budget, now spread among Defense, State, Energy, Homeland Security and other cabinet departments, into a single, consolidated budget item, so that redundancies and unnecessary weapons systems and overseas deployments can be eliminated while ensuring that no legitimate aspect of total national defense is underserved;

• Rebalance our national security portfolio in the context of a consolidated defense budget to place more emphasis on nonmilitary security tools such as diplomacy and foreign aid;

• Reduce the defense development and procurement programs to those items deemed essential for defense against real and not imagined threats to our homeland and national security interests;

• Ensure that military spending prioritizes defense of the homeland and not the siting of numerous military bases on foreign soil as a substitute for robust diplomatic engagement;

• Increase the security of ports by greatly increasing the inspection routine at all airports and seaports, further limiting points of access, and strengthening inspection protocols on all land border crossings;

• Increase foreign non-military aid dedicated to improving anti-terrorist police training, investigation, information exchange, and international cooperation;

• Increase federal funding to states and communities for equipping, training and expanding the force of first-responders;

• Rebuild, strengthen, and reaffirm the primary role of the National Guard as the states' principal means of providing internal security under the command of the various governors;

• Oppose the use of unmanned devices such as drones for killing people in countries with whom we are not at war and ensure that any use of drones in the context of military operations is fully consistent with U.S. obligations under International Human Rights Law;

• Recognize the supremacy of the United States Constitution in all matters; safeguard the civil and personal rights in the Constitution and not sacrifice them for invasive and intrusive security legislation against imagined or exaggerated threats. In particular, we support the right of the people under the Fourth Amendment to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures of their private communications by the NSA, and support limiting the NSA to collecting data only from those who have already been identified as agents of a foreign power;

• Restrict further modernization of our Nuclear Weapons Program pending further cuts in nuclear arsenals by the nuclear weapons states; and,

• Honor obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty framework to convene a conference to negotiate a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone.

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

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

• Enhance the democratic process by ensuring an educated citizenry, equal opportunity for influence, honest public debate, competitive elections and robust civic participation;

• Support and implement legislation for Clean Money full public financing of election campaigns at the local, state and federal levels;
• Support and implement full disclosure, on the ads themselves, of the largest major funders of all political television, radio, print, slate mailer, and online advertising for ballot measures, independent expenditures, and issue advocacy, in a way that clearly and unambiguously identifies the largest major donors;
• Uphold the Voting Rights Act and its implementation in letters, practice, and spirit and improve voter outreach and education efforts, especially for youth and underserved communities;
• Increase voter participation by advocating for extended voting hours and/or days, scheduling elections on weekends, or by declaring Election Day a holiday;
• Investigate and prosecute any and all forms of voter intimidation, including improper solicitation of documentation;
• Demand transparency at every stage with voting system software (including open-source software); national standards for electronic voting machine certification; external, non-partisan certifying groups that publicly disclose testing results; reliable voter-verifiable systems with a paper ballot as the ballot of record; robust auditing procedures that include absentee ballots; updated and thorough recount procedures;
• Support candidates who pledge full accountability to the electorate and hold them to that pledge, including regular reports, in person, to the members of the DSCC and their constituents in their home districts;
• Encourage, where feasible, instant run-off elections, especially in primaries;
• Encourage no concessions by candidates until all ballots are counted;
• Work to overturn, by Constitutional Amendment if necessary, the decision in Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission that allows corporations to give unlimited amounts of money to political campaigns, and to clarify that corporations are not persons and constitutional rights are for natural persons only, and to end the doctrine that money is speech;
• Demand transparency and implementation of accountability measures for all special districts, statewide commissions, and governing boards; and,
• Support and defend voter protection under the federal Voting Rights Act (including those provisions deemed outdated by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013) and the California Voting Rights Act.

Seniors
California Democrats continue to recognize the importance and dignity 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. We affirm and embrace the continuing contributions of our seniors and we continue to be committed to fostering a strong bond between all generations. 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. We strongly believe that seniors be offered the opportunity to remain in jobs that they have so successfully performed in for many years. A decent standard of living, adequate nutrition, health care, and other social and economic achievements are not just development goals—they are human rights.

Pre-seniors, ages 55 to 62, have been among those hardest hit by the current economic downturn. Many in this Baby Boom generation have lost the ability to regain financial footing, yet they don’t qualify for the same benefits as their elders, such as low-income housing and Medicare. Forced retirement for those 55 and older costs needed income, which results in loss or reduction of benefits and brings additional financial burden to Social Security and Medicare.

To honor California seniors, Democrats will:
• Oppose mandatory retirement;
• Work for additional retraining for the Boomer generation to remain in the workforce; extend unemployment, housing and health care benefits to individuals 55 and older and their immediate family;
• Strengthen Social Security and preserve hard-earned pensions as the bedrocks of a dignified retirement;
• Continue Medicare as a guaranteed right;
• 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;
• Support increased, stable funding, and expansion of service hours for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS);
• 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;
• Fight to preserve and protect programs that serve low-income seniors such as: Adult Protective Services, Senior Community Employment, Multipurpose Senior Service Programs, Alzheimer's Cay Care Resource Centers, Home Delivered Meals, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, California Senior Legal Hotline, renter's assistance, homeowner property tax discount assistance programs and property tax postponement;
• Expand 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; and,
• Guarantee decent living conditions for all seniors to ensure that our elders live in dignity and are able to afford the necessities of life — housing, food, health care and a respectable standard of living.

Sustainable Communities
California Democrats seek to build healthy, livable and sustainable communities that conserve natural resources, promote smart growth, are economically prosperous, and socially equitable. Unsustainable consumption reduces our energy independence, exacerbates both global warming and urban/suburban sprawl, while increasing our trade deficit. We are committed to environmental justice, a sustainable lifestyle, and a healthy economy over both the short and the long term.

To promote sustainable communities, California Democrats will:
• Support local governments and regions for completing voluntary, sub-regional comprehensive planning processes that stem the tide of urban and suburban sprawl, and promote smart growth;
• Promote support for driving reduction targets shown to stabilize the climate at a livable level and work for equitable and environmentally – sound road and operations;
• 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;
• Protect and promote 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 existing homeowners’ property rights by limiting eminent domain to reasonable public uses, and oppose the practice of abusing eminent domain to take homes without the consent of the owner and convey property from one private person to another or to any corporation merely to increase tax;
• Encourage incentives to reclaim and redevelop old abandoned buildings and brownfields; and,
• 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.

Veterans and Military Families
All veterans are entitled to receive equal treatment and benefits, including education, training, health benefits, home loans, and other financial assistance.
No veteran should be discriminated against due to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, religion, or political affiliation.

**Through the shared heritage and sacrifice of veterans and their families, Democrats will work to:**

- Insist that the military remove the chain of command from investigating and prosecuting claims of rape and sexual harassment, vigorously prosecute cases, and direct the Governor to immediately effectuate this change in California’s National Guard;
- Insist that the federal Department of Veterans Affairs provide comprehensive and timely, wrap-around health and mental healthcare to all veterans and their families, including those with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which will decrease incidents of domestic violence and suicide;
- For veterans who were involuntarily discharged due solely to their sexual orientation, automatically upgrade the less-than-honorable discharges to honorable discharges, without the requirement that service members request it;
- Ensure all leases and use of veterans’ properties, facilities and land by for-profit, non-profit, and government agencies solely benefit veterans and/or their families, including the Los Angeles Veterans Hospital and campus and California Veterans Homes;
- Support the elimination of homelessness among veterans by increasing funding levels for permanent affordable housing, therapeutic facilities, and utilization of California’s State Armories year-round;
- Provide our troops with the latest protective equipment and weaponry and provide full training prior to deployment;
- Ensure that activated reservists and National Guard members can resume their jobs upon return, and hold accountable those employers who remove employment due to their drill or deployment obligations;
- Provide a secure system of electronic balloting for service members and their families who are stationed outside the United States to ensure full and timely opportunity to vote;
- Insist that the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) fulfill its obligation to veterans by reducing the backlog of claims through both accelerated claims processing, and employ veterans to perform claims processing;
- Insist that those who begin their service as documented or undocumented non-residents are afforded an immediate pathway to citizenship complimentary of their service to the U.S.;
- Waive tuition and fees in state colleges and universities, and state-funded vocational, technical and trade schools for veterans of the Middle East wars and support implementation of the G.I. Bill for the 21st Century, who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001;
- Support a Veterans Bill of Rights to provide for complete benefits to veterans;
- Ensure that the same benefits given to the armed forces are provided to all National Guard and reserve members activated for federal service;
- Establish and fund Veterans’ Courts and encourage the establishment of Veterans’ justice programs;
- Provide assistance to individuals exposed to Agent Orange and other toxins, including contaminated soils, in the course of their military service or as a dependent residing at a former or current military installation; and,
- Provide for equality in the armed forces and veterans’ groups by advocating for issues specific to women veterans and service members.

**Women**

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

To demonstrate this respect, California Democrats will:

- Support equal access for women of all ages to training, jobs and promotions, and equal pay for equal work, capital, equity and contracts;
• Support affirmative action, the rights accorded to women in Title IX, the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and ratification of the ERA;
• Preserve confidential, unrestricted access to affordable, high quality, culturally sensitive health care services, including the full range of reproductive services, contraception and abortion, without requiring guardian, judicial, parental, or spousal consent or notification;
• Support the programs of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), including educational and preventive initiatives, especially those that serve women at risk of sexual and domestic violence;
• Recognize that freedom from domestic violence is a fundamental human right;
• Promote age-appropriate sex education in school curriculum in California;
• Promote health insurance and medical coverage of the full range of mental health services and treatment for women, including early screening and intervention for postpartum depression,
• Increase parenting and job skills for women through available, comprehensive education and training for women who were formerly incarcerated;
• Expand workplace rights for women including flex time, compensatory time, and pregnancy and family leave in all employment contracts; and,
• Promote the engagement of young women in our political process in order to develop a pipeline for new leadership.

World Peace and International Relations
The Obama administration has made a dramatic impact on the world. America now stands for international cooperation first. Under President Obama’s leadership, we exited Iraq, caught Bin-Laden and created the conditions for Libyans to overthrow Khadafy.

Terrorism is a plague, but wars have demonstrated that even for the most powerful nation on earth, it is impossible to eradicate terrorism through a strategy of war and brute force. Foreign intelligence, an effective foreign aid program and domestic policing are much more effective and less costly means of fighting terrorism.

We honor our troops best by returning them home to their loved ones. We must also properly provide for this new generation of veterans upon their return.

The US and California suffer from an ongoing economic crisis. While war efforts continue to cost billions each month, we must face the truth: current domestic needs cannot be met while pursuing unnecessary military actions around the world paid for with borrowed money and not supported by a majority of California Democrats. Further cutting social programs while an open-ended military policy is being implemented is not consistent with the true needs of our country.

Finally we must trust in the belief that the American people will support truth over the fear-mongering of our political adversaries. We must be truthful with our allies, but also with ourselves. It is the only moral path to take as we strive for world peace.

California Democrats support an international policy that will:
• Support the decision to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan and talks aimed at ensuring legitimate democracy in Afghanistan;
• Support the President in his statement that Iran cannot be permitted to acquire nuclear weapons and encourage the use of diplomacy and robust and transparent IAEA inspections to achieve these ends; oppose initiating war against Iran;
• Proactively seek durable peace in the Middle East;
• Cooperate with other nations to eliminate terrorism, increase literacy and child survival rates, combat poverty disease and malnutrition, bolster existing and new democracies and developing nations and reduce the support and demand for narcotics;
• Support the capability of multilateral institutions such as the UN and NATO, and use our economic leadership to leverage the capacity of foreign aid institutions to foster international peace and decrease poverty;
• Combat external threats through increased participation in, support for, and cooperation with the UN, other international agencies and regional organizations, greater participation in peacekeeping to help prevent mass atrocities, and renewed international collaborations to build government structures in states which are failing or emerging from conflict;
• Abide by the terms of the key treaties that advance the causes of peace and human rights, such as: the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention, the Landmine Treaty, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
• Negotiate towards implementation of both the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons;
• Support international efforts to establish an Arms Trade Treaty regulating arms transfers;
• Support the advancement of programs that will end the cycle of violence to ultimately promote peace, rule of law, and human rights for increased security and prosperity at home;
• Actively promote the establishment of national institutions based on the organizing principles of violence prevention and non-violent conflict resolution, utilizing and developing a network of “best practice” peace building policies and programs, both within UN member states, and externally among nations;
• Follow the Geneva and Hague Conventions. No torture. No extraordinary renditions. No exceptions;
• Commit to the achievement of the UN Millennium Goals including eradication of extreme hunger and poverty, achievement of universal primary education, and promotion and empowerment of women. Work to enhance the UN and regional organizations;
• Set as a longterm policy of the US the elimination of all nuclear weapons around the world. Support the Obama Administration’s “interagency discussions and international negotiations regarding the reduction and elimination of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world.” Reallocate defense expenditures in a manner commensurate with actual threats. Enhance efforts to deprive terrorists of weapons of mass destruction by moving multilaterally to diminish weapons stockpiles;
• Affirm the mission of the State Department as the promotion of world peace and disarmament through diplomacy;
• Condition our policies and our aid to other governments upon respect for basic human rights;
• Tailor our foreign policy to eliminate the worst poverty by targeting an additional one percent of our budget to aid and development;
• Promote population-planning worldwide through education and support for family planning organizations;
• Reduce our trade deficit and restore America’s global economic leadership by designing policies that maximize the benefits and minimize the negative consequences of globalization;
• Reevaluate the War Powers Act by exploring the return of authority to declare war to Congress;
• Structure fair trade agreements that require countries to adopt and enforce internationally recognized labor standards such as the right to associate and bargain collectively, and the prohibitions of child labor, forced labor, and discrimination in employment; and,
• California Democrats, as part of our commitment to ending genocide, are devoted to a truthful and just resolution of the Armenian Genocide, and support its condemnation.