

## SANDERS THEMATICS

**Sanders Is Wrong on Guns** - Sanders repeatedly voted against the Brady Bill, but voted for the loophole that allows a person to purchase a gun if the background check is not completed within a certain time (the amendment he voted for was 1 day; the Brady Bill is 3 days). He voted to provide near blanket immunity to gun manufacturers. He voted against restoring funding to research on gun violence, and voted to allow firearms in checked luggage on Amtrak for guns in national parks. His first win to Congress was aided by the National Rifle Association, which ran ads against his opponent.

**Sanders Proposes Trillions in New Spending without Plans to Pay for It/Raising Taxes on the Middle Class** - Sanders has introduced many costly proposals, totaling roughly \$20 trillion. While Sanders has offered some specific pay-fors, he is not being straightforward about how he will pay for all of his proposals. He says he wants the wealthy to pay their fair share, but there is not enough money in the top one percent that can cover the cost of all his proposals. That leaves three options: Sanders will have to raise taxes on middle class families; Sanders will have to increase the deficit; or Sanders will have to scale back his proposals.

**Sanders is Rewriting History** - Sanders has tried to change the record on why he voted against DOMA, the Brady Bill and immigration reform in order to sound more progressive than he was at the time. He said he opposed immigration reform to protect guest workers, when at the time he said guest worker programs were a corporate plot to replace American jobs with cheap labor. He said he opposed DOMA because he believed in marriage equality, but at the time called it a states' rights issue and supported civil unions. The Washington Post said his explanation of the Brady Bill vote created a "misleading impression."

**Sanders Is Not a Strong Champion of African Americans, Latinos, Women** - While claiming to be a champion on issues of equality, Sanders has not been a leader on issues most important to women, African Americans and Latinos, and has said that issues of race and gender were secondary to the class struggle. Throughout his career, Sanders has been criticized for excluding women from top positions on his staff and administration. As mayor and in Congress, Sanders has generally been silent on race issues, and was never at the forefront of debates on police reform or immigration. His rhetoric on immigration reform frequently accuses immigrants of driving down wages and taking jobs from American workers.

**Sanders Would Repeal ACA and Give Health Care Over to States**- Senator Sanders voted for the Affordable Care Act but has said he wants to move the U.S. to a single payer system. His proposal would repeal the Affordable Care Act, along with Medicaid, TRICARE, SCHIP, and private insurance, and force everyone into a plan that is administered at the state level. Vermont tried a similar proposal but found that it was unfeasible because it would have raised taxes and busted the budget.

**Sanders Has Evolved On Issues** - Sanders has said that he never had never changed his mind on a closely held position, but that's not always the case. He evolved on marriage equality, opposing DOMA as a state's rights issue, was silent on civil unions when Vermont was debating it, and then in 2006, he supporting civil unions rather than advocating to go further to full marriage equality. Sanders said that legalizing drugs would "doom an entire generation of young people," but now advocates for removing marijuana from the federal government's list of outlawed drugs. Sanders previously defended his 2005 vote to give gun manufacturers broad immunity from liability, but under pressure, Sanders said he was

willing to reconsider. Sanders used to be a pacifist, but stresses that he is not anymore, and would be willing to go to lead the United States into a war if necessary.

**Sanders's Past Extreme Views** - When Sanders entered political life, he held a number of extreme views. In the 1970s, Sanders supported a 100% tax rate on incomes above \$1 million. He called for an end to compulsory education, and praised the growing disillusionment with public schooling, saying it created adults who were docile and conformist. He also called for the legalization of all drugs, including heroin.

**Sanders Can't Get Things Done** - Sanders has only sponsored one substantive bill that became law over almost 26 years in Congress, and passed only 45 amendments into law - mostly attached to must pass spending bills. His current proposals have very few co-sponsors. He has been called one of the "least cooperative" Senators, and has frustrated his colleagues with his uncompromising views. He said that compromising was "not his style," and was shut out of budget negotiations over concerns about his abilities, even though he is chair of the Budget Committee.

**Sanders Puts Ideology Over Everyday Americans** - Sanders has admitted that the top one percent alone can't pay for all of his proposals, and in the Senate, repeatedly opposed payroll tax cut that benefits working families. He was the only Democrat to oppose the Export-Import Bank, even though it helps thousands of small businesses and jeopardizes American jobs.

**Sanders Is Not A Democrat** - Throughout his career, Sanders has been critical of the Democratic Party, and said that you can't change the system from within the party. When he ran for Congress, he said it would be hypocritical for him to run as a Democrat, refused become a Democrat to join the Caucus, and distanced himself from the party while in the House. He declined the Democratic nomination for Senate in 2006, and even said it would have been good if President Obama had a primary challenge in 2012. Now, Sanders believes we need a "course correction" from President Obama's accomplishments as President.

**Sanders Pay to Play with an Anti-Labor Donor** - Sanders accepted support from a company while it was involved in a bitter labor dispute—locking out union employees for nearly 22 months. In July 2012, he accepted \$10,000 in contributions from American Crystal Sugar, while the workers had been locked out for nearly a year due to failed labor negotiations. The workers' union widely opposed the company's contract proposal because it could have doubled their out-of-pocket health care costs. At the same time American Crystal Sugar was proposing to cut back on workers' health benefits, it spent more than \$2 million in lobbying money and campaign contributions to politicians like Sanders in order to preserve its favorable sugar commodity program.

**Jane Sanders, Burlington College & VEDA** - Jane Sanders has been called Bernie's "closest political advisor." She has been accused of benefitting from a \$200,000 "golden parachute" after potentially committing loan fraud as president of Burlington College. While Jane served on the board of directors for the Vermont Economic Development Authority, Sanders announced that the program received \$1 million from the USDA relending program. Sanders was involved with helping VEDA obtain federal funding before his wife served on the board, which could raise the question of whether her appointment to the board authority was influenced by Sanders' work. One of Sanders' largest corporate donors, Agri-Mark, received \$2 million in financing from VEDA after contributed \$7,500 to Sanders' campaign.