2016
PLATFORM

Adopted at California Democrats Convention
San Jose Convention Center
February 28, 2016
2015-2016 PLATFORM COMMITTEE

Thank you to the CDP Platform Committee Members for all their hard work and efforts in putting together the 2016 California Democratic Party Draft Platform.

LEAD CHAIRS: Lyn Shaw Hilfenhaus
Howard Welinsky

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS: Norman Chramoff
Julie Soo

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Robert Baird
Michael Barnett
Jennifer Barranza
Debra Broner
Mikki Cichocki
Farid Ben Amor
Elspeth Farmer
Janet Gastil
Bob Handy
Sandy Hester
Haig Kartounian
Dotty LeMieux
Clark Lee
Jonathan Lyens
Justin Meyers
Daniel Ortiz
Mister Phillips
Natalie Rodgers
Jeremy Smith
Michael Sweet
Matt Tuchow

CDP STAFF: Candelaria Vargas
# Table of Contents

I. Preamble.................................................................................................................... 2  
II. Business and Economy.............................................................................................. 2  
III. Children, Young Adults, and Their Families........................................................... 3  
IV. Civil Justice............................................................................................................. 4  
V. Communications and the Internet............................................................................. 5  
VI. Criminal Justice...................................................................................................... 5  
VII. Culture and the Arts............................................................................................... 7  
VIII. Death with Dignity ............................................................................................... 8  
IX. Disabilities................................................................................................................ 8  
X. Education.................................................................................................................. 9  
XI. Energy and Environment......................................................................................... 10  
   i. Energy  
   ii. Environment  
   iii. Agriculture and Food Safety  
   iv. Transportation  
   v. Water  
XII. Equality of Opportunity......................................................................................... 12  
XIII. Health Care........................................................................................................... 13  
XIV. Immigration.......................................................................................................... 14  
XV. Labor, Economic Justice and Poverty Elimination.................................................. 16  
   i. Anti-Human Trafficking  
XVI. National Security................................................................................................ 17  
XVII. Political Reform................................................................................................... 18  
XVIII. Seniors............................................................................................................... 20  
XIX. Sustainable Communities...................................................................................... 20  
XX. Veterans and Military Families.............................................................................. 21  
XXI. Women................................................................................................................. 22  
XXII. World Peace and International Relations............................................................ 23
PREAMBLE
The Platform of the California Democratic Party is a statement of our principles for the people of California, Democratic Party leaders and members, our elected officials, and candidates who seek our endorsement.

California Democrats believe in the equality and inherent dignity of all persons. We believe our state and our national government must protect the rights to freedom of expression and assembly as well as the equality of opportunity, for all Californians.

We believe that justice for all requires constant vigilance and a thorough examination of laws and governmental actions that disproportionately impact diverse segments of society.

This Democratic Platform depends on resolutely defending these American values, which support every individual’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 below in a series of planks that embody our cherished principles for our residents, our elected officials, and those we seek to elect.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY
A robust economy and business climate that creates jobs and economic opportunity for all is fundamental to the promise of the American Dream and the spirit of California. Through work we derive our dignity and contribute to our individual and collective growth. From it, we also contribute to the tax base for the programs and policies we champion as Democrats that support our brethren who are less fortunate. Capitalism is essential to our growth across any industry where profit is an appropriate incentive, but government must also work to promote equality of opportunity through economic justice and the redistribution of wealth. We must also continue to encourage the explosive creativity and innovative intellectual property growth that have come to typify all parts of California and draw people from around the country and the world.

To grow jobs and assure a prosperous future for all Californians, California Democrats will:
• Continue to encourage the sustainable growth of small businesses, which serve as the backbone of California's economy;
• 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;
• 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;
• Support a legislative initiative to provide foreclosure relief to borrowers who were the victims of unscrupulous loan brokers or unethical financial services practices, along with investigating the perpetrators of illegal and abusive financial services businesses;
• 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 capital for loans to businesses and individuals while strengthening the state agencies that provide regulatory oversight of banks and financial services;
• Continue to 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 promoting commerce;
• Reward employers that, instead of moving out of state, choose to remain in California by giving the California Treasurer/Board of Equalization the mandate 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 implementation of tax policies that provide a higher degree of equity; equity, including a fair self-employment tax rate to support small businesses;
• Continue to support and fund job retraining and vocational rehabilitation programs to meet the manpower needs of California's changing economy;
• Provide new funding mechanisms and legislative support for the promotion of progressive 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;
• Support job-creating businesses and cooperative member/worker owned small businesses and provide for growth of already successful businesses;
• Phase out unwarranted corporate farm subsidies to create a more equitable and local food market system;
• Support a uniform criteria for determining a "small business" and eliminate 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 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, YOUNG ADULTS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

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 will:

• Expand pre-natal, peri-natal and well-baby care, as well as provide comprehensive immunization services;
• Support programs that prevent homelessness and 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 that provide for the average caloric intake needs of our children.
• 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 without regard to the gender of the parent.
• Ensure Child Protective Services and social workers have the resources needed to protect children and support foster youth; reunify families when possible and improve the foster care system to ensure that child abuse and neglect court proceedings that protect the welfare of children are accessible, swift, and unbiased, and aggressively enforce child-support payment rulings; work to ensure child support
payments are timely paid and urge enforcement in a manner that maintains a payor’s ability to pay and encourage foster youth to successfully complete high school;

• Support the fathers, mothers, children, and guardians who are involved in the Child Protective Services process and work to ensure that all parties are treated with fairness and equity under the law;

• Enhance education and development with free community-based enrichment 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;

• Support the removal or ban of toxic substances from all toys, equipment, and furniture, and the removal, ban or remediation of toxic substances from buildings and building materials sold or used in California with a priority assigned to public buildings; and

• Actively identify and remove toxic chemicals, particularly PCB’s which have been banned by Congress, from California’s schools to protect all children and provide them a healthy learning environment.

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 of our citizens 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.”

To reverse these attacks on the rights of our citizens to seek full and fair justice through the courts, California Democrats 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 ruling 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, California 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.

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE INTERNET
The fundamental human right of free speech requires robust communication technologies, and the Internet has quickly proven to be an essential part of its propagation. All speech must be unfettered by equal and uncensored access to all forms of wired and wireless telecommunication infrastructure and its many applications, including voice, video, and the Internet. In order to promote vigorous exercise of our fundamental human rights, California Democrats support policies to preserve and encourage continued innovation of open, fast, accessible, and competitive communication and Internet services.

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 high speed wired and wireless networks to all homes and businesses so that everyone, especially underserved areas, can access, upload, and download content at high speeds and fully participate in e-commerce;
• Reassess all communication operators transmitting over radio 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;
• Guarantee equal access online to all legal content by preventing connectivity degradation and requiring full transparency of any service provider that chooses to offer tiered data services;
• Encourage new video and content applications by requiring Internet service providers to promote innovation and competition between traditional and “over-the-top” (over the public Internet) services; and,
• Encourage Internet service providers to deploy services in areas that are already served by other providers to expand competition and increase consumer choice.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Crime prevention and rehabilitation are essential to our families, our communities, and the state budget. 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 and investment in alternatives to incarceration and services as the best use of taxpayer funds.

We are committed to ending mass incarceration in California prisons and jails. We need to prioritize building schools, not jails. We must invest in proven strategies to prevent crime including providing structured preschool and afterschool programs for youth, as well as programs to promote school retention and promote graduation. We will work to end the practice of racial profiling, from surveillance through charging and sentencing;

To promote safe communities for all, California Democrats will:
• Provide drug treatment of high-quality that is easily accessible for every person with an alcohol or substance abuse disorder;
• Prevent criminalization of persons who commit low-level offenses or create a “public nuisance” related to homelessness or mental illness, by directing them to public health and housing services, rather than resorting to arrest;
• Support abolishing capital punishment;
• Enhance victim-witness advocacy that provides therapeutic assistance, financial compensation and support for comprehensive services for victims of crime;
• Support the legalization, regulation and taxation of marijuana, in a manner similar to that of tobacco or alcohol; prioritizing the health and safety of California’s communities over revenue or profits.
• Support contact and communication for families and loved ones who are incarcerated - there is no stronger predictor of post incarceration success than family support. Invest in programs that assist families in visitation, communication, and planning for re-entry. End the practice of housing Californians in out-of-state jails and prisons;
• Recruit and retain law enforcement officers who are trained to work effectively in cross-cultural situations;
• Support law enforcement officers with excellent pay and benefits, and hold them accountable for misconduct. Dismiss any peace officer that does not uphold the high standards and trust afforded them by the community and government;
• Implement the policies and practices of de-escalation that enable law enforcement to work in a safe and productive manner rather than resorting to physical restraint, violence, arrest or the threat of restraint, violence or arrest in the face of anger, disagreement or resistance that is not a threat to the peace officer or others;
• Insist on independent investigators in cases of police use of deadly force;
• Support the universal use of police body, dashboard and prisoner compartment cameras; support rules requiring police officers to mitigate injuries by responding appropriately to requests for medical assistance or in situations where a suspect has been injured or killed during a police encounter;
• Support the collection of data in each county about demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, language, gender identity age citizens detained, fined, arrested, injured or killed during police encounters;
• Prioritize funding for labs to complete all rape kits in a timely fashion;
• Support the use of DNA testing when appropriate to protect the wrongfully accused and set free the wrongfully convicted;
• Challenge the implementation of "stop and frisk" policies that are disproportionately applied to persons of color;
• Overhaul the bail system so that persons awaiting trial are not forced to languish in jails solely because they and their families are too poor to pay for bail;
• Remove barriers to accessing public benefits for people with felony convictions, including victim services;
• Work to restore the full civil rights, including the right to serve on juries, of persons convicted of felonies who have served their term of incarceration and supervision;
• Support the establishment of a non-partisan sentencing commission that is mandated to review inequitable sentencing laws;
• Provide balanced funding for public defender and district attorney agencies so that the promise of a constitutionally adequate defense is realized;
• Work to reduce prison overcrowding by decreasing penalties and decriminalizing certain drug and other non-violent offenses, implement state law provisions for compassionate release and release for older, long-term prisoners, and support community service as an alternative sentence for low risk individuals;
• Oppose using prisons and jails as de facto mental health facilities and fight to adequately fund community mental health and substance abuse programs;
• Ensure that law enforcement and prison workers are trained how to properly interact with mentally ill people.
• Oppose the expansion of public prisons and call for the closure of private prisons and jails;
• Advocate that the state adopt concrete measures to eliminate the use of solitary confinement for adults and minors;
• Oppose youth being held in adult prisons and jails; end the practice of trying juveniles as adults;
• Support youth parole by providing review for all sentences committed before the age of 23, including sentences of Life, Life Without the Possibility of Parole (LWOP) and determinate sentences; and,
• Support the implementation of restorative justice practices that bring together people who have committed crimes, victims and community members in an effort to repair the damage caused by criminal activity through accountability and rehabilitation.

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 and promote 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;
• Promote the arts as a major employer and industry by recognizing the importance of creative workers to the California economy, and strongly support all efforts to retain California’s international status as a center of innovation, including the film and television industry, architecture, design, technology and the many categories of fine and performing arts; and,
• Support increases in funding for the California Arts Council.

DEATH WITH DIGNITY
To ensure death with dignity, California Democrats 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
People with disabilities have an inalienable right to participate as self-sufficiently as possible through employment and equal opportunity for political expression. California democrats support and uphold 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, and promote increases in, 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:
• Expect elected officials to have one staff person well-versed in disability civil rights issues;
• Actively support 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; Strongly support the formation and strengthening of Democratic organizations dedicated to advocating for and the inclusion of people with disabilities in civic and political life;
• Ensure that all Democratic political headquarters are fully accessible;
• Encourage more balanced participation of people with disabilities on state and local commissions;
• Work with unions to promote and develop alternative forms of employment for people with disabilities, including those unable to 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 people with disabilities the right to interdependence through shared housing with a spouse or significant other;
• 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
We believe that the right to human dignity and equality can be preserved only with a universally well-educated population, and that only public education, free to all through high school and available and affordable to all through college and university, can achieve that goal. Further, public education improves our quality of life, strengthens our economy and provides a diverse trained and competent workforce.

California's K-12 education was once the envy of America. The California Master Plan for Higher Education made our California Community Colleges (CCC), California State University System (CSU), and University of California (UC) models for the world.

California students must have access to free world-class K-12 public education that will prepare them to live, work, and thrive in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and highly connected world. We must provide instruction in all the sciences and humanities, and we must prepare our students for postsecondary education, career technical education, and active citizenship in the 21st century. To assure access to jobs, strong support is needed for STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The passage of Proposition 30 in 2012 provided more than $24 billion in increased funding to K-12 and community colleges; and, it freed up state funds that have prevented devastating cuts to services for seniors, low-income children and healthcare. Yet, California is still near the bottom, nationally, in per pupil spending. In order to ensure continued improvement in California’s schools and correct years of underfunding we must prioritize the extended funding of K-12 and community colleges.

While Proposition 30 increased funding to K-14, only in the last budget has it increased funding to UC and CSU. These two segments should be prioritized dramatically to correct the years of underfunding that approaches $1 billion each for UC and CSU.

Financial aid programs, such as Pell Grants, Cal Grants and other middle-class scholarships must be fully funded.

To help educate California's young leaders for the 21st century, California Democrats will:
• Strive for full competency in reading and writing English and at least one other language;
• Provide instruction in social studies, mathematics, the sciences, literature, art, music, foreign languages, and physical education;
• Ensure that all California four-year-old children have access to preschool;
• Support career and technical education programs in high school, Adult Education, and Community College programs;
• Implement "debt-free college" and free community college, so students have a public college education financed entirely without student loans. We can move in the direction of expanding access by allowing refinancing of existing student loans, providing equal treatment of student loans in bankruptcy, and rolling back tuition increases. This can be done by reinvesting in public higher education at the Federal and State levels;
• Target reforms and resources to close the achievement gap;
• Ensure that districts' local accountability plans for grant monies reach the students with the greatest needs, for whom they are intended;
• Support restorative policies and practices that eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline. End zero-tolerance policies that criminalize student behavior, and develop school discipline reforms that encourage counseling, education and positive behavior interventions;
• Ensure that educators and classified staff receive wages commensurate with their expertise and responsibility, and have opportunities for professional growth;
• Ensure that “adjunct faculty” at our community colleges who do the same work as full-time faculty and meet the same professional standards are paid a comparable wage. Encourage community colleges to utilize full-time faculty to the extent possible to ensure student access to all courses and office-hour faculty support to increase on-time graduation rates;
• Ensure that teachers play a central role in the selection and creation of curricula, and are able to adapt curricula as appropriate for their students;
• Ensure that science textbooks fully reflect the strong scientific consensus on issues of science such as climate change, evolution and the Big Bang theory.
• Ensure a safe educational environment and school culture where students and staff do not feel threatened and are free from bullying and harassment, including racist and ethnic provocations. Provide training in tolerance, mediation, peaceful conflict resolution, and counseling. When incidents of racial or ethnic abuse occur, schools and universities should respond immediately and officially;
• Assure that sworn peace officers in schools are adequately trained to handle difficult situations and understand that the use of force against students should be used as a last resort when all other means of disciplinary measures have been exhausted. Peace officers should only be present when judged essential by the community;
• Support comprehensive, accurate, age-appropriate sex education, including information 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.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
All Californians, urban, suburban and rural, hold a shared interest in preserving and protecting the environment that sustains us, especially our water. 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, California Democrats will:

Energy
• Urge Congress to pass a comprehensive energy security and climate protection law that includes national requirements for renewable electricity generation, end 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 employed to tear down and remove the plant;

• 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 the right of individuals to generate their own energy; virtual net metering; expansion of solar energy production in disadvantaged communities and multi-unit developments; and encourage the growth of individual energy generation. Oppose any attempts to disincentivize the growth of rooftop solar systems. 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 encourages 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;

• Extend the state's landmark Global Warming Solutions Act to 2050; by 2020, return to the state's 1990 greenhouse gas emissions levels; by 2030 produce 100 percent of California's electricity from renewable and sustainable energy sources, produce 50 percent of the state's transportation fuels from non-petroleum sources, and support Low Carbon Fuel Standards that take into account long-term sustainability;

• Oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure projects;

• Reject any attempt for new offshore oil or gas development, preserve and ensure 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 policies to eliminate the costly scourge of plastic pollution from our state's neighborhoods, rivers, beaches, and marine ecosystems; 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;

- Work to reduce California’s dependence on natural gas, replacing it with renewable energy, in order to eliminate the need for storage facilities like the one near Porter Ranch that had a massive well blow out, without sacrificing energy system reliability.

**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 vehicle regulations to 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;
- Demand Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) driving-reduction targets, shown by science to support climate stabilization;
- Work for equitable and environmentally-sound road and parking operations; Support strategies to reduce driving, such as smart growth, “complete streets”; teaching bicycling traffic skills; and improving transit, from local systems to high speed rail
- Work for shared, convenient and value-priced parking, operated with a system that provides earnings to those paying higher costs or getting a reduced wage, due to the cost of providing the parking; and,
- Demand a state plan showing how cars and light-duty trucks can hit climate-stabilizing targets, by defining enforceable measures to achieve the needed fleet efficiency and per-capita driving;
- Support policies, including tax policies and the use of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) grants, that empower business owners, especially small business owners, to make investments in transportation infrastructure to ensure that freight moves by lower-emission local, short-line freight railroads, instead of adding to highway congestion and pollution.

**Water**

- Implement a comprehensive science-based water plan that includes managing each watershed (including groundwater) as a unified whole and upgrading the Delta levee system;
- Fully protect all water sources from contamination and guarantee sufficient water for the basic human needs of drinking and sanitation;
- Motivate efficient, sustainable, safe use of water and hold all users accountable for their consumption; implement and enforce regulations regarding groundwater use including full usage documentation; and,
- Ensure allocation and management of water to sustain ecosystems, fisheries, recreation, and endangered species.

**EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

The California Democrats 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:

- Support a just and righteous society by speaking out in a public and unified voice against all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment, hatred, and violence directed at racial and ethnic minorities. Support movements that recognize disproportionate discrimination, including Black Lives Matter;
- 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; including the Tribes sovereign powers in protecting Native American sacred sites and grave sites. We support the removal of and the prevention of using any mascot names by public educational institutions that are discriminatory or offensive to the Native American community.
- 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 marriages in accordance with their respective beliefs;
- Protect the right of all people to use facilities and participate in all aspects of society consistent with their true gender identity, regardless of the gender assigned them at birth.
- 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.

**HEALTH CARE**
California Democrats believe that health care is a human right not a privilege. We 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 health care system for all Californians.

To build a healthy future for all, California Democrats will:

- Support and implement universal comprehensive health care 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;
• Monitor recent legislation enacted to remedy any uncertainty concerning dispensing of medical cannabis with regard to state law that will provide for rights of a medical cannabis patients and specify means and manner of dispensing to qualified patients;
• Lead the nation in providing comprehensive quality health care 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 health care plans and public health care 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 health care, support an independent panel free of health care industry conflict to oversee rate increases, cost-effectiveness, and quality of care;
• Support the state in coordinating with the Federal government in regulating and controlling the cost of prescription drugs;
• Invest in education, incentives, and other means to prevent disease and promote healthy living;
• Lead the fight against diseases by supporting and expanding stem cell and other groundbreaking research;
• Ensure that loss of employment does not cause a loss of health care;
• 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;
• Recognize the physical and financial burdens of family caregivers and support legislation and programs to provide adequate training, assistive interventions, and financial safety nets such as employer savings and tax credits;
• Ensure economic and physical access to multilingual health care services;
• Support addressing health care 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 health care 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; and,
• 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.

IMMIGRATION
California is the most diverse state in the nation; and reflects the foundation of America's strength, emphasizing 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; country of origin; 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, religious 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 state and 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 organized 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.

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, help the elderly, and help the disabled in order to strengthen all California communities.

To meet the basic economic needs of all Californians, California Democrats will:
• Support a statewide minimum wage with a path to at least $15 per hour, and then indexed for inflation, and 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;
• Encourage employers to “ban the box” and fight to ensure that hiring decisions are made on the basis of an individual’s qualifications for a particular job instead of whether they are formerly convicted/incarcerated persons;
• 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 chronic hunger;
• 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 to expand;
• Support “Fair Share” fees which cover the costs of union representation for bargaining and enforcing workers’ contracts with employers.
• Oppose so called “Right to Work” laws, which deny workers the chance to have strong unions that give them a voice at work.
• 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.
• Support funding for California’s mutual aid disaster response capabilities to ensure that state and local fire agencies have the resources necessary to effectively mitigate the public safety consequences brought about by changing climate patterns.

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 believe that keeping the United States of America and Americans safe is of the utmost importance. Therefore, a strong national defense should include aspects that go beyond military might. Our national security also depends upon a strong domestic economy, a stable federal budget, a healthy environment, and in addition to our perception in the world as a responsible member of the world community. We are committed to a foreign policy that holds the use of military force as means of last resort for national defense, to be used only when available diplomatic and preventive options have been exhausted, and in conformity with the United Nations Charter. We recognize that current national security policies should take into consideration their downstream effects and unintended consequences. In that regard, we recognize that the current level of military spending hinders our government's ability to deal with domestic priorities, including unemployment, national debt and environmental degradation.

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, and the hopes of its children."
To preserve, protect and defend our country and the Constitution of the United States, California Democrats will:

- Support reallocating the defense budget on expenditures that protect the homeland against current threats such as terrorism, loose fissile materials, and the fight against extremist ideologies. Military spending should address today’s threats not yesterday’s adversaries;
- Increase foreign non-military aid dedicated to improving anti-terrorism capabilities, law enforcement training, investigation, information exchange, and international cooperation. We believe that it is impossible to eradicate terrorism solely through a strategy of war and brute force. A robust foreign intelligence, an effective foreign aid program, and domestic policing should be better leveraged to support the nation’s fight against terrorism;
- Support a gradual and responsible reduction in the DOD budget - in line with historic drawdowns after major conflicts and reallocation of those cutbacks to state and local government needs;
- Rebalance our national security portfolio to place more emphasis on nonmilitary tools such as diplomacy, and foreign aid;
- Support a foreign policy that promotes democratic reforms abroad and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law;
- Secure our ports of entry by enhancing the inspections at all airports, seaports, land crossings, and cargo containers;
- Increase federal funding to states and communities for equipment, training and improving the capabilities 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;
- Support the establishment of clear and accountable chain of command for the use of unmanned devices such as drones 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 law;
- Recognize the supremacy of the United States Constitution in all matters. There needs to be balance between the gathering of intelligence and the constitutional protection of Americans. Therefore, all domestic surveillance must be in compliance with our laws and regulations. In particular, we support the right of the people under the Fourth Amendment to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures;
- Honor obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty framework and set a long term policy to reduce and eventually eliminate weapons of mass destruction throughout the world;
- Support investments in infrastructure improvements and technology that promotes domestic energy independence through renewable sources. We believe that climate change and global warming poses a national security threat;
- Work with gun owners and sporting associations to promote responsible gun ownership, safety education, and reasonable background checks;
- Support a common sense ban on deadly assault weapons;
- Support enhancing the federal and state law enforcement agencies’ capabilities of cybersecurity, in order to protect Americans against the increased theft of their identities;
- Protect Americans’ creativity and jobs by combating online piracy of their intellectual properties; and,
- Advocate for policies that decrease the demand for illicit drugs. Thereby decreasing the influence of international narco-traffickers.

POLITICAL REFORM

California Democrats believe that a healthy democracy is based on free and fair 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 of funding sources for political advertisements, including 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 donor(s);
- 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;
- 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;
- Support and defend voter protection under the federal Voting Rights Act and the California Voting Rights Act. This includes supporting voter outreach and education efforts, especially for youth and underserved communities and the Voting Rights Act provisions requiring federal pre-clearance for changes to local and state voting laws and policies that were deemed outdated by the Supreme court in Shelby V. Holder in 2013.
- Urge all states to join the inter-state compact, which will award Electoral College votes to the Presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes nationwide, in order to make all states important to the candidates and in order to prevent the Presidency from being stolen by the award of Electoral College votes district-by-district in gerrymandered states; and
- Demand the establishment of polling sites in tribal communities with large populations on reservations and surrounding areas including urban Native American Communities.
SENIORS
California Democrats continue to recognize the importance and dignity of seniors, the fastest growing age group in the nation, and believe they enrich our everyday experiences, connect us with our past and are a strong driving force in our collective future. We affirm and embrace the continuing contributions of seniors and we continue to be committed to fostering a strong bond between all generations. 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 senior 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 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 thru 65, have been among those hardest hit by recent economic downturns. Many in the Baby Boom generation have lost the ability to regain financial footing, including experiencing salary reductions, 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 results in the loss of much needed income, resulting in loss of future benefits and brings additional financial burden to the Social Security and Medicare systems.

To honor California seniors, California 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 – including stronger oversight of reverse mortgage programs - 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 Day 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 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, and provide green spaces for all communities;
- 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 revenues;
- 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 U.S. veterans are entitled to receive equal treatment and benefits, including education, training, health care, home loans, and other financial assistance. No veteran should be discriminated against due to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, religion, or political affiliation.

To honor the shared heritage and sacrifice of veterans and their families, California Democrats will:
- Insist that the military remove the chain of command from investigating and prosecuting claims of rape and sexual harassment;
- Insist that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides comprehensive and timely, wrap-around health and mental healthcare to all veterans and their families, including those with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which will decrease incidents of domestic violence and suicide;
- Advocate that 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 that all leases and use of VA properties, facilities and land by for-profit, non-profit, and government agencies solely benefit veterans and/or their families,
- 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 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 VA fulfills its obligation to veterans by reducing the backlog of claims through both accelerated claims processing, and employing 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 recent conflicts 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 accessible to all counties 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;
• Support the licensing of Medical Psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications to treat veterans’ mental health needs;
• Provide better services and support to veterans making the transition from active duty to appropriate and rewarding post-service civilian employment.

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. California 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, and the right to sue for equal pay, 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 Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution;
• Recognize the decline in the number of Democratic Women serving in the state legislature and promote the importance of women running for and serving in public office;
• 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 and protection from violence or abuse, domestic and otherwise 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;
• Promote the engagement of young women in our political process in order to develop a pipeline for new leadership; and,
• Support women’s reproductive rights by calling for reparations for all women who were sterilized without consent in California jails, prisons and state institutions.

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 began a new chapter in the story of the relationship between Cuba and the US.

But many places in the world remain closed to Democracy and repressive of the most basic civil rights. Terrorism is a plague, but wars have demonstrated that even for the most powerful nation on earth, it is impossible to eradicate terrorism solely through a strategy of war and brute force. Foreign intelligence, an effective foreign aid program and domestic policing should be better leveraged to support the nation’s fight against terrorism.

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 and also with ourselves. We must be firm with those who threaten the American people and our democratic ideals, whether at home or abroad. And we must take the moral path as we strive to promote world peace.

*To create a more secure and peaceful world, California Democrats will:

• Support the decision to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan and talks aimed at ensuring legitimate democracy in Afghanistan;
• 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 long-term 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;
• Support the President in his efforts to reach a nuclear agreement with Iran and hope that the Iranian Government will recognize this opportunity to re-engage with the world community in a positive way in pursuit of peace and with recognition of basic human and civil rights. However California Democrats also recognize that the recently signed agreement does not affect state laws that limit transactions with companies that do business in Iran, specifically including the bar on investment by CalPERS, CalSTERS, banks and insurance companies in those companies as well as limitations on government contracting with companies doing business with the Government of Iran. Those laws should be maintained; and
• Support the dignified treatment of refugees no matter their race, religion or country of origin.