

## **Bergeron, Jean-François -NGA**

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**From:** Sunderland, Meaghan -WSHDC -WS  
**Sent:** 9 septembre 2016 14:21  
**To:** Morrison, David -NGM  
**Subject:** WSHDC-3596: U.S. Elections Outlook

**Summary:** With Labour Day now behind us, the U.S. presidential election has moved into the homestretch and Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Clinton appears to have the advantage over her Republican rival, Donald Trump. Most pundits are of the view that Secretary Clinton has a decent chance of beating Mr. Trump on November 8th, but more difficult to predict is the margin by which she may do so. Much will depend on the rate of voter turnout [REDACTED] turnout could be low. In addition to the presidential election, voters will also elect 435 members to the U.S. House of Representatives and 34 to the U.S. Senate. Most expect the House of Representatives to remain under Republican control, but many pundits are now giving the edge to Democrats when it comes to likely control of the Senate. Twelve states will hold gubernatorial elections and Republicans will look to expand their historically high number of governorships, but they also run a risk of losing control of some state chambers.

### **The Numbers**

2. Most general election polls show Clinton leading Trump, although the race has narrowed somewhat over the past few weeks. The Real Clear Politics polling average, for example, currently has Mrs. Clinton up by 2 points (41.2% to Trump's 39.1%) in a race that includes Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson (9.0%) and Green Party candidate Jill Stein (3.3%). These polling averages were showing Clinton with double that margin in early August, right after the Democratic Convention, and everyone will be watching closely to see if the gap between the candidates continues to narrow over the coming weeks.

3. As many will recall from the 2000 election, however, success in the national popular vote only gets a candidate so far. U.S. presidential elections are based on the electoral college system, where each state is assigned a specific number of electoral votes (equal to the combined total of its Senate membership and House of Representatives delegation). To win an election, a presidential candidate must capture at least 270 of the 538 electoral votes. While some may find Clinton's general election lead to be relatively modest, most analysts agree that her path to the 270 electoral votes is much wider and deeper than that of Trump's.

4. Democrats start with an electoral vote advantage, having won 18 states plus the District of Columbia (a total of 242 electoral votes) in the last six presidential elections – known as the “blue wall”. Mitt Romney won 206 electoral votes in 2012 and even if one starts from the presumption that Trump can win those same states [REDACTED], his path to 270 is not so evident. Trump and his campaign have tried to make inroads with a “Midwest Rust Belt state” strategy, but several polls show him trailing in places like Michigan and Wisconsin. And 2012 swing states like Virginia and Colorado have at times shown Clinton with double-digit leads, such that the Clinton campaign has decided to concentrate its advertising in other battleground states like New Hampshire, Nevada, North Carolina, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Iowa. The Trump campaign is also engaging those states, but it would require Trump carrying all of Romney's states and winning in the three largest swing states (OH, PA, FL) for him to win. While polls in many of those battleground states are competitive, Clinton is actually leading in all of the 26 states that Obama won in 2012 (a total of 332 electoral votes). Perhaps more worrisome to Republicans is how well Clinton is faring in states like North Carolina (which Romney won in 2012) and Georgia or even more traditional GOP strongholds like Arizona, Missouri or Utah, forcing Republicans to play defense. A Washington Post / Survey Monkey poll out earlier this week shocked many when it listed Clinton and Trump as in a dead heat in the Republican stronghold of Texas. As one reputable pundit recently put it, “it would take something pretty major to enable Trump to overcome this [electoral vote] deficit”.

5. No matter the general election and swing state polls, both candidates continue to face record high unfavourable ratings. A recent Washington Post/ABC News Poll revealed that Hillary Clinton's favourability ratings have actually reached a record 25-year low, with only 41% of respondents having a favourable impression of the former Secretary of State, while 56% had an unfavourable one. Mr. Trump, however, has long been the more unpopular of the two and luckily for Mrs. Clinton, his favourability also remains low, with 35% viewing him favourably to 63% unfavourably. Also working in Secretary Clinton's favour are President Obama's approval ratings, which have been steadily improving (currently around 50%). A more popular President tends to provide less incentive for voters to punish the party in power. Over the coming weeks, the Clinton campaign is expected to make great use of surrogates like President Obama, Vice President Biden, in the hope of energizing the Obama coalition to turn out to the polls for Clinton. Even Clinton's former rival for the Democratic nomination, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, is stumping for the candidate, trying to convince his supporters to cast a ballot for her.

6. Given how unpopular each candidate is, more Americans than ever before will be voting for a candidate they don't really like or trust. This means that many will be casting their vote not so much in favour of one candidate, but as a vote against the other candidate who they dislike even more. A recent Pew Research Center survey found that 46% of Clinton supporters say theirs is a vote against Trump, while 53% of Trump supporters say theirs is primarily a vote against Clinton. (In both 2000 and 2008, more than half of each candidate's supporters said their vote was for their candidate.) This level of dislike has led to speculation on the level of voter turnout, with some arguing it could be historically low, although it won't be due to a lack of interest in the election: 80% of registered voters say they have given "quite a lot" of thought to the election, the highest share at this point in the campaign since 1992. Others argue that dislike for the other party's candidate may actually drive some voters to the polls. With early voting getting underway in some states towards the end of this month, there is little time left for the candidates to adjust their campaigns. Other than an extreme unexpected development (e.g. terrorist incident; market collapse), many will be watching the presidential debates scheduled to take place Sept. 26, Oct. 9 and Oct. 19 to see what if any impact they have on the race.

7. One factor, often overlooked, is the impact that third party candidates may be having on the presidential race. The historically high unfavorable ratings of the two main party candidates would appear to be causing some voters to look elsewhere as this year the third party vote is said to be "bigger than in any presidential election since 1992". Together, Libertarian nominee Gary Johnson and Green Party nominee Jill Stein are garnering over 12% in national polls, with Johnson hovering around 9% and Stein at 3%. (At this point in 2012, Johnson was averaging only 2%.) But little is known about the political leanings of the voters who support them and just what sort of impact their candidacies may be having on either Clinton's or Trump's overall support. A recent Morning Consult survey concluded that the inclusion of Stein and Johnson could cut into Clinton's lead in a number of states which could prove decisive, including Florida, New Hampshire, Ohio and Wisconsin, but would also tip the scales in her favour in states like New Mexico and Iowa. In recent elections, third party candidates have tended to lose support as Election Day neared, but Gary Johnson's support has remained relatively steady over the past month. Unfortunately for Johnson and Stein, however, neither is reaching the 15% threshold needed to participate in the upcoming presidential debates and as Election Day nears, voters may start to re-think their support for these third-party candidates knowing neither one has a chance of getting elected.

8. Interestingly, this could be the first election where Millennial and Gen X eligible voters outnumber voters from the Baby Boom and previous generations. Baby boomers and previous generations have cast the majority of votes in all elections since 1980, but thanks to the aging-in of Millennials and naturalizations among foreign-born adults, the Pew Research Group reports that eligible voters from those younger generations will now outnumber the older ones (126 million eligible voters compared to 98 million in the older generations). Admittedly, "eligible" voters don't necessarily translate into actual voters so the impact of these Millennials and Gen Xers will depend on the level of voter turnout. Millennials and Gen Xers tend to lean Democrat in their voting and if the Clinton campaign can somehow convince them to turn out to the same extent they did in 2012 (53.9%) or 2008 (56.6%), they may boost her chances.

9. There tend to be stark differences in candidate support across other demographic groups too. An NBC/Wall Street Journal poll in early August showed Clinton enjoying a significant advantage among women (51% to Trump's 35%), African-Americans (91% to 1%), all non-white voters (69% to 17%), young voters (46% to 34%), and white voters with a

college degree (47% to 40%). Trump led among white voters (45% to Clinton's 40%), seniors (46% to 43%), independents (36% to 32%) and white voters without a college degree (49% to 36%). The two candidates are running nearly even among men, with Clinton at 43% and Trump at 42%.

### **The Presidential Campaigns**

10. Following their respective party conventions in July, the presidential candidates were expected to spend the final one hundred days of their campaign engaging in traditional campaign tactics: fleshing out their policies with speeches, while trying to broaden their appeal to independents and the other party's moderates, particularly those in battleground states. The two main party candidates have indeed delivered key policy speeches on such issues as national security, immigration and taxation, but neither has shifted his/her position on matters of particular interest to Canada. They continue to express starkly differing views on such matters as climate change, immigration and foreign policy, but both have hewed to the protectionist sentiments that saw them through the primaries. Mr. Trump, whose positions on certain matters often lacked the same detail as Mrs. Clinton's (reftel WSHDC-3303: "Clinton's and Trump's platforms"), has used some of his addresses to flesh out a few of his proposals. More recently, this has included his proposals to expand the U.S. military, address the millions of undocumented immigrants currently in the U.S., and respond to ISIS (reftel WSHDC-3570; WSHDC-3589; WSDHC-3531).

11. Now that both candidates have transition teams in place, there is more talk of what each hopes to accomplish within his/her first 100 days in office. For Clinton, this is said to include putting in place a \$300 million infrastructure plan, ending tax loopholes that allow for corporate inversions, enforcing existing trade agreements (presumably with the appointment of her proposed chief trade prosecutor), and setting renewable energy goals. Some media also report that she may introduce immigration reform legislation in this period. Mr. Trump has also discussed trade enforcement, tax reform and changing immigration laws within his first 100 days, but he has also suggested lifting restrictions on energy production, repealing the Affordable Care Act, and nominating someone other than Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. Most recently he has said that he would call on military leaders to present him with a plan for Daesh's destruction within 30 days.

12. Despite these attempts to present themselves to the general electorate through policy speeches, much of the last couple of months has been taken up with the two candidates attacking the other's temperament or fitness to hold office, rather than their rival's proposals for how to govern. Trump has been trying to cut into Clinton's margins of late with direct appeals to the African-American and Hispanic communities, arguing that those communities do not see their lots improve when Democrats are in power and even going so far as to label Mrs. Clinton a "bigot", but there is little evidence that this strategy is paying off. His polling with those communities remains low and several members of his Hispanic Advisory board actually resigned following his recent immigration speech where he reiterated his proposals to deport millions and build a wall along the border with Mexico. Some speculate that his outreach had less to do with making inroads with these particular communities and more with trying to soften his image among college-educated whites, particularly women. A recent Washington Post survey, however, indicates that Trump continues to trail Clinton with this group across much of the country.

13. Clinton, however, is not without her own controversies. While surveys have found that a majority view her as more "personally qualified to be President" and possessing better judgment than Mr. Trump, many question her honesty and integrity. Revelations about her use of a private email server and foreign donations to the Clinton Foundation while she served as Secretary of State have done nothing to quell voters' concerns. Clinton has been regularly reaching out to moderate Republicans, rolling out their endorsements on a regular basis. She has also been aided in this regard by a number of senior Republicans who may not necessarily endorse her but who are against the notion of a Trump presidency (such as the fifty senior national security officials from Republican administrations who signed a letter in August declaring that Mr. Trump would be "the most reckless president in American history"). But appealing to moderate Republicans is only part of the equation. She must find a way to entice various constituencies, whether Sanders supporters, independents, the young, or non-whites, to see past their own dislike for her and at least cast a vote against Trump.

14. In an effort to further expand her support, it is reported that Clinton's campaign and her supportive super PAC have booked tens of millions of dollars' worth of TV ad time over these final weeks. Trump's campaign is reported to have made a smaller ad buy, and isn't thought to be supplemented by the same sorts of super PACs as various Republican donors opt to sit out this presidential campaign. In addition to having more cash on hand, Clinton's campaign is also better organized. She is said to have more than three times the number of campaign offices in critical states than does Trump and the Republican National Committee. Trump may point to his victories in the primaries as evidence that the traditional data-driven, on-the-ground campaign may not be necessary this year. But given the strong partisan divide that exists in the U.S., engagement of the few undecided and any remaining moderate voters has become that much more important and a campaign able to focus on targeted turnout may have the advantage. Mr. Trump has said that data is "overrated", while the Clinton campaign has spent years building on the data model that was so crucial in getting out the vote for Obama in 2008 and 2012.

### **Congress**

15. In addition to the presidential campaigns, there are a number of other important elections happening at other levels. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives, for instance, will also be up for election in November. Republicans currently hold their largest majority since 1928 with 246 seats to Democrats' 186 (and three vacancies). The increased voter turnout that usually occurs in presidential election years has often favoured Democrats and while they are expected to chip away at the Republican majority this year, possibly picking up 10-15 seats, few if any think Democrats will gain the thirty seats necessary to flip control of the House.

16. The real focus this year will be on the Senate, where Republicans currently enjoy a 54-46 majority over Democrats (includes two Independents who caucus with Democrats). Democrats must win 5 seats to regain the majority (4 if Clinton is elected President and the Vice-President provides the tie-breaking vote). Republicans are clearly the more vulnerable, with 24 seats up for re-election compared to 10 for Democrats, including 7 seats in states that President Obama won in 2012. In recent weeks, more and more analysts have been predicting that Democrats may have just enough of an advantage to re-take control of the Senate. Over the coming weeks the consulates will be providing more detail on those races, and others taking place in their regions, in WSHDC's weekly "U.S. National Political Updates". For now it is interesting to note that unlike the last few U.S. elections, which saw several GOP incumbents lose to far-right/Tea Party opponents in their primaries, establishment-aligned GOP candidates, such as Arizona Sen. John McCain and Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, managed to prevail this year against conservative primary challengers. So while Republican voters may have opted to place an "outsider" at the top of the ticket, they have been less prone to do away with establishment candidates elsewhere. Whether those incumbents ultimately prevail in the election, however, remains to be seen.

17. Given the strong partisan divide, the American electorate tends to vote for the same party up and down the ballot and instances of ticket-splitting (where a voter supports a candidate from one party for President, but another party's candidates for other positions) has become a rarity. But this year, with two unfavourable candidates seeking the presidency, there is more talk of potential ticket-splitting. Moderate Republicans who cannot fathom voting for the unpredictable Mr. Trump may ultimately choose to support Secretary Clinton, but may continue to vote Republican down-ballot as a sort of "check" on their presidential choice. Some Republican candidates (e.g. Senators McCain and Rubio) have even adopted this line of argument as part of their campaign strategy. Conversely, if the presidential race tightens and a Clinton victory is not assured, doubts about Mr. Trump's temperament and preparedness for the job could incentivize swing voters to support a Democrat in the House or Senate.

### **2016 Gubernatorial Races**

18. Republicans currently hold 31 governorships, close to a historic high for the party, compared with 18 for Democrats and 1 for Independents. Of the twelve states that will hold gubernatorial elections in 2016, eight are held by Democrats which puts them at a higher risk of losing seats. Gubernatorial elections that coincide with a competitive presidential election usually elicit high voter turnout.

### **2016 State Legislative Races**

19. Of the 86 state legislative chambers with elections in 2016, twenty are considered partisan battlegrounds where a small number of seats could flip the majority control. Republicans control almost twice as many battleground chambers (13) as Democrats (7), which puts them at a greater risk of losing control of chambers. If key state legislatures flip, the results could shape the electoral landscape of future elections.

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## Bergeron, Jean-François -NGA

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**From:** Garson, Ron -WSHDC -GR  
**Sent:** 7 septembre 2016 18:01  
**To:** EXTOTT (NGM)  
**Subject:** WSHDC-GR-3589: Donald Trump on "peace through strength"

Donald Trump spoke today to the Union Club of Philadelphia, a private club founded in 1862 "to support the Union and the policies of President Abraham Lincoln." Trump's speech focused on the defence policy he would pursue should he be elected president. His address included a vow to boost U.S. defence spending, increase the capabilities of U.S. forces, and build a world-class missile defence system. Trump also vowed to ask allies to shoulder more of the defence burden, including meeting the NATO target of 2 per cent of GDP.

### Report

Trump opened with an attack on the track record of President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton, contrasting in particular the (relatively) stable Middle East of 2008 with the chaotic scene today. He noted as well the declining deference China, Russia and Iran show the United States. Trump also leveled charges at Clinton that she has often directed at him: she is "trigger-happy and unstable when it comes to war ... so reckless, in fact, she put her emails on an illegal server that our enemies could easily hack ... [and her] only foreign policy experience is failure." In sum, "her conduct is simply disqualifying."

Trump would introduce a new approach to U.S. national security that would avoid the failures of the past:

- Its overriding theme would be "peace through strength," a phrase used by, among others, Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) and the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD). It would be a "new" foreign policy based on advancing key U.S. interests, promoting regional stability and easing global tensions. It would be a policy that eschews endless war and efforts to promote radical change (as in regime change).
- The U.S. would work with any country whose goal is to destroy Daesh and America would wage military, cyber, financial and ideological warfare against the terrorist group. Immediately after taking office, a President Trump would ask his generals to present a plan for Daesh's destruction within 30 days. Media commentators were quick to note that Trump has previously claimed to know more about Daesh than the generals and has repeatedly said he already had a plan for the group's destruction – but was keeping it secret so as not to tip his hand to the enemy.
- Immigration security will be central to U.S. national security: "We only want to admit people to our country who will support our values and love our people."
- Trump bemoaned current levels of defence spending and U.S. military capabilities and vowed "as soon as he takes office" to ask Congress to eliminate the defence sequester. He would then introduce a new budget to rebuild the U.S. military. Increased defence spending would be made possible in part by eliminating waste in government, reducing the size of government through attrition, collecting now-unpaid taxes and "unleashing American energy." The military bureaucracy would also be streamlined.
- A President Trump would, "early in my term," ask all NATO members to "promptly pay their bills" – i.e., the 2 percent of GDP target, which he noted only 5 members now meet. He would also "respectfully" ask that countries such as Germany, Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia pay more for U.S. security support.
- With these new funds, the U.S. would build:

- an active army of about 540,000, compared to today's 490,000 troops, one-third of whom are considered combat-ready (based on the Army Chief of Staff's assessment of U.S. needs);
- a Marine Corps of 36 battalions, in place of today's 23 (a Heritage Foundation recommendation);
- a navy of 350 surface ships and submarines, compared to today's 276 (a recommendation of the National Defense Panel); and
- an air force of 1,200 fighter aircraft versus the 1,113 today (a Heritage Foundation recommendation).

The U.S. would also develop a "state-of-the-art missile defense system" – a capability Trump said had been degraded by "Obama-Clinton" precisely when threats from regimes like Iran and North Korea are growing. A Trump presidency would also improve the Department of Defense's cyber capabilities ("Hillary Clinton has taught us all how vulnerable we are to cyber hacking"). One of the first directives of a Trump presidency would be to order a review of U.S. cyber defences that would identify all vulnerabilities and establish plans to remedy them. A Trump presidency would also invest significantly in offensive cyber capabilities.

This military build-up would be a "fifty-state effort – every state in the union will be able to take part in rebuilding our military and developing the technologies of tomorrow." It would help ensure that America is the "world's dominant technological powerhouse of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" and, Trump noted, "young Americans – including in our inner cities – should get these new jobs."

Trump concluded with a plea for unity and inclusion ("we will work across all racial and income lines to create One American Nation") and a promise to "discard the failed policies and division of the past, and embrace true American change to rebuild our economy, rebuild our inner cities, and rebuild our country."

Drafted/Released: WSHDC/Garson

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## Bergeron, Jean-François -NGA

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**From:** Garson, Ron -WSHDC -GR  
**Sent:** 22 septembre 2016 16:25  
**To:** EXTOTT (NGM)  
**Subject:** WSHDC-GR-3632: 75 career diplomats endorse Clinton, denounce Trump  
**Attachments:** Former-ambassadors-sign-a-letter-refusing-to.pdf

Seventy-five career diplomats have released (attached) a letter endorsing Hillary Clinton for president and denouncing Donald Trump.

The letter notes that its signatories have, as career officers, served every president since Truman and, as Ambassadors or senior State officials, represented every president since Nixon. More prominent names on the list include Thomas Pickering (multiple senior postings – Russia, India, Israel, UN – and a former Under Secretary for Political Affairs), Nicholas Burns (former Under Secretary for Political Affairs under Bush II), Ryan Crocker (Iraq, Afghanistan) and Jim Cunningham (UN, Afghanistan, Israel). A number of former Assistant Secretaries of State (roughly ADM level) have signed the letter as well.

The letters notes that many of the signatories have never before publicly endorsed a candidate for president and are doing so now because this is an election “different from any election we can recall.”

The letter has harsh words for Donald Trump:

“One of the candidates -- Donald J. Trump -- is entirely unqualified to serve as President and Commander-in-Chief. He is ignorant of the complex nature of the challenges facing our country, from Russia to China to ISIS to nuclear proliferation to refugees to drugs, but he has expressed no interest in being educated. Indeed he has recently demonstrated he entirely misunderstands and disrespects the role of the very officials who could educate him: the senior career officers of our intelligence services and of our military services (whom he has characterized as "rubble"). In his frequent statements about foreign countries and their citizens, from our closest friends to our most problematic competitors, Mr. Trump has expressed the most ignorant stereotypes of those countries; has inflamed their people; and has insulted our allies and comforted our enemies. Shockingly, he has even offered praise and admiration for Vladimir Putin, the leader of Russia whose international activities and reported intrusions into our democratic political process have been among the most damaging actions taken by any foreign leader since the end of World War Two. We fear the damage that such ineptitude could cause in our closest relationships as well as the succor it might offer our enemies.”

The signatories instead endorse Hillary Clinton for president, noting that her “handling of foreign affairs has consistently sought to advance fundamental US interests” and has been grounded in the work of the thousands of career officers charged with responsibility for US national security. In the view of the signatories, only the Clinton team has the skills and knowledge to lead American foreign policy “in a manner befitting our role as the world's sole superpower.”

The letter joins two previous letters issued by GOP national security experts, who likewise vow not to support Trump. The first was signed in March by 121 former GOP national security officials. The second, issued in August, was signed by 50 former GOP officials (signatories overlap between the two letters). Trump, on the other hand, can also point to a letter, signed by 88 retired military officials, endorsing his candidacy. One wonders what impact such letters have outside of the policy world... recall Spiro Agnew’s reference to the media elite in his day as “an effete corps of impudent snobs.”

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*September 21, 2016*

**STATEMENT BY FORMER CAREER AMBASSADORS AND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS**

The undersigned have each previously served the people of the United States as career diplomats in our nation's Foreign and Civil Services. We have each had the privilege of being nominated by the President, and confirmed by the United States Senate, to represent our nation abroad and at the highest levels of our foreign policy and security organizations.

- Together, we have represented the United States as ambassadors in 52 countries or international organizations. We have hundreds of years of combined service.
- As career officers, we have served every President since Harry Truman, and have proudly represented every President since Richard Nixon as ambassadors or senior State Department officials in Senate-confirmed positions. We have served Republican and Democratic Presidents with pride and enthusiasm.
- None of us will vote for Donald J. Trump.
- Each of us endorses Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine. Because the stakes in this election are so high, this is the first time many of us have publicly endorsed a candidate for President.

Very simply, this election is different from any election we can recall. One of the candidates -- Donald J. Trump -- is entirely unqualified to serve as President and Commander-in-Chief. He is ignorant of the complex nature of the challenges facing our country, from Russia to China to ISIS to nuclear proliferation to refugees to drugs, but he has expressed no interest in being educated. Indeed he has recently demonstrated he entirely misunderstands and disrespects the role of the very officials who could educate him: the senior career officers of our intelligence services and of our military services (whom he has characterized as "rubble").

In his frequent statements about foreign countries and their citizens, from our closest friends to our most problematic competitors, Mr. Trump has expressed the most ignorant stereotypes of those countries; has inflamed their people; and has insulted our allies and comforted our enemies. Shockingly, he has even offered praise and admiration for Vladimir Putin, the leader of Russia whose international activities and reported intrusions into our democratic political process have been among the most damaging actions taken by any foreign leader since the end of World War Two.

We fear the damage that such ineptitude could cause in our closest relationships as well as the succor it might offer our enemies.

By contrast, Hillary Clinton's handling of foreign affairs has consistently sought to advance fundamental US interests with a deep grounding in the work of the many tens of thousands of career officers on whom our national security depends. Not every one of us has agreed with

every decision she made (and the same would be true of every one of her predecessors), but we have profound respect for her skills, dedication, intelligence, and diplomacy.

In this election there is only one team to represent our nation and lead our career foreign policy and security professionals in a manner befitting our role as the world's sole superpower. Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine are the candidates we support.

### **Signatories**

1. **Morton Abramowitz** - Ambassador to Turkey (1989-1991) Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (1985-1989), and Ambassador to Thailand (1978-1981)
2. **Frank Almaguer** - Ambassador to Honduras (1999-2002)
3. **Diego Asencio** - Ambassador to Brazil (1983-1986), Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs (1980-1983), Ambassador to Colombia (1977-1980)
4. **Robert Beecroft** - Ambassador and Head of Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (2001-2004)
5. **Robert O. Blake** – Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs (2009-2013), Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (2006-2009), Indonesia (2014-present)
6. **Charles Richard Bowers** - Ambassador to Bolivia (1991-1994)
7. **Robert Bradtke** - Ambassador to Croatia (2006-2009)
8. **Aurelia E. Brazeal** - Ambassador to Ethiopia (2002-2005), Kenya (1993-1996), Federated States of Micronesia (1990-1993)
9. **Sue K. Brown** - Ambassador to Montenegro (2011-2014)
10. **Susan Burk** - Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation
11. **A. Peter Burleigh** - Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (1995-1997)
12. **Nicholas Burns** - Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and Ambassador to Greece
13. **Patricia Butenis** - Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (2009-2012) and Bangladesh (2006-2007)
14. **Johnnie Carson** - Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (2009-2013), Ambassador to Kenya (1999-2003), Zimbabwe (1995-1997), Uganda (1991-1994)
15. **Carey Cavanaugh** - Ambassador/Special Negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and New Independent States Regional Conflicts (2000-2001)
16. **Wendy Chamberlin** - Ambassador to Pakistan (2001-2002) and Laos (1996-1999)
17. **Peter Chaveas** - Ambassador to Sierra Leone (2001-2004), and Malawi (1994-1997)

18. **Marion Creekmore, Jr.** - Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (1989-1992)
19. **Ryan Crocker** – Ambassador to Lebanon (1990-1993), Kuwait (1994-1997), Syria (1998-2001), Pakistan (2004-2007), Iraq (2007-2009), Afghanistan (2011-2012)
20. **James B. Cunningham** - Ambassador to Afghanistan (2012-2014), Israel (2008-2011), United Nations (2001)
21. **Jeffrey Davidow** - Ambassador to Mexico (1998-2002), Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs (1996-1998), Ambassador to Venezuela (1993-1996), Zambia (1988-1990)
22. **John Dinger** - Ambassador to Mongolia (2000-2003)
23. **Nancy Ely-Raphel** - Ambassador to Slovenia (1998-2001)
24. **Robert W. Farrand** - Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands (1990-1993)
25. **Robert P. Finn** - Ambassador to Afghanistan (2002-2003), Tajikistan (1999-2001)
26. **Robert Fitts** - Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands (2003-2006)
27. **Robert S. Gelbard** - Ambassador to Indonesia (1999-2001), Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters (1993-1997), Ambassador to Bolivia (1988-1991)
28. **Edward "Skip" Gnehm** - Ambassador to Jordan (2001-2004), Australia (2000-2001), Kuwait (1991-1994)
29. **Marc Grossman** - Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (2001-2005), Ambassador to Turkey (1995-1997), Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs (1997-2000)
30. **Maura Harty** - Ambassador to Paraguay (1997-1999), Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs (2002-2008)
31. **Thomas C. Hubbard** - Ambassador to the Republic of Korea (2001-2004) and the Philippines (1996-2000)
32. **Edmund J. Hull** - Ambassador to Yemen (2001-2004)
33. **Cameron R. Hume** - Ambassador to Indonesia (2007-2010), Sudan (2005-2007), South Africa (2001-2004), Algeria (1997-2000)
34. **William H. Itoh** - Ambassador to Thailand (1995-1999)
35. **Dennis Jett** - Ambassador to Peru (1996-1999) and Mozambique (1993-1996)
36. **Linda Jewell** - Ambassador to Ecuador (2005-2008)

37. **A. Elizabeth Jones** - Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia (2003), Ambassador to Kazakhstan (1995-1997)
38. **James Keith** - Ambassador to Malaysia (2007-2010)
39. **Laura Kennedy** - Ambassador to Turkmenistan (2001-2003)
40. **Thomas C. Krajewski** - Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen (2004-2007), Kingdom of Bahrain (2011-2014)
41. **Daniel C. Kurtzer** - Ambassador to Israel (2001-2005), Egypt (1998-2001)
42. **Alphonse F. La Porta** -- Ambassador to Mongolia (1997-2000)
43. **Chris LaFleur** - Ambassador to Malaysia (2005-2007)
44. **Edward Gibson Lanpher** - Ambassador to Zimbabwe (1991-1995)
45. **Michael Lemmon** - Ambassador to Armenia (1998-2001)
46. **James G. Lowenstein** - Ambassador to Luxembourg (1977-1981)
47. **John Maisto** - Ambassador to the Organization of American States (2003-2006), Venezuela (1997-2000), and Nicaragua (1993-1996)
48. **Edward Marks** - Ambassador to Cape Verde (1977-1980), and Guinea-Bissau (1977-1980)
49. **Marshall McCallie** - Ambassador to Namibia (1993-1996)
50. **Jackson McDonald** - Ambassador to Guinea (2004-2007), The Gambia (2001-2004)
51. **Thomas J. Miller** - Ambassador to Greece (2001-2004), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1999-2001)
52. **William Green Miller** - Ambassador to Ukraine (1993-1998)
53. **Mark Minton** - Ambassador to Mongolia (2006-2009)
54. **B. Lynn Pascoe** - Ambassador to Indonesia (2004-2007), and Malaysia (1998-2001)
55. **June Perry** - Ambassador to Sierra Leone (2007-2010), and Lesotho (2004-2007)
56. **Donald K. Petterson** - Ambassador to Sudan (1992-1995), Tanzania (1986-1989), and Somalia (1978-1982)
57. **Thomas R. Pickering** -- Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (1997-2000), Ambassador to Russia (1993-1996), India (1992-1993), United Nations (1989-1992), Israel (1985-1988), El Salvador (1983-1985), Nigeria (1981-1983), Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (1978-1981), Ambassador to Jordan (1974-1978)

58. **Nicholas Platt** - Ambassador to Pakistan (1991-1992), Philippines (1987-1991), Zambia (1982-1985)
59. **Nancy Powell** - Ambassador to India (2012-2014), Nepal (2007-2010), Pakistan (2002-2004), Ghana (2001-2002), Uganda (1997-1999)
60. **Phyllis Powers** - Ambassador to Nicaragua (2012-2015), and Panama (2010-2012)
61. **Charles A. Ray** - Ambassador to Zimbabwe (2009-2012), Cambodia (2002-2005)
62. **Thomas B. Robertson** - Ambassador to Slovenia (2004-2007)
63. **Howard B. Schaffer** - Ambassador to Bangladesh (1984-1987)
64. **Teresita C. Schaffer** - Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (1992-1995)
65. **Ints M. Silins** - Ambassador to Latvia (1992-1995)
66. **Thomas W. Simons, Jr.** - Ambassador to Pakistan (1996-1998) and Poland (1990-1993)
67. **Kathleen Stephens** - Ambassador to the Republic of Korea (2008-2011)
68. **Gordon L. Streeb** - Ambassador to Zambia (1990-1993)
69. **Nicholas Veliotis** - Ambassador to Egypt (1984-1986), Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (1981-1984), and Ambassador to Jordan (1978-1981)
70. **Edward S. Walker, Jr.** - Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs (2000-2001), Ambassador to Israel (1997-1999), Egypt (1994-1997), United Arab Emirates (1989-1992)
71. **Alexander F. Watson** - Ambassador to Peru (1986-1989), Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs (1993-1996)
72. **E. Ashley Wills** - Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives (2000-2003)
73. **Kenneth Yalowitz** - Ambassador to Georgia (1998-2001) and Belarus (1994-1997)
74. **Johnny Young** - Ambassador to Slovenia (2001-2004), Kingdom of Bahrain (1997-2001), Togo (1994-1997), Sierra Leone (1989-1992)
75. **Stephen M. Young** - Ambassador to Kyrgyz Republic (2003-2005)

## **Bergeron, Jean-François -NGA**

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**From:** Isaac, Howard -WSHDC -TD  
**Sent:** 2 août 2016 15:41  
**To:** Morrison, David -NGM  
**Subject:** WSHDC-3499 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORMS  
**Attachments:** Democratic-Party-Platform.pdf; Republicanplatform.pdf

Both the Republicans and Democrats approved their party platforms during their conventions. Although not binding on presidential or congressional candidates, the two platforms do represent an outline of possible policies that will be pursued during the next Administration and the 115th Congress. The Democrats and the Republicans come from different philosophical and demographic positions. On the economy, the former believe in more government intervention, while the latter put much more emphasis on individual initiative and less government activity in business. Nonetheless, their platforms share many common elements and remarkably, frequently take similar approaches to the issues.

2. The overarching concern for both parties is the barriers facing the middle class in today's economy. According to the Republicans, the economy is unnecessarily weak with stagnant wages. For the Democrats, the economic growth now only benefits the richest one per cent. Both parties believe that Americans' earnings are not keeping up.

### **TRADE and TRADE AGREEMENTS**

3. In their discussion of trade, the Democrats and the Republicans affirm the importance of trade for U.S. prosperity and employment. Nevertheless, both platforms take a sceptical perspective, which is in line with prior Democratic platforms, but is a break from the traditional Republican approach. The Democrats as a party have a longstanding view that international trade and trade agreements have failed to live up to their promise. Rather than deliver new jobs, they have boosted the profits of large corporations, while failing to protect workers' rights, the environment and public health. The Democrats claim that the failure of global trade is due to too many countries breaking the rules as well as corporations outsourcing their manufacturing at the expense of U.S. workers and communities.

4. The Democratic platform proposes to review "agreements negotiated years before" to reflect the goal that a trade policy should support jobs in the U.S. as well as the other fundamental principles such as labour rights. Like Mr. Trump, Ms. Clinton has indicated she would include NAFTA among the agreements that should be re-negotiated. It is unclear if either candidate would also include the underlying Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA) in that list.

5. The Republican platform does confirm that trade is "crucial for all sectors of America's economy." However, it decries trade deficits and calls for a multilateral trading agreement based on shared principles of an open market. What they call a "Reagan Economic Zone" in which free trade is fair trade. The platform does not explain whether this would be a system similar to the WTO or a free trade agreement like the TPP, but among like-minded democratic countries. In a nod to the thinking of candidate Trump, the Republic platform calls for "trade agreements that put America first."

6. In partial defence of trade agreements, the Republican platform states that agreements carefully negotiated with friendly democratic countries have resulted in millions of jobs, although they did not provide any examples, e.g., CUSFTA. However, in a similar vein to the Democratic document, the Republican platform states that "when those agreements do not adequately protect U.S. interests, U.S. sovereignty, or when they are violated with impunity, they must be rejected." The platform says that the U.S. should be willing to walk away from negotiations, although they should also broaden agreements with countries that share the same business and commercial principles.

7. The Republican platform is light on substantive trade negotiating objectives. It does condemn forced localization, especially by China, (demonstrating an ironic lack of knowledge of Buy America legislation passed by the last two Republican-controlled Congresses). In a nod to important Republican constituencies, like research-based pharmaceutical companies, the platform condemns countries that steal intellectual property rights (IPR). Both parties see IPR as an important contribution to U.S. prosperity and its heritage and both want to protect data privacy while ensuring the free flow of data across borders.

8. The Republicans do not mention labour and the environment, while these are central areas of concern for the Democrats. The Democratic platform states that future trade agreements, including the TPP, must not "undercut American workers by taking shortcuts on labor policy or the environment." New trade agreements must include enforceable labour and environment standards in their core document, unlike NAFTA. The Democrats will prioritize and enforce provisions on workers' rights in their diplomatic, trade and programmatic efforts.

9. The Democratic platform appears to single out investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) by saying that future agreements should not "undermine democratic decision-making through special privileges and private courts for corporations." The Republican platform does not address ISDS.

10. Both the Democratic and Republican platforms highlight concern about currency manipulation, especially by China. The Democrats state that no country should be able to use its currency to gain competitive advantage. They would use trade enforcement tools to hold them responsible. The Republicans' platform states that they cannot "allow China to continue its currency manipulation..." China is the only trade partner/foe mentioned in either document. For the Democrats, the Chinese dump goods on the market, subsidize their industries, manipulate their currency and discriminate against U.S. companies. The Republican platform has a similar list, but also complains about the exclusion of U.S. products.

11. Both parties vow to use available trade remedies against countries, such as China that do not trade fairly and openly, e.g., manipulate their currency to create unfair advantages. However, the Democrats are more interventionist and support subsidization for small business and minorities.

12. On process issues affecting trade negotiations, both the Republican and Democratic platforms believe that the American people are entitled to transparency, full disclosure and protection of national sovereignty as well as having their negotiators bargain hard to advance the interests of U.S. workers. The Republican platform specifically states that no significant trade agreement should be rushed or undertaken in the Lame Duck Session, which could have an impact on the TPP's prospects. The Democratic platform is silent on this issue, but Clinton and V.P. candidate Kaine have come out against bringing the TPP up for a vote in the Lame Duck.

## **DOMESTIC POLICIES WITH INTERNATIONAL RAMIFICATIONS**



13. While the platforms are remarkably similar on international trade, their domestic policy prescriptions for economic growth do differ. Both platforms condemn outsourcing, but the Republican platform simply says that American companies should be headquartered in the U.S. while the Democrats state that the U.S. should claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas and use the proceeds to reinvest in communities and workers at home. The Republicans also want to bring in new investment from tax revenue. However, their platform proposes that the playing field can be levelled by lowering the U.S. corporate tax while the Democrats do not discuss this issue. The Republicans also propose to switch to a territorial tax system to enable companies to bring back profits earned and taxed abroad for "job-creating investments" in the U.S. The Democrats do mention the need for tax simplification, but most of their approaches involved increased government spending. The Democrats instead propose a more punitive approach. They would claw back any tax breaks from companies that relocate jobs abroad. They would also crack down on companies that use inversions and other methods to avoid tax responsibilities. The Democrats are unlikely to support switching to a territorial basis as their platform calls on American corporations to pay U.S. taxes on foreign profits immediately and not avoid their fair share of taxes by keeping profits abroad. On regulation, the Republicans claim that corporations face increasingly burdensome regulations and go so far as to question the constitutionality of the current Administration's regulatory agenda. The Democrats do not discuss the burden of regulations. Rather, they appear to support increased governments to address a wide host of issues, such as the environment, union rights, workers' rights and parental leave.

14. Both parties strongly endorse new spending on infrastructure. The Republicans would try to repeal legislation that requires workers on federally financed infrastructure projects be paid the federal minimum wage. They claimed this drives up costs. Nevertheless, the Republicans also recognize the need for increased funding for infrastructure expansion. Therefore, they would support Private-Public Partnerships to save taxpayers' money and to find outside investment. The Republicans do not directly or indirectly mention Buy American or Buy America, although Candidate Trump explicitly supported such policies in his trade policy speech delivered on June 28, 2016.

15. The Democrats, unsurprisingly, endorse the use of government contracting and infrastructure programs to support American jobs. The Democrats want to use up to one trillion dollars in government spending on contracts, loans, and grants to support jobs that would rebuild the middle class. They favour significant reinvestment in infrastructure projects of all types including public transit, airports, freight and passenger rail lines and water systems. In an indirect endorsement of Buy American and Buy America, the Democratic platform states that these investments would create increased demand for American-made steel and other U.S.-manufactured products. They also propose an infrastructure bank to finance the projects.

16. The Democratic platform acknowledges the "Make it in America" plan that has been a project of the House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) for the past two Congresses, which is also part of Clinton's own policy platform. This plan includes encouraging innovation through an industrial strategy and the revitalization of hard-hit manufacturing communities and the creation of manufacturing hubs. The Democrats, unlike the Republicans, believe that the government must help workers and businesses compete for jobs in clean technology as well as high-tech products, internet technology products, and advanced manufacturing and vehicles. They also call for increased federal investment in housing to construct, preserve and rehabilitate millions of rental units. Democrats propose additional funding for affordable housing.

17. Both parties want workers to share in the profits of their employers. The Republican platform endorsed employee stock ownership plans that enable employees to become capitalists, expand the reach of private property and energize "a free enterprise economy." They would leave the minimum

wage up to state and local authorities. In contrast, the Democrats call for a \$15.00/hour minimum wage that would be indexed but implemented over time. They also want to “incentivize companies to share profits with their employees on top of wages and pay increases.” This would be achieved working with business, labour and other stakeholders.

## CONCLUSION

18. Although they differ on the details and the methodology, the two platforms share much in common regarding the underlying principles. This is especially true on trade, where both parties favour it in principle but view other countries as acting unfairly and not in the best interests of the United States. The Democrats as a party seem to be much more supportive of Buy America and Buy American, but the Republican have led or acquiesced on several occasions on its inclusion in legislation and Mr. Trump is a proponent. The Republicans take a more hands off approach to government intervention in the economy, while the Democrats are more comfortable with government involvement. Nevertheless, these platforms suggest a more protectionist tone, and in some respect carry an anti-trade agreement perspective, which point to new speed bumps on the road to more open trade. It is important to recognize the limited impact of the platforms. A party's platform is not binding on a candidate. Furthermore, many of their provisions will require legislative action that could face significant challenges from Congress.

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**Sent:** 25 mai 2016 16:19  
**To:** Morrison, David -NGM  
**Subject:** WSHDC-3303: Clinton's and Trump's platforms s.15(1) - International  
**Attachments:** comparison.docx

(Bcc list below)

### **SUMMARY**

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and businessman and reality television star Donald Trump are, respectively, the presumptive Democratic and Republican nominees in this year's U.S. presidential election. Although both are wealthy New Yorkers who have been in the public eye for decades, their personalities and policies are very different. No matter the outcome of the Presidential election on Nov. 8th,

Both Clinton and Trump have come out against trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and NAFTA and for both, security remains a top concern with matters related to borders and migration getting the most attention.

As many pundits have already noted, this year's presidential election has been anything but predictable and with over five months to go until Election Day, there is little point in trying to predict its outcome this far out. What we do know is that the American electorate is wracked by a certain sense of insecurity, not just from outward threats like ISIL or terrorism more generally, but also economically with most voters lacking confidence in where the U.S. is headed. While the two candidates may diverge significantly on how to address matters such as climate change, immigration and foreign policy, both candidates have responded in a similar manner to popular views on trade. The protectionist sentiment that has emerged this election may not only endanger the future of trade deals like the TPP, but could also impact deals concluded years ago like NAFTA. Even if the candidates were to find their way to supporting either deal, whether in their existing form or some sort of re-negotiated version thereof,

Also up for debate is the future of the U.S.' role in the world. Whether led by the more hawkish Hillary Clinton who could seek to expand alliances, or the more isolationist Donald Trump calling on allies to "pay their fair share", there may be increased calls for burden-sharing from allies.

Trump may be more positive towards Canadian oil exports, but his questioning of climate change science and the role of the EPA would likely impact bilateral and international cooperation on emissions reductions.

The annexes to this report provide a compilation of the two candidates' respective positions on key issues of interest to Canada at this point in time, namely on matters of **trade, foreign policy, national security, economic policy and taxes**. A 2-page chart that juxtaposes their positions on several of these issues is also attached, for ease of reference. We can expect the candidates' positions to further evolve over the coming months as they shift their focus from the primaries to the general election, when they will look to broaden their appeal beyond their own party's supporters. WSHDC will continue to track the candidates' positions throughout the course of the election.

### **HOW DID WE GET HERE?**

If she is elected in November, Hillary Clinton will be the first woman to serve as President of the United States. If he is elected in November, Donald Trump will be the first President since Dwight D. Eisenhower who has never before run for

office. Either way, the results of this year's Presidential election will be historic. [REDACTED]

Only months ago, few expected Mrs. Clinton would still be campaigning in May 2016 to wrap up the Democratic nomination against a self-declared democratic socialist senator from Vermont. And likely even fewer thought that Mr. Trump's candidacy for the Republican nomination would last beyond 2015.

WSHDC has previously elaborated upon the broader context for this year's presidential and congressional elections (reftel WSHDC-3083). [REDACTED]

Candidates like Hillary Clinton and Jeb Bush, standard bearers of the previous centrist regimes, have scrambled to keep up with their respective party's shift. Hillary Clinton's rival for the Democratic nomination, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, has raised more money than Clinton most months and built up a coalition of ardent supporters, causing Clinton to skew left on several issues. The most notable examples are her denunciations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Keystone XL pipeline, two issues she appeared favorably disposed towards during her time as Secretary of State. Donald Trump has similarly tapped into the populist insurgency, leading him to eschew many of the principles of conservatism generally favored by Republican legislators. Not only has he attacked free trade pacts, but he's vowed not to cut entitlements and espoused more liberal stances on social issues such as gay rights. Since our earlier report, a few interesting public polls have emerged which examine the views of the U.S. electorate on various issues, whether foreign policy, economic, etc. A brief examination of these polls may help explain some of the candidates' positions to date.

#### WHAT THE POLLS TELL US

In early May a Pew Research Center report found: "The public views America's role in the world with considerable apprehension and concern. In fact, most Americans say it would be better if the U.S. just dealt with its own problems and let other countries deal with their own problems as best they can." The report also found that 49% of Americans view U.S. involvement in the global economy as a bad thing because it lowers wages and costs jobs, compared with 44% who view it positively because it provides the U.S. with new markets and opportunities for growth. But there is a clear partisan divide to these results: "On each of these measures, Republicans express greater skepticism about U.S. international engagement than do Democrats." Despite, or perhaps because of this wariness, public support for increased defense spending has climbed to its highest level since a month after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, with much of that increase again coming from Republicans. But even within the parties there are differences, with supporters of Bernie Sanders more likely to want to cut defense spending than supporters of Hillary Clinton (43% to 25%), and Trump supporters far outnumbering supporters of former Republican presidential hopeful Sen. Ted Cruz (65% to 49%) with their negative assessments of U.S. involvement in the global economy. [REDACTED]

The same Pew report found the top global threat facing the United States to be ISIS. "Currently, 80% say the Islamic militant group in Iraq and Syria known as ISIS is a major threat to the well-being of the United States, while 72% view cyberattacks from other countries as a major threat and 67% say the same about global economic instability." Interestingly, Democrats consider global climate change to be as great a threat as ISIS, while Republicans ranked climate change as the lowest of the issues put forward. A similarly blunt divide exists among those who consider refugees fleeing countries like Iraq and Syria to be a threat (74% Republicans to 40% Democrats). [REDACTED]

Although the United States has recovered from the 2008 recession more rapidly than other developed economies, wage growth remains low and hasn't accelerated as the economy as a whole has improved, contributing to an angry populist sentiment throughout the campaigns. Another Pew report from earlier this spring found that 46% of registered voters thought that life in America today is worse than it was 50 years ago "for people like them," compared with 34% who say life is better. Again there was a clear partisan divide, with Republican and Republican-leaning voters more than twice as

likely as Democratic voters to say things had gotten worse (66% to 28%) and again, this sentiment was strongest amongst Trump supporters (75% to Cruz's 63%). Trump supporters also stood out for their pessimism about the nation's economy and their own financial situations, with 48% rating current economic conditions in the U.S. as "poor". This overall pessimism is echoed in other polls. A McClatchy-Marist poll from early April found that more than two-thirds of Americans think the country is moving in the wrong direction, the highest in nearly four and half years. Again, this sentiment was more predominant amongst Republicans than Democrats (89% to 49%).

Both Republicans and Democrats consider the economy the number one issue in this year's presidential election and are thus greatly interested in the candidates' positions on the economy and jobs. Indeed, there is some agreement that the primary economic issue facing the next President will be how to make economic growth more inclusive. Both parties acknowledge that 90% of America has seen stagnant wages for the last fifteen years despite sustained economic growth.

Much has been written about how this year's candidates are leveraging the protectionist sentiment gripping the electorate to target past trade deals. And yet, Gallup has found that most Americans (58%) continue to view foreign trade as an opportunity for growth. According to the March Pew report, most Clinton and Sanders supporters are of the view that free trade agreements have been good for the U.S. (58% and 55%, respectively), while most Trump supporters (67%) view them negatively (a view not borne out in Congress). When asked specifically about NAFTA and TPP, 4 in 10 Americans didn't know enough to say whether the U.S. should withdraw from those particular agreements, and among those who did have an opinion, there was an even split on whether or not to withdraw (28% each). Each candidate has attempted to respond to these popular views about trade to further their electoral agenda.

## ANNEXES

### Trade

#### CLINTON

In some ways it is easier to ascertain Secretary Clinton's position on trade policy as she has specifically pronounced on numerous agreements over the years, both as a U.S. senator and as Secretary of State. That said, her views have undergone some changes over the years. She voted for or supported almost every free trade agreement during her time in the Senate, the exceptions being the Trade Act of 2002 (fast track authority) and Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) of 2005. She supported **NAFTA** while serving as First Lady, but opposed it as a senator in 2007. She supported **TPP** as Secretary of State, remarking in November 2012 that it "sets the gold standard in trade agreements to open, free, transparent, fair trade, the kind of environment that has the rule of law and a level playing field." So while it's easy to build a trade-friendly narrative based on her voting record as a senator and statements as Secretary of State, presidential candidate Clinton has come out against TPP stating in October, 2015, "As of today, I am not in favor of what I have learned about it."

Her opposition to TPP is based on what she views as shortcomings in the agreement, specifically the language on currency manipulation, labor rights, the environment and the need for conditions that would allow more small businesses to benefit from exports. In order to earn her support, U.S. workers and their wages would need to be protected and the deal would have to strengthen national security. In March 2016, she went further - pushing for stronger "rules of origin" labeling standards for the auto industry.

Several trade analysts have suggested that, in spite of public statements asserting she would oppose the TPP both before and after the election, Clinton will find a way to pivot back to supporting TPP. However, they generally concede that the tenor of the election to date has made any such pivot a significant political risk.

She has already called for a new chief trade

prosecutor reporting directly to the President and a tripling in the number of trade enforcement officers.

## TRUMP

Whereas Clinton appears to have undergone a shift in her views on trade deals over the years, Donald Trump has remained relatively consistent in his opposition to trade deals. This election year has been no different, with Trump campaigning on his disdain and opposition to free trade, although he has made statements in support of "fair trade." Much of his opposition is centered on allegations of currency manipulation and devaluation, as well as the effects such trade deals have on the U.S. labor market. Mr. Trump also makes sweeping pronouncements on the deleterious effect trade deals have on the American worker, routinely pointing to China and Mexico as the reason for the decline in manufacturing infrastructure and jobs.

He has, however, stated that he understands "that the United States is bound by laws and treaties."

Trump has referred to **NAFTA** as a "disaster", and "the worst trade deal ever", pinning the blame for the agreement on poor negotiations. He supports renegotiating the agreement and if that fails, breaking the agreement. There is no precedent for the U.S. withdrawing from a trade agreement. Under NAFTA, any party can withdraw from the agreement upon six months' notice. In such an instance, the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, currently suspended, could come back into force (unless the U.S. were to withdraw from it too), while the U.S.' trade relationship with Mexico would rely on WTO rules.

Trump is against the **Trans-Pacific Partnership**. In a November 10, 2015 debate, he referred to it as a "horrible deal." Similar to his assessment on previous and pending trade deals, Trump is of the view that the U.S. labor market is the ultimate loser in most of these agreements, with claims of 900,000 jobs lost to Mexico since the implementation of NAFTA, the closure of over 80,000 factories and a loss of approximately 1/3 of U.S. manufacturing jobs (citing findings by the Economic Policy Institute). However, it is worth noting that the total value-added from manufacturing is higher today than before the financial crisis, and continues to grow. Significant increase in labour productivity in manufacturing largely explains the relative shrinking of manufacturing employment.

Trump also addressed the **softwood lumber** dispute in May 2016, claiming at a rally in the Pacific Northwest: "You can't sell your timber ... they won't even take it and when they do take it, they charge you tax. When we take their product, come on in folks, come on in. We're not going to do it."

China and Mexico have borne the brunt of Trump's populist campaign rhetoric, with threats on tariffs targeted at both. With regard to China, Trump argues that the threat of a 45 percent tariff is necessary to rebalance trade with China given the \$365 billion bilateral trade surplus that China currently enjoys. To accomplish his goal, he has put forth a four-part plan for rebalancing the U.S.-China trade relationship:

1. Declare China a currency manipulator;
2. End China's intellectual property violations;
3. Eliminate China's illegal export subsidies and other unfair advantages; and
4. Strengthen the U.S. negotiation position through a reduction in the corporate tax increase and the deployment of U.S. military personnel in the East and South China Seas.

As for Mexico, Trump has campaigned on the application of a 35 percent tariff on most Mexican imports citing Carrier and Ford's relocations to Mexico as a reason for the tariff threat. However, there is no legal basis to apply such a tariff under existing U.S. law and WTO rules. . It should be noted that application of a 35 percent tariff would have a disproportionate effect on the auto sector, as automotive exports account for more than one-third of Mexico's exports, valued at approximately \$110 billion.

## Foreign Policy

### CLINTON

On **Iran**, Secretary Clinton is supportive of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as part of a broader strategy limiting Iranian access to nuclear materials necessary for the construction of a nuclear weapon. She also supports the use of sanctions and/or force to address any Iranian non-compliance with the agreement.

On **Syria/ISIS**, Mrs. Clinton favors a more robust international commitment that includes an increase in intelligence sharing and the possible creation of a no-fly zone necessary to protect civilians. She also favors a diplomatic solution that removes Syrian President Bashar Assad from power. Regarding the Islamic State, Clinton supports more air strikes, local forces on the ground and online surveillance. "Our strategy should have three main elements. One, defeat ISIS in Syria, Iraq, and across the Middle East. Two, disrupt and dismantle the growing terrorist infrastructure that facilitates the flow of fighters, financing, arms, and propaganda around the world. Three, harden our defenses and those of our allies against external and homegrown threats." Clinton supports President Obama's decision to rule out the deployment of a large number of U.S. combat troops to defeat the Islamic State, and says that a ground force should be drawn from the region, particularly Sunni Arabs and Kurds in both Iraq and Syria.

In a speech to AIPAC in March 2016, Clinton reaffirmed **Israel's** safety and security as a major U.S. priority. Concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Clinton supports a negotiated two-state agreement and believes that America has an important role to play in supporting peace efforts. She would oppose any attempts from outside parties to impose a solution on Israel and the Palestinians, including propositions from the U.N. Security Council.

Looking to **China**, Clinton has suggested that the U.S. could prioritize "broadening our relationship with China," while also holding China accountable for being a responsible stakeholder in the region. She supports the Administration's "pivot to Asia" and wants to improve relations with China in common areas of interest like climate change, while continuing to criticize China in other areas, like human rights.

On **North Korea**, Clinton supports using sanctions to further isolate North Korea until the regime gives up its nuclear arsenal. She also wants China to increase its pressure on the North Korean regime to give up their nuclear program.

With respect to **Europe**, Clinton wants to work with Russia on issues of common interest while partnering with allies to limit Russia's transgressions when needed. She believes that "Putin will ... go as far as he can go unless he is contained." She wants to stand up to him and encourage allies to decrease their dependence on Russian oil in an effort to deter Putin's extreme actions.

Secretary Clinton has stated that the United States needs to strengthen its alliances and that turning away from **NATO** partners would be playing right into the hands of Russian President Vladimir Putin. "Putin already hopes to divide Europe," Clinton said in her speech at Stanford University in March.

However, this is not something we would expect to be debated publicly, but rather communicated through regular diplomatic channels.



**TRUMP**

Mr. Trump describes his foreign policy as "America First", a slogan first popularized in the 1930s by the aviator Charles Lindbergh and other isolationists who opposed the United States' entering World War II. Mr. Trump's rendition of "America First" is simply that advancing U.S. interests will be at the core of all of his foreign policy decisions. However, analysts have described his foreign policy as contradictory, often uninformed, and unpredictable. Mr. Trump, himself, has stated he thinks the United States needs to be more unpredictable: "We have to be unpredictable, and we have to be unpredictable starting now."

Mr. Trump has stated he will tear up the "disastrous" Iran nuclear agreement and renegotiate. However, he's also said that he would "enforce its terms" and even suggested that the United States sell Iran "faulty" missiles. Trump has also promised that "we will totally dismantle Iran's global terror network," which he said had "seeded terror groups all over the world" and "perpetrated terror attacks in 25 different countries on five continents."

Mr. Trump has said that Syria's dictator Bashar al-Assad is someone with whom he could work: "I've been watching Assad," he told Fox's Bill O'Reilly last fall, "and I've been pretty good at this stuff over the years, because deals are people. And I'm looking at Assad and saying, 'Maybe he's better than the kind of people that we're supposed to be backing.'" Trump also supports a no-fly zone in Syria and has called for an increase in U.S. ground forces in Iraq and Syria.

Trump has said his goals for the Middle East are to "defeat terrorists and promote regional stability" and he has promised that ISIS' "days are numbered". Trump has argued that containing the spread of radical Islam must be a major foreign policy goal of the U.S., and he promised to work closely with allies in the Muslim world at risk from radical Islamic violence. Yet at the same time, Trump has also repeatedly said he plans to pull out of the Middle East so that he can save money and focus on nation-building here at home. "We are spending trillions of dollars in the Middle East, and the infrastructure of our country is disintegrating," Trump has said. "We have to build our own country and that's what we have to focus on." The U.S. lead in the coalition against ISIL has been key to getting the more than 60 member countries to contribute to the fight.

Trump has pledged to be a neutral arbiter between Israel and the Palestinian Authority but recently said he supports the continued building of settlements by Israel in the West Bank. "I don't think there should be a pause," Trump stated on May 2 when asked if he would pressure Israel to pause settlement construction as part of an effort to renew peace talks with the Palestinians. "I think Israel should have ... they really have to keep going. They have to keep moving forward."

China is a frequent target of Trump's and he believes that China has bested the United States on trade and economic policy. He would formally designate China a currency manipulator and crack down on what he says is its theft of U.S. intellectual property. He has called for the U.S. to increase its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region, which he says would bolster Washington's bargaining position with respect to Beijing. On China's military build-up in the South China Sea, Trump suggested that the United States use economic pressure to halt Chinese activity there.

Trump recently made headlines when he stated he would be willing to speak with North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un. Like Clinton, Trump has said he believes the United States should pressure China to use its influence to rein in North Korea but goes further to suggest that the United States should be prepared to impose economic penalties on China if it refuses to intervene. He is also open to both South Korea and Japan acquiring nuclear weapons to counterbalance the nuclear arsenal in North Korea and would be willing to withdraw U.S. forces from the two countries if they refused to contribute more to the U.S. presence in their countries. "Japan is better if it protects itself against this

maniac of North Korea. We are better off frankly if South Korea is going to start protecting itself ... they have to protect themselves or they have to pay us."

Mr. Trump believes he can improve relations with **Russian** President Vladimir Putin. "I see improved relations with Russia, from a position of strength, as possible," Mr. Trump said. "Some say the Russians won't be reasonable; I intend to find out."

Mr. Trump has also suggested that **NATO** is obsolete and that other members of the organization are not paying their fair share: "Either they have to pay up for past deficiencies or they have to get out. And if it breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO." Trump favors reforms to the organization to redirect its focus to anti-terrorism activities or the creation of a new entity with anti-terrorism as its focus.

## National Security

### CLINTON

Mrs. Clinton favors a multilateral approach to combatting terrorism and cybersecurity. Her platform envisions a collaborative approach to addressing the necessary defeat of ISIS while expanding coalitions from the Middle East to Africa, Asia and Europe.

While not specifically referring to the **Canada-U.S. border**, Clinton has said she wants to "control the borders." In response to the March 2016 bombings in Belgium she suggested that the United States should reconsider security protocols at airports, potentially clamping down on public zones within terminals, before security checkpoints.

Mrs. Clinton is on record as favoring executive power to provide deportation relief for undocumented immigrants and enacting comprehensive immigration reform to create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Clinton's platform centers on enacting a pathway to citizenship that "keeps families together, and enables millions of workers to come out of the shadows." She also wants to end family detention and close private immigrant detention centers.

### TRUMP

After the December 2015 attacks in San Bernardino, California, Mr. Trump proposed temporarily banning all Muslims from entering the country, a position he confirmed in an interview in May. He attacked undocumented Mexican immigrants in his presidential announcement speech in June 2015, saying: "... they're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." He has repeatedly said he would build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and make the Mexican government pay for it. In addition to the wall, his campaign platform also calls for increased fees on visas for Mexicans and at Mexican ports of entry. Trump has not solely focussed on Mexican immigrants, however. He has also called for the deportation of the approximately 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States and he has pledged to end birthright citizenship, triple the number of Immigration and Custom Enforcement officers, institute nationwide E-verify, prioritize the mandatory return of all criminal aliens, and defund sanctuary cities.

When he was asked during a debate in February about building a similar wall along the **Canada-U.S. border**, he suggested that it would be too long and expensive, and it was unnecessary. "With Canada, you're talking about a massively long piece. You're talking about a border that would be about four times longer." "It would be very, very hard to do – and it is not our biggest problem. I don't care what anyone says. It is not our big problem."

Trump generally supports U.S. counterterrorism practices, including some controversial government surveillance and interrogation programs. "We have to err on the side of security," Trump said in June 2015, speaking about the NSA's program to collect bulk data on U.S. phone calls. "It's certainly not something I like," he said, "but when you have all these maniacs over the world, we probably have to go that little bit of an extra step." Trump has also stated he is in favor of using waterboarding and other forms of torture when U.S. officials are interrogating terrorism suspects. "Only a stupid person would say it doesn't work," he said of waterboarding in late 2015. Even "if it doesn't work, they deserve it

anyway for what they're doing to us." As for laws that currently prohibit torture he has said, "We have to change our laws and we have to be able to fight at least on almost equal basis."

At one time he suggested that as commander-in-chief, he would order soldiers to kill the families of those involved in terrorist plots even if the family members were not implicated in the crime. However, he later moderated that stance by saying that he would not order U.S. personnel to violate domestic or international law

## Climate Change and Energy

### CLINTON

Hillary Clinton refers to climate change as an "urgent threat" and a "defining challenge of our time". She says she is committed to meeting the climate challenge and can be expected to continue and expand many of President Obama's related initiatives. The installation of a liberal appointee to the Supreme Court would be key to the success of many regulatory efforts she might put forward. Clinton wants the U.S. to continue as a global leader in the fight against climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions to "30 percent below what they were in 2005 within the next decade" (which is slightly more ambitious than the US' current target of 26-28% below 2005 by 2025). She has said she would establish a White House climate "war room" and has indicated she will defend the Obama Administration's Clean Power Plan (which sets carbon emission limits for new and existing power plants). She has also pledged to cut methane emissions by 40-45 percent as well as put in place strong standards for reducing leaks from both new and existing sources.

In order to meet these emissions goals, Clinton has called for the U.S. to become a clean energy superpower. Specifically, she has called for the installation of 500 million solar panels nationally by the end of her first term, as well as the generation of enough renewable energy to power every U.S. home within ten years. Mrs. Clinton supports nuclear energy, but her platform also includes the launch of a \$60 billion Clean Energy Challenge that would support federal partnerships with states, cities and rural communities in developing context specific carbon reduction and clean energy mechanisms such as clean energy tax incentives (and a discontinuation of subsidies for "big oil"), expanded research and development, and increased hydropower generation.

Her platform in fact calls for forging a "**North American Climate Compact**" with the governments of Canada and Mexico. Among other things, this compact would look to build on existing regional emissions trading schemes, modernize the interconnected electrical grid, harmonize vehicle fuel standards, and make use of our integrated markets, while also establishing continent-wide methane emissions reductions targets.

Secretary Clinton has also advocated for the U.S. to reduce its fossil fuel dependency by, inter alia, transitioning off coal and by reducing U.S. consumption through efficiency measures and the use of alternative fuels. She promises to restrict leasing on federal lands and opposes offshore drilling in the Arctic and Southeast Atlantic. Clinton acknowledges the role that natural gas can play as a bridge fuel, but she only supports fracking when local communities are in favour, when fracking chemicals are disclosed, and when there is no significant resultant air or water pollution. She opposed the **Keystone XL** pipeline, tweeting: "Time to invest in a clean energy future — not build a pipeline to carry our continent's dirtiest fuel across the U.S." (These statements were made prior to Alberta's climate leadership plan or the Government of Canada's commitment to a pan-Canadian climate change framework.)

Her energy plan calls for "modernizing North American energy infrastructure", which would include making the infrastructure review and permitting process "more effective and efficient", but it's unclear if this would only apply to clean energy projects. She also specifies that she will work to close the loophole that exempts bitumen from an eight cents per barrel tax on crude oil which funds the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, while also ensuring that rail regulations are "strengthened and enforced" both within the U.S. and across the U.S.-Canada border.

### TRUMP

Donald Trump dismisses man-made climate change, referring to it as a “hoax” and a “very expensive form of tax” and has even gone so far as to suggest that it was created “by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive”. In stark contrast to his Democratic rival, Trump has not shied away from supporting fossil fuel development, calling instead for an expansion of domestic oil, natural gas and coal production and has tweeted, “Fracking will lead to American energy independence.” He has stated he would immediately approve the **Keystone XL** pipeline, but has also demanded a 25% cut of the project’s profits and stated he is “not in love with the idea of taking Canadian oil”. He is of the view that that the US can produce all of its oil needs by unleashing fracking - a proposition that no energy analyst sees as feasible in the medium term. This fact, coupled with his stated willingness to halt the import of oil from Gulf countries unwilling to participate in the anti-ISIL coalition, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] One of Trump’s energy policy advisers is Republican Congressman Kevin Cramer of North Dakota. Rep. Cramer, a former North Dakota energy regulator, supports an “all of the above” energy policy and has long supported North American energy independence.

There is scant information on Mr. Trump’s views on renewable energy. In 2012 he urged the Scottish Parliament to end plans for an offshore wind farm, arguing it would spoil the views at his golf resort. He has referred to wind turbines as “noisy”, “ugly” and “kill[ing] a lot of birds”.

Unlike more conservative candidates who have called for restoring federal lands to the states, Mr. Trump has suggested developing a shared governance structure with the states, which would allow for “maintaining the aesthetics of the land while finding ways to gain revenue that would benefit both the federal and state governments”. He has also suggested a shared governance structure for waterways.

Mr. Trump has suggested that he would eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency, which he considers “a disgrace”, and at the very least all of EPA’s rules would be reviewed. “Any regulation that imposes undue costs on business enterprises will be eliminated.” (Rep. Cramer recently provided Mr. Trump with an energy policy proposal that recommends eliminating many of President Obama’s “regulatory burdens” such as the regulations for power plants and methane emissions, while advocating for “fair tax treatment” for all forms of energy.) In response to a candidates’ questionnaire from the American Energy Alliance, Mr. Trump stated that all energy subsidies should end, but he also indicated he was against ending the Renewable Fuel Standard (which subsidizes the use of ethanol) until the U.S. is energy independent. He has also recently indicated that he does not support a tax on carbon and that he would “at a minimum” seek to renegotiate the Paris climate change agreement. [REDACTED]

## **Economic Policy**

### **CLINTON**

According to Hillary Clinton, “the defining economic challenge of our time” is raising incomes for hard-working Americans and she has put forward a three-pronged economic platform focused on strong, fair and long-term growth. Her policies would predominantly target the middle class, intended to expand their opportunities through wage growth, greater access to education and more evenly distributed economic growth. Her general economic themes of fairness to the middle class and investments in infrastructure and people, are broadly resonant with the economic policies of the Canadian government.

Clinton envisages economic growth from investments in education, infrastructure, scientific research and clean energy. For example, her “New College Compact” aims to make higher education more affordable and accessible by extending tax cuts of up to \$2,500 per student and significantly cutting interest rates on student loans. Small businesses would also be provided increased access to capital, greater tax relief and less regulation, and she aims to increase workforce participation through equal pay, paid leave and affordable child care initiatives.

Her plans to invest in infrastructure would see an increase in federal infrastructure funding of \$275 billion over five years, which would include the creation of a \$25 billion national infrastructure bank ([REDACTED])

[REDACTED] The bank would leverage its \$25 billion in funds to support up to an additional \$225 billion in

direct loans, loan guarantees, and other forms of credit enhancement. The plan would see investments in ports, airports, roads, and waterways to address the main chokepoints for the movement of goods and persons, as well as advance clean energy through investment in dams and levees to generate more hydroelectric energy. In addition to physical infrastructure investments, the plan would also increase broadband communication, create connected “smart cities”, establish a more efficient air traffic control system, improve the power grid and advance new vehicle technology such as connected cars.

As for fair growth, Clinton’s platform would encourage businesses to enhance profit sharing in the workplace, raise the minimum wage, reform taxes so that the wealthy pay their “fair share”, expand early learning opportunities for young children, and guarantee paid leave. She has proposed a plan to implement a 15% tax credit—even higher for small businesses—for businesses that distribute profits to employees. She also promises to expand access to capital for small businesses, primarily by easing unnecessary regulatory burdens on community banks, supporting new financing models like impact investing, and doubling support for community development financial institutions. She supports raising the federal minimum wage to \$12 and is open to advancing it further at the state and local level. Independent analysis has suggested that her proposals are close to fully balanced against revenue increases, as per the tax section below.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Aware of the election enthusiasm for “taking on Wall Street”, Clinton has gone on record as pledging to go beyond recent Dodd-Frank financial reforms and give regulators even more discretion to restructure financial firms. She has also committed to introduce taxes on financial institutions that are “too big to fail” or related to practices like high frequency trading. She would also propose new “shadow banking” rules that would place new constraints on borrowing, eliminate the Volcker rule exemption on hedge fund investments by banks, require more public disclosures from hedge funds and increase the independence of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission by reducing their reliance on funding from Congress. Unlike her Democratic rival Bernie Sanders, Clinton does not advocate a return of the Glass-Steagall Act that would separate banks’ commercial and investment functions, calling it unnecessary and pointing to support for her position from experts such as Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] She would also end the carried interest tax break for investment fund managers (a commitment Donald Trump has made as well). Even with these promises of increased regulation, however, Clinton has received more campaign contributions from financial services executives than all other candidates combined, an indication, former Republican strategist and SEC adviser Andrew Weinstein theorized, that the industry “hate(s) uncertainty around tax, regulatory and trade policy” and is steering clear of backing the usually preferred Republican candidate.

## TRUMP

Trump famously declared in his Republican presidential campaign announcement that he “will be the greatest jobs president that God has ever created.”

Mr. Trump has written of the need to advance infrastructure spending in the United States. In his 2015 book, “Crippled America: How to Make America Great Again”, Trump wrote: “For me, fixing the country’s infrastructure would be a major priority project. Before we build bridges to Mars, let’s make sure the bridges over the Mississippi River aren’t going to fall down. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, that stimulates the economy better than construction.” Trump admits that rebuilding American infrastructure would cost taxpayer dollars, but appears to conclude that the long-term economic benefits will outweigh the costs: “On the federal level, this is going to be an expensive investment, no question about that. But in the long run it will more than pay for itself,” he said. “It will stimulate our economy while it is being built and make it a lot easier to do business when it’s done—and it can be done on time and under budget.”

Mr. Trump is well known for his protectionist stance on trade deals (discussed above), but that same protectionism can also be found in his proposals for legal migration to the United States. According to Mr. Trump, “A nation that does not serve its own citizens is not a nation. Any immigration plan must improve jobs, wages and security for all Americans.” On his campaign website he writes, “The influx of foreign workers holds down salaries, keeps unemployment high, and makes it difficult for poor and working class Americans – including immigrants themselves and their children – to earn a middle class wage.” He proposes increasing the prevailing wage for some immigrant categories (H1-B) and pausing others (e.g. green cards), so as to encourage employers to draw from the existing domestic pool of unemployed. He also writes of “increase[ing] standards for the admission of refugees and asylum seeker” and redirecting the monies saved on “expensive” refugee programs to aiding Americans.

Mr. Trump regularly states that the United States is getting “killed” in global commerce by China, so his goal is to “cut a better deal with China that helps American businesses and workers compete”. While much of his plan to achieve that goal would involve measures aimed directly at China (e.g. declaring it a currency manipulator), he has referred to “strengthening America’s negotiating position”. In this regard, he proposes addressing the U.S. debt and deficit by “eliminating waste, fraud and abuse in the Federal government”, although many analysts are skeptical of the amount of savings this would actually generate.

Donald Trump’s views on what he would do regarding the financial sector are somewhat unclear beyond general statements that the Obama administration’s Dodd-Frank financial reforms are “a disaster” that have resulted in U.S. banks being “petrified of the regulators”. His official website is silent on the subject, and much of what he has said occurred before his presidential run, such as his call for individual responsibility and greater “financial intelligence” in his 2010 book, *Think Like a Champion*. “I have no idea how he would view our issues,” said Camden Fine, president of the Independent Community Bankers of America.

[REDACTED]

One of the few financial targets identified by the presumptive Republican presidential nominee is hedge funds. Trump has pledged to eliminate the carried interest tax break for investment fund managers (a commitment also in Hillary Clinton's platform). Another focus, [REDACTED] is monetary policy, though it is supposed to be free of political influence; Trump has said repeatedly he would replace Janet Yellen (after her term expired), and has clearly expressed a preference for low interest rates. "If we raise interest rates, and the dollar starts getting too strong, we're going to have some very major problems", [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Taxes

### CLINTON

The Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center estimates that Hillary Clinton's tax proposals would increase federal revenue by as much as \$1.1 trillion over the first decade, and an additional \$2.1 trillion over the subsequent decade, as her measures raise taxes on high-income individuals. A Clinton victory could even raise tax revenue before she takes office, as high-income earners would likely accelerate their realization of capital gains and other income to avoid future tax increases. Nearly two-thirds of the revenue increase over the first decade would come from tax provisions aimed squarely at high earners. The Tax Policy Center forecasts that Clinton's plan, if enacted, would reduce the federal debt by more than \$1.2 trillion over the 10-year budget window analyzed. Another study by the Committee for a Responsible Budget, however, expects Clinton's proposals to cost \$1.8 trillion over 10 years, countered with \$1.6 trillion in revenue offsets, with the remaining \$200 billion shortfall potentially covered by additional corporate tax revenues, although the study says Clinton's corporate tax plan doesn't have sufficient detail to indicate whether that's possible. The paper expects that federal debt under Clinton's plan would grow from 74% of GDP in 2015 to 86% by 2026.

Clinton tax proposals [REDACTED] include the student tax cut of up to \$2,500 for college expenses and tax relief of up to \$6,000 for family members caring for ailing parents and grandparents (family caregivers would also receive credit towards their Social Security benefits). She has also pledged to offer all employees up to 12 weeks paid family and medical leave with at least two-thirds pay, which would be funded by taxing high earners their "fair share" (no contributions would be required of employers).

Other commitments on the individual income tax side, mostly aimed at the wealthiest Americans, include:

- o A four percent surcharge on adjusted gross income (AGI) over \$5 million;
- o A 30 percent minimum tax on those with an AGI over \$1 million (aka "the Buffett Rule");
- o Limiting the tax value of specific deductions and exclusions to 28 percent;
- o Introducing new tax rates for capital gains with rates that decline with the holding period; and

- o Making permanent changes to estate and gift taxes that permanently reduce the tax threshold, and setting a lifetime gift tax exemption.

On the business tax side, there are numerous commitments

- o Stopping corporate inversions by increasing the threshold for foreign ownership in an inversion transaction from 20 percent to 50 percent of the combined company shares, and levying an “exit tax” on un-repatriated earnings;
- o Instituting a tax, or “risk fee”, on the largest financial institutions (more than \$50 billion in assets as well as other systemically important financial institutions), and a tax on high-frequency and algorithmic trading;
- o A 15-percent tax cut for companies that provide profit sharing on top of wages and pay increases; and
- o Eliminating tax incentives on fossil fuels

Her website also refers to providing tax relief and tax simplification for small businesses, although few details are provided. She would also provide a tax credit for businesses that hire apprentices of up to \$1,500 per apprentice, with an additional bonus “for providing opportunities specifically for young people.”

According to the Tax Policy Center study, Clinton’s proposals would lead to a more complex tax code, particularly as it relates to high earners through measures such as the Buffett Rule, an additional minimum tax and capital gains tax based on holding periods. On the economic side, the plan could reduce the incentive to save and invest, but only for filers in the top 10 percent of wage earners.

In addition, a financial transaction tax (FTT) would also be expected to be received critically outside of the U.S. by several industrialized countries, including Canada, who have not come out in support of the idea, most notably given the significant market volatility in recent years and the uncertainty of such a tax’s effects. A 2012 article in the Bank of Canada Review, for example, found that an FTT could reduce the flow of profitable investment, decreasing levels of real production, expansion, capital investment and possibly employment.

## TRUMP

In contrast to a dearth of financial sector policies, Trump’s tax plan was released early on in the Republican race and is a key part of his official website. However, press reports following Ted Cruz and John Kasich’s campaign suspensions indicate the nominee may now be considering deviating from the plan he released late last year, telling MSNBC it is only a starting point for negotiations or a “concept”. More recently, he has repeatedly referred to the need to lower taxes for the middle class (“they have been absolutely shunned”), even though his current tax plan sees wealthier Americans benefitting the most. It’s reported that CNBC television host Larry Kudlow and Stephen Moore, of the conservative think tank Heritage Foundation, have been tasked with updating the plan to reduce its cost and the corresponding benefits to the top income tax bracket. Kudlow has reportedly referred to their work as “tweaking”, and may not necessarily be endorsed by the candidate, although Trump now believes that taxes on the highest earners including himself “should go up”.

Under his current plan, Donald Trump would:

- Significantly reduce all marginal tax rates;
- Increase standard deduction amounts to nearly four times their current levels;
- Limit or repeal tax expenditures;
- Repeal individual and corporate alternative minimum taxes as well as estate and gift taxes.

On the personal income tax side, Trump would institute four tax brackets instead of the current seven: 0, 10, 20 and 25 percent. Single Americans with income under \$25,000 and couples with income under \$50,000 would pay no income tax



(as his website puts it, these taxpayers will get a new one-page form to send to the IRS saying “I win”, and would save an average of nearly \$1,000).

On the business side, the corporate tax rate would be reduced to 15 percent, with a phased-in limit on business deductions. To help combat corporate inversions and repatriate offshore earnings by U.S. multinationals, there would be a one-time 10 percent tax on corporate income held outside the United States and an end to the deferral of foreign income (the current foreign tax credit would be retained). Trump’s platform argues that the effects of the 10-percent repatriation tax rate and end to income deferral, combined with the elimination of deductions and loopholes such as the exemption of carried interest and the exemption of life insurance interest for high-income earners, would ensure the tax relief promised is revenue neutral. One measure currently not in the plan but being proposed by Kudlow and Moore is an immediate expensing of equipment purchases.

[REDACTED] The Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center estimates the Trump tax proposals would reduce federal revenue by \$9.5 trillion in the first decade alone, adding as much as \$11.2 trillion to the U.S. federal debt by 2026 and \$34.1 trillion by 2036. The think tank also concludes the tax relief would increase inequality; taxes would be cut by an average of about \$5,100, or roughly seven percent of after-tax income, but more than \$1.3 million, or nearly 19 percent of after-tax income, for the top 0.1 percent of income earners. In another study, by the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, the authors conclude that if the Trump tax plan were implemented, government revenues in relation to the economy would fall to 14 percent from the current 18.2 percent, a level not seen since the 1950s. A more recent estimate by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget expects Trump’s campaign proposals to add between \$10.8 and \$15.45 trillion to the federal debt over the next ten years.

At the same time, from an economic standpoint, Urban-Brookings notes that the lower rates promised could increase incentives to work, save and invest, although if revenue losses are not offset with spending reductions the resulting deficits would crowd out private investment, slow economic growth and raise interest rates. According to the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, balancing the budget in 2026 under this scenario would require cutting all government programs—including Social Security, Medicare and defense—by about two-fifths (keep in mind that this does not include the cost of new spending in the Trump platform, including up to \$1 trillion in new spending on veterans).

[REDACTED] In 1999, for example, Trump proposed a wealth tax: a one-time 14.25 percent levy on estates of more than \$10 million. He had also expressed his opposition, and then support, for a flat tax that he at one time dismissed as unfair to the poor. He has also called for the elimination of corporate tax in his 2011 book, *Time to Get Tough*, which he said would “create an unprecedented jobs boom”.

Given that the candidate has explicitly stated that his plan, as outlined in his campaign platform, is only a concept and can be expected to change, [REDACTED]

While Trump’s tax commitments are almost exclusively focused on tax cuts, there is one area where a new tax might be created under his leadership. Should he follow through on his oft-repeated pledge to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico, Congressional Republicans have openly considered the imposition of a tax on foreign remittances (or what Trump has termed “illegal wages”) to pay for its construction. According to the World Bank, \$54.2 billion in remittances were sent abroad by U.S. residents in 2014, with almost half that amount destined for Mexico.

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Clinton	Trump
<p><b>Trade:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Against TPP, based on shortcoming in the agreement on currency manipulation, labor rights, the environment and conditions for small businesses. Analysts suggest she may reassess post-election. This could involve a re-negotiation to ensure protection of U.S. workers and their wages and strengthening of national security.</li> <li>• Did not support NAFTA as U.S. Senator.</li> <li>• Would create a chief trade prosecutor to enforce U.S. rights under existing trade agreements.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Trade:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Against TPP, saying it will lead to U.S. job loss.</li> <li>• Considers NAFTA “a disaster”. Would renegotiate it or break it.</li> <li>• Would “rather make individual deals with individual countries” than move forward with a multination agreement.</li> <li>• Would declare China a currency manipulator</li> <li>• Would impose tariffs on Mexican and Chinese imports.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foreign policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationalist / multilateralist</li> <li>• Supports the Iran nuclear deal.</li> <li>• Supports possible no-fly zone in Syria and use of local forces on the ground.</li> <li>• Supports two-state agreement for Israel/Palestine.</li> <li>• Supports additional sanctions on DPRK.</li> <li>• Favors strengthening NATO.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Foreign policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolationist (“America First”), unpredictable</li> <li>• Iran nuclear deal is “disastrous” but would “enforce its terms”.</li> <li>• Supports no-fly zone in Syria and increased U.S. ground forces.</li> <li>• Pledged to be a “neutral arbiter” between Israel and Palestine, but supports building of settlements.</li> <li>• Suggested economic penalties on China if it doesn’t intervene with DPRK.</li> <li>• Open to Japan and South Korea obtaining nuclear weapons and would withdraw U.S. forces from those countries unless they contribute more to their presence.</li> <li>• Critical that NATO partners are “not paying their fair share”; considers the organization “obsolete”; favors reforming NATO to focus on anti-terrorism activities or breaking it up.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National security:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would provide deportation relief for undocumented migrants and supports legislative reform to create a pathway to citizenship.</li> <li>• Favors a multilateral approach to combatting terrorism and cybersecurity.</li> <li>• Would expand coalitions.</li> <li>• Wants to “control the borders”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>National security:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would temporarily ban all Muslims from entering the U.S.</li> <li>• Would deport undocumented immigrants (approx. 11 million).</li> <li>• Would build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and make the Mexican government pay for it.</li> <li>• Supports waterboarding and other forms of torture</li> </ul>
<p><b>Climate change and energy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change is an “urgent threat”. Would establish a White House climate “war room”.</li> <li>• Would restrict fossil fuel leases on federal land</li> </ul>	<p><b>Climate change and energy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change is a “hoax”. Would seek to renegotiate the Paris climate change agreement.</li> </ul>

<p>and opposes offshore drilling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for fracking under limited conditions</li> <li>• U.S. to be clean energy superpower, with 500 million solar panels by end of her first term and enough renewable energy to power all U.S. homes within 10 years.</li> <li>• Supports the Clean Power Plan.</li> <li>• Opposes Keystone XL.</li> <li>• Would reduce GHG emissions to 30% below 2005 levels within the next decade.</li> <li>• Would cut methane emissions by 40-45%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls for an expansion of domestic oil, gas and coal production.</li> <li>• “Fracking will lead to American energy independence”.</li> <li>• Suggests eliminating the Environmental Protection Agency and at the very least, reviewing its rules (including the Clean Power Plan).</li> <li>• Supports Keystone XL, but has also demanded a 25% cut of the project’s profits.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “the defining economic challenge of our time” is raising incomes for hard-working Americans.</li> <li>• Economic growth from investments in education, infrastructure, scientific research and clean energy</li> <li>• increase workforce participation through equal pay, increased minimum wage, paid leave and affordable child care initiatives.</li> <li>• \$275 billion in infrastructure funding over 5 yrs</li> <li>• Pledges to go beyond Dodd-Frank reforms, giving regulators more discretion to restructure financial firms.</li> <li>• Increased independence for SEC and CFTC</li> </ul>	<p><b>Economic policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “will be the greatest jobs president that God has ever created”.</li> <li>• Would require employers to offer jobs to Americans and existing immigrants before allowing additional immigrants</li> <li>• Supports raising the minimum wage.</li> <li>• Would advance infrastructure spending, but unclear how this would be funded.</li> <li>• Eliminate “waste, fraud and abuse” from the federal government (although analysts are skeptical of the savings)</li> <li>• Protection and expansion of entitlements (Social Security, Medicare)</li> <li>• Considers Dodd-Frank reforms a “disaster”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tax policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased taxes on the wealthy (e.g. Buffett Rule of 30% min. tax on those with adjusted gross income over \$1 million)</li> <li>• Stop corporate inversions by increasing threshold on foreign ownership to 50%</li> <li>• Reduce estate and gift tax threshold and set lifetime gift tax exemption</li> <li>• Limit value of specific deductions to 28%</li> <li>• Would eliminate the carried interest tax break for investment fund managers</li> <li>• Tax cut for companies that provide profit sharing</li> <li>• Eliminate fossil fuel tax incentives</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tax policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced marginal tax rates</li> <li>• One-time 10% repatriation tax on corporate income outside the U.S.</li> <li>• Repeal individual and corporate alternative minimum taxes as well as estate and gift taxes</li> <li>• Increase standard deductions</li> <li>• Would eliminate the carried interest tax break for investment fund managers</li> <li>• Contemplates a tax on foreign remittances</li> <li>• With the exception of the Renewable Fuel Standard, says energy subsidies should end.</li> </ul>

# 2016 Democratic Party Platform

July 21, 2016

As Approved by the Democratic Platform Committee  
July 8-9, 2016 - Orlando, FL

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## 2016 DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

### Preamble

In 2016, Democrats meet in Philadelphia with the same basic belief that animated the Continental Congress when they gathered here 240 years ago: Out of many, we are one.

Under President Obama's leadership, and thanks to the hard work and determination of the American people, we have come a long way from the Great Recession and the Republican policies that triggered it. American businesses have now added 14.8 million jobs since private-sector job growth turned positive in early 2010. Twenty million people have gained health insurance coverage. The American auto industry just had its best year ever. And we are getting more of our energy from the sun and wind, and importing less oil from overseas.

But too many Americans have been left out and left behind. They are working longer hours with less security. Wages have barely budged and the racial wealth gap remains wide, while the cost of everything from childcare to a college education has continued to rise. And for too many families, the dream of homeownership is out of reach. As working people struggle, the top one percent accrues more wealth and more power. Republicans in Congress have chosen gridlock and dysfunction over trying to find solutions to the real challenges we face. It's no wonder that so many feel like the system is rigged against them.

Democrats believe that cooperation is better than conflict, unity is better than division, empowerment is better than resentment, and bridges are better than walls.

It's a simple but powerful idea: we are stronger together.

Democrats believe we are stronger when we have an economy that works for everyone—an economy that grows incomes for working people, creates good-paying jobs, and puts a middle-class life within reach for more Americans. Democrats believe we can spur more sustainable economic growth, which will create good-paying jobs and raise wages. And we can have more economic fairness, so the rewards are shared broadly, not just with those at the top. We need an economy that prioritizes long-term investment over short-term profit-seeking, rewards the common interest over self-interest, and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship.

We believe that today's extreme level of income and wealth inequality—where the majority of the economic gains go to the top one percent and the richest 20 people in our country own more wealth than the bottom 150 million—makes our economy weaker, our communities poorer, and our politics poisonous.

And we know that our nation's long struggle with race is far from over. More than half a century after Rosa Parks sat and Dr. King marched and John Lewis bled, more than half a century after César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and Larry Itliong organized, race still plays a significant role in determining who gets ahead in America and who gets left behind. We must face that reality and we must fix it.

We believe a good education is a basic right of all Americans, no matter what zip code they live in. We will end the school-to-prison pipeline and build a cradle-to-college pipeline instead, where every child can live up to his or her God-given potential.

We believe in helping Americans balance work and family without fear of punishment or penalty. We believe in at last guaranteeing equal pay for women. And as the party that created Social Security, we believe in protecting every American's right to retire with dignity.

We firmly believe that the greed, recklessness, and illegal behavior on Wall Street must be brought to an end. Wall Street must never again be allowed to threaten families and businesses on Main Street.

Democrats believe we are stronger when we protect citizens' right to vote, while stopping corporations' outsized influence in elections. We will fight to end the broken campaign finance system, overturn the disastrous *Citizens United* decision, restore the full power of the Voting Rights Act, and return control of our elections to the American people.

Democrats believe that climate change poses a real and urgent threat to our economy, our national security, and our children's health and futures, and that Americans deserve the jobs and security that come from becoming the clean energy superpower of the 21st century.

Democrats believe we are stronger and safer when America brings the world together and leads with principle and purpose. We believe we should strengthen our alliances, not weaken them. We believe in the power of development and diplomacy. We believe our military should be the best-trained, best-equipped fighting force in the world, and that we must do everything we can to honor and support our veterans. And we know that only the United States can mobilize common action on a truly global scale, to take on the challenges that transcend borders, from international terrorism to climate change to health pandemics.

Above all, Democrats are the party of inclusion. We know that diversity is not our problem—it is our promise. As Democrats, we respect differences of perspective and belief, and pledge to work together to move this country forward, even when we disagree. With this platform, we do not merely seek common ground—we strive to reach higher ground.

We are proud of our heritage as a nation of immigrants. We know that today's immigrants are tomorrow's teachers, doctors, lawyers, government leaders, soldiers, entrepreneurs, activists, PTA members, and pillars of our communities.

We believe in protecting civil liberties and guaranteeing civil rights and voting rights, women's rights and workers' rights, LGBT rights, and rights for people with disabilities. We believe America is still, as Robert Kennedy said, "a great country, an unselfish country, and a compassionate country."

These principles stand in sharp contrast to the Republicans, who have nominated as the standard-bearer for their party and their candidate for President a man who seeks to appeal to Americans' basest differences, rather than our better natures.

The stakes have been high in previous elections. But in 2016, the stakes can be measured in human lives—in the number of immigrants who would be torn from their homes; in the number of faithful and peaceful Muslims who would be barred from even visiting our shores; in the number of allies alienated and dictators courted; in the number of Americans who would lose access to health care and see their rights ripped away.

This election is about more than Democrats and Republicans. It is about who we are as a nation, and who we will be in the future.

Two hundred and forty years ago, in Philadelphia, we started a revolution of ideas and of action that continues to this day. Since then, our union has been tested many times, through bondage and civil war, segregation and depression, two world wars and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Generations of Americans fought and marched and organized to widen the circle of opportunity and dignity—and we are fighting still.

Despite what some say, America is and has always been great—but not because it has been perfect. What makes America great is our unerring belief that we can make it better. We can and we will build a more just economy, a more equal society, and a more perfect union—because we are stronger together.

### **Raise Incomes and Restore Economic Security for the Middle Class**

Democrats believe we must break down all the barriers holding Americans back and restore the basic bargain that built America's mighty middle class: If you work hard and play by the rules, you can get ahead and stay ahead. The system is not working when we have a rigged economy in which ordinary Americans work longer hours for lower wages, while most new income and wealth goes to the top one percent. Republican governors, legislatures, and their corporate allies have launched attack after attack on workers' fundamental rights to organize and bargain collectively. Too many Americans are living paycheck to paycheck, and hallmarks of a middle class life—owning a home, having access to affordable and quality childcare, retiring with dignity—feel out of reach. It is no wonder so many Americans feel like the deck is stacked against them. The Democratic Party believes that supporting workers through higher wages, workplace protections, policies to balance work and family, and other investments will help rebuild the middle class for the 21st century.

#### *Raising Workers' Wages*

Democrats believe that the current minimum wage is a starvation wage and must be increased to a living wage. No one who works full time should have to raise a family in poverty. We believe that Americans should earn at least \$15 an hour and have the right to form or join a union and will work in every way we can—in Congress and the federal government, in states and with the private sector—to reach this goal. We should raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour

over time and index it, give all Americans the ability to join a union regardless of where they work, and create new ways for workers to have power in the economy so every worker can earn at least \$15 an hour. We applaud the approaches taken by states like New York and California. We also support creating one fair wage for all workers by ending the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers and people with disabilities.

Democrats support a model employer executive order or some other vehicle to leverage federal dollars to support employers who provide their workers with a living wage, good benefits, and the opportunity to form a union without reprisal. The one trillion dollars spent annually by the government on contracts, loans, and grants should be used to support good jobs that rebuild the middle class.

### *Protecting Workers' Fundamental Rights*

The Democratic Party believes that when workers are strong, America is strong. Democrats will make it easier for workers, public and private, to exercise their right to organize and join unions. We will fight to pass laws that direct the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union if a simple majority of eligible workers sign valid authorization cards, as well as laws that bring companies to the negotiating table. We support binding arbitration to help workers who have voted to join a union reach a first contract.

A major factor in the 40-year decline in the middle class is that the rights of workers to bargain collectively for better wages and benefits have been under attack at all levels. Donald Trump would make matters worse by creating a race to the bottom where the middle class is fighting over fewer and fewer good-paying jobs. In fact, Trump rejected some attempts by his own employees to unionize and has personally hired union-busting firms to undermine workers' rights.

Democrats believe so-called "right to work" laws are wrong for workers—such as teachers and other public employees who serve our communities every day—and wrong for America. We will continue to vigorously oppose those laws and other efforts that would eliminate dues check-off procedures, roll-back prevailing wage standards, abolish fair share requirements, restrict the use of voluntary membership payments for political purposes, attack seniority, restrict due process protections, and require annual recertification efforts. We oppose legislation and lawsuits that would strike down laws protecting the rights of teachers and other public employees. We will defend President Obama's overtime rule, which protects millions of workers by paying them fairly for their hard work.

The Democratic Party believes consumers, workers, students, retirees, and investors who have been mistreated should never be denied their right to fight for fair treatment under the law. That is why we will support efforts to limit the use of forced arbitration clauses in employment and service contracts, which unfairly strip consumers, workers, students, retirees, and investors of their right to their day in court.

### *Supporting Working Families*

We will fight to secure equal pay for women, which will benefit all women and their families, particularly women of color who are disproportionately impacted by discriminatory pay

practices, and against other factors that contribute to the wage gap. And we will combat the discrimination they face on and off the job. While Donald Trump thinks it is “dangerous” for women to leave the home and paid family leave hurts our economy, Democrats will make sure that the United States finally enacts national paid family and medical leave by passing a family and medical leave act that would provide all workers at least 12 weeks of paid leave to care for a new child or address a personal or family member’s serious health issue. We will fight to allow workers the right to earn at least seven days of paid sick leave. We will also encourage employers to provide paid vacation.

Our work and family policies must also help family caregivers. We will ensure that family caregivers have the support, respite care, and training they need to support their loved ones. We will create a strong stable paid caregiving workforce to help meet families' needs, by raising wages, improving access to training, and giving workers the opportunity to come together to make their voices heard in support of a stronger system. We will address the conditions that make it hard for workers with unpredictable or inflexible schedules to meet caregiving responsibilities. We will take steps to expand and strengthen the home care workforce. We will increase investments to make quality childcare more affordable, boost wages for childcare workers, and support the millions of people paying for, coordinating, or providing care for aging relatives or those with disabilities.

#### *Helping More Workers Share in Near-Record Corporate Profits*

Corporate profits are at near-record highs, but workers have not shared through rising wages. Profit-sharing is linked to higher pay and productivity. That is why, working with business, labor, and other stakeholders, we will incentivize companies to share profits with their employees on top of wages and pay increases, while targeting the workers and businesses that need profit-sharing the most.

#### *Expanding Access to Affordable Housing and Homeownership*

Whereas the Republican Presidential nominee rooted for the housing crisis, Democrats will continue to fight for those families who suffered the loss of their homes. We will help those who are working toward a path of financial stability and will put sustainable home ownership into the reach of more families. Democrats will also combat the affordable housing crisis and skyrocketing rents in many parts of the country, which is leading too many families and workers to be pushed out of communities where they work.

We will preserve and increase the supply of affordable rental housing by expanding incentives to ease local barriers to building new affordable rental housing developments in areas of economic opportunity. We will substantially increase funding for the National Housing Trust Fund to construct, preserve, and rehabilitate millions of affordable housing rental units. Not only will this help address the affordable housing crisis, it will also create millions of good-paying jobs in the process. Democrats believe that we should provide more federal resources to the people struggling most with unaffordable housing: low-income families, people with disabilities, veterans, and the elderly.

We will expand efforts to address the lingering effects of the foreclosure crisis through programs like the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program. We will also expand programs to prevent

displacement of existing residents, especially in communities of color; create affordable and workforce housing; and preserve neighborhood-serving nonprofit organizations and small businesses. We will reinvigorate housing production programs, repair public housing, and increase funding for the housing choice voucher program and other rental assistance programs. And we will fight for robust funding to end homelessness in our cities and counties once and for all, through targeted investments to provide the necessary outreach, social services, and housing options for all populations experiencing homelessness. We will engage in a stronger, more coordinated, and better funded partnership among federal, state, and local governments to end chronic homelessness for millions of Americans. We will build on and expand President Obama's promising initiatives to end veteran and family homelessness in our country.

We must make sure that everyone has a fair shot at homeownership. We will keep the housing market robust and inclusive by supporting more first-time homebuyers and putting more Americans into the financial position to become sustainable homeowners; preserving the 30-year fixed rate mortgage; modernizing credit scoring; clarifying lending rules; expanding access to housing counseling; defending and strengthening the Fair Housing Act; and ensuring that regulators have the clear direction, resources, and authority to enforce those rules effectively. We will prevent predatory lending by defending the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). These steps are especially important because over the next decade most new households will be formed by families in communities of color, which typically have less generational wealth and fewer resources to put towards a down payment.

#### *Protecting and Expanding Social Security*

Democrats are proud to be the party that created Social Security, one of the nation's most successful and effective programs. Without Social Security, nearly half of America's seniors would be living in poverty. Social Security is more than just a retirement program. It also provides important life insurance to young survivors of deceased workers and provides disability insurance protection. We will fight every effort to cut, privatize, or weaken Social Security, including attempts to raise the retirement age, diminish benefits by cutting cost-of-living adjustments, or reducing earned benefits. Democrats will expand Social Security so that every American can retire with dignity and respect, including women who are widowed or took time out of the workforce to care for their children, aging parents, or ailing family members. The Democratic Party recognizes that the way Social Security cost-of-living adjustments are calculated may not always reflect the spending patterns of seniors, particularly the disproportionate amount they spend on health care expenses. We are committed to exploring alternatives that could better and more equitably serve seniors.

We will make sure Social Security's guaranteed benefits continue for generations to come by asking those at the top to pay more, and will achieve this goal by taxing some of the income of people above \$250,000. The Democratic Party is also committed to providing all necessary financial support for the Social Security Administration so that it can provide timely benefits and high-quality service for those it serves. Our plan contrasts starkly with Donald Trump. He has referred to Social Security as a "Ponzi scheme" and has called for privatizing it as well as increasing the retirement age.

### *Ensuring a Secure and Dignified Retirement*

Democrats believe it should be easier for Americans to save for retirement and prepare for unforeseen risks and expenses. We will defend the right of workers to collect their defined benefit pensions and make sure workers get priority and protection when pension plans are in distress. Democrats will also fight to enact legislation to make sure that the earned pension benefits of Americans will not be cut, and will pay for it by closing tax loopholes that benefit millionaires and billionaires. We will fight against any attempt by Republicans in Congress or on Wall Street to roll back the Conflict of Interest Rule, which requires that retirement advisors put the best interests of their clients above their own financial gain.

Seniors should not have to choose between putting food on the table, keeping a roof over their heads, or buying the medication that they need to stay healthy. We strongly support the Older Americans Act, which funds critical programs to help seniors remain independent in their own homes and communities. We are also committed to fighting the immense problem of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### *Revitalizing Our Nation's Postal Service*

The United States Postal Service (USPS) is a national treasure. That is why Democrats embrace a vibrant, public Postal Service that offers universal service, and reject any effort to privatize or marginalize it. We are committed to eliminating the unsustainable mandate to “pre-fund” retiree health costs. And we will work to restore service to appropriate levels, including overnight delivery of first-class mail and periodicals within the same metropolitan area, maintaining six-day and door-to-door delivery, and appointing members to the Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission who champion a strong public Postal Service. Democrats also advocate for expanding postal services. This includes offering basic financial services such as paycheck cashing and removing statutory restraints on services the USPS may offer. It also includes promoting vote-by-mail to increase voter participation and to help address the scourge of voter suppression.

## **Create Good-Paying Jobs**

Democrats know that nothing is more important than creating good-paying jobs that can support a middle-class life—from nurses, firefighters, and teachers to construction workers, factory workers, and small business owners. That is why we are committed to doing everything we can to build a full-employment economy, where everyone has a job that pays enough to raise a family and live in dignity with a sense of purpose. Democrats will build strong, sustained, shared economic growth. We know that when Americans come together, we can do amazing things. In the last century, our leaders came together across the aisle to electrify the nation, build the Interstate Highway System, support groundbreaking research in medicine, science, and communications, and send a man to the moon. When we are bold and ambitious, we can do big things and make our economy stronger for decades to come.

### *Building 21st Century Infrastructure*

If we are serious about reversing the decline of the middle class, we need major federal investments to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and put millions of Americans back to work



in decent paying jobs in both the public and private sectors. The climate emergency and the need to expand the middle class demand that we make the most ambitious investment in American infrastructure since President Eisenhower created the interstate highway system. We will put Americans to work updating and expanding our roads, bridges, public transit, airports, and passenger and freight rail lines. We will build 21st century energy and water systems, modernize our schools, and continue to support the expansion of high-speed broadband networks. We will protect communities from the impact of climate change and help them to mitigate its effects by investing in green and resilient infrastructure. We will address the backlog of deferred maintenance in our four key public land management agencies. And we will protect public health and safety by modernizing drinking and wastewater systems. These investments will create secure, good-paying middle-class jobs today and will substantially increase demand for American-made steel and other products manufactured in the United States. And by boosting economic growth in a fair and equitable way, and strengthening our long-term competitiveness, these investments will create many more jobs in the years to come.

Democrats will also create an independent, national infrastructure bank that will support critical infrastructure improvements. This bank will provide loans and other financial assistance for investments in energy, water, broadband, transportation, and multi-modal infrastructure projects. Democrats will continue to support the interest tax exemption on municipal bonds and will work to establish a permanent version of Build America Bonds as an additional tool to encourage infrastructure investment by state and local governments.

Furthermore, Democrats will fight to ensure resources and programs are adequately targeted to provide economic development, job training, and critical infrastructure investment in areas of the greatest need.

#### *Fostering a Manufacturing Renaissance*

Democrats believe one of the best ways to innovate, prosper, and create good-paying jobs is to make more in America, which is why we firmly support American manufacturing with a "Make it in America" plan. We must revitalize hard-hit manufacturing communities; create thriving hubs of manufacturing and innovation throughout the country; and claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, using the proceeds to reinvest in communities and workers at home instead. Democrats are proud of rescuing the auto industry from collapse, which saved more than a million jobs, and led the auto industry, which is at the heart of American manufacturing, to record sales. Democrats will defend the Export-Import Bank, which supports good-paying jobs across the country and allows American workers and manufacturers to compete on a level playing field. Donald Trump may talk tough, but he has consistently outsourced his own products. American workers deserve better.

#### *Creating Good-Paying Clean Energy Jobs*

We must help American workers and businesses compete for jobs and investments in global clean energy, high-tech products, internet technology products, and advanced manufacturing and vehicles. We must make American manufacturing more internationally competitive by making it the greenest and most efficient in the world, including by investing in industrial energy efficiency.

*Pursuing Our Innovation Agenda: Science, Research, Education, and Technology*

Democrats support ambitious public and private investments in science, technology, and research. We are focused on creating good jobs in communities across America. Entrepreneurship and innovation are fundamental to our future economic growth—in the information technology (IT) industry as well as energy, manufacturing, transportation, health, retail, services, and countless other sectors. We will nurture the next generation of scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs, especially women and people of color, to make sure America continues to out-compete and out-innovate the rest of the world with our bold innovation agenda.

New technologies are already transforming our economy, and they have the power to generate trillions in economic output. We must harness these forces so that they create higher-paying jobs across the country, bring more people into the workforce, and reduce inequality. To do this, we need to educate our people and train our workforce; support entrepreneurship and promote inclusion in the digital economy; attract and retain talented people from all over the world; and invest in research and development, innovation hubs, as well as in getting ideas to market. We also need to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn computer science by the time they graduate from high school.

Democrats believe we must harness the promise of technological innovation to promote community participation and enhance opportunities to achieve greater economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. We will encourage technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and small business creation throughout the country and in all types of innovation sectors.

High-speed internet connectivity is not a luxury; it is a necessity for 21st century economic success, social mobility, education, health care, and public safety. Despite considerable progress and private investment in the last eight years to close the digital divide, there is more work to do. Democrats will finish the job of connecting every household in America to high-speed broadband, increase internet adoption, and help hook up anchor institutions so they can offer free WiFi to the public. We will take action to help America widely deploy 5G technology—the next generation wireless service that will not only bring faster internet connections to underserved areas, but will enable the Internet of Things and a host of transformative technologies.

Democrats support a free and open internet at home and abroad, and will oppose any effort by Republicans to roll back the historic net neutrality rules that the Federal Communications Commission enacted last year.

Democrats value American innovation and believe it is one of our country's great strengths. We will protect the intellectual property rights of artists, creators, and inventors at home and abroad. The entire nation prospers when we promote the unique and original artistic and cultural contributions of the women and men who create and preserve our nation's heritage.

Democrats will fight against unfair theft of intellectual property and trade secrets. We will increase access to global markets for American intellectual property and other digital trade by opposing quotas, discriminatory measures, and data localization requirements.

Pushing beyond the boundaries of what we know is core to who we are as Americans. Democrats are immensely proud of all that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has done—through its achievements in science, technology and exploration—to better understand our place in the universe and inspire and educate generations of young people in this country to pursue careers in science. Space exploration is a reminder that our capacity for curiosity is limitless, and may be matched only by our ability to achieve great things if we work together. Democrats believe in continuing the spirit of discovery that has animated NASA's exploration of space over the last half century. We will strengthen support for NASA and work in partnership with the international scientific community to launch new missions to space.

#### *Supporting America's Small Businesses*

The Democratic Party will make it easier to start and grow a small business in America, unlike Donald Trump, who has often stifled small businesses—nearly bankrupting some—with his deceptive and reckless corporate practices. By supporting small business and entrepreneurship, we can grow jobs faster in America. We will cut the red tape that holds back small businesses and entrepreneurs. We will open up access to credit because we know that small businesses are some of the best job creators in our country. We will provide tax relief and tax simplification. And we will expand access to new markets because every American small business should be able to tap new markets — whether across their city, across their state, or around the world. Democrats will provide targeted funding and support for entrepreneurship and small business growth in underserved communities. Democrats also realize the critical importance of small businesses as engines of opportunity for women, people of color, tribes, and people in rural America, and will work to nurture entrepreneurship.

#### *Creating Jobs for America's Young People*

Democrats will make investments to spur the creation of millions of jobs for our young people. Roughly one in ten Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 is unemployed, more than twice the national average. The unemployment rates for African American, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), and American Indian teenagers and youth with disabilities are far too high. That is why Democrats will provide direct federal funding for a range of local programs that will put young people to work and create new career opportunities.

### **Fight for Economic Fairness and Against Inequality**

Democrats believe that today's extreme levels of income and wealth inequality are bad for our people, bad for our businesses, and bad for our economy. Our country depends on a thriving middle class to drive economic growth, but the middle class is shrinking. Meanwhile, the top one-tenth of one percent of Americans now own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent combined. These trends create problems beyond insulting our sense of basic fairness. Social mobility is far lower than most believe it to be. Children who are born to families in the lowest fifth of earnings are more than 10 times more likely to remain there as adults than they are to earn as much as those in the top fifth. Unless we invest in building a level playing field, we all lose.

### *Reining in Wall Street and Fixing our Financial System*

To restore economic fairness, Democrats will fight against the greed and recklessness of Wall Street. Wall Street cannot be an island unto itself, gambling trillions in risky financial instruments and making huge profits, all the while thinking that taxpayers will be there to bail them out again. We must tackle dangerous risks in big banks and elsewhere in the financial system. We must make Wall Street work for the job-creating, productive economy—including by making loans more affordable for small- and medium-sized businesses. We need to prohibit Wall Street from picking and choosing which credit agency will rate its products as well as from imposing excessive fees on consumers. And we must hold both individuals and corporations accountable when they break the law. Democrats believe that no bank can be too big to fail and no executive too powerful to jail. Democrats will support stronger criminal laws and civil penalties for Wall Street criminals who prey on the public trust. We also support extending the statute of limitations for prosecuting major financial fraud, and providing the Department of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission more resources to prosecute wrongdoing. “Equal Justice Under Law” will not just be words engraved on the entrance of the Supreme Court. It will be the standard that applies to Wall Street and all Americans.

We will also vigorously implement, enforce, and build on President Obama’s landmark Dodd-Frank financial reform law, and we will stop dead in its tracks every Republican effort to weaken it. We will stop Republican efforts to hamstring our regulators through budget cuts, and we will ensure they have the resources and independence to fully enforce the law and hold both individuals and corporations accountable when they break the rules. We will also continue to protect consumers and defend the CFPB from Republican attacks. We oppose any efforts to change the CFPB’s structure from a single director to a partisan, gridlocked Commission and likewise oppose any efforts to remove the Bureau’s independent funding and subject it to the appropriations process. Democrats will also continue to support the CFPB in enforcing foundational civil rights laws protecting against discrimination in consumer lending. Democrats condemn predatory payday lending, and will protect consumers by defending the CFPB and implementing strong new regulations.

Our goal must be to create a financial system and an economy that works for all Americans, not just a handful of billionaires. We support a financial transactions tax on Wall Street to curb excessive speculation and high-frequency trading, which has threatened financial markets. We acknowledge that there is room within our party for a diversity of views on a broader financial transactions tax.

Democrats will not hesitate to use and expand existing authorities as well as empower regulators to downsize or break apart financial institutions when necessary to protect the public and safeguard financial stability, including new authorities to go after risky shadow-banking activities. Banks should not be able to gamble with taxpayers’ deposits or pose an undue risk to Main Street. Democrats support a variety of ways to stop this from happening, including an updated and modernized version of Glass-Steagall as well as breaking up too-big-to-fail financial institutions that pose a systemic risk to the stability of our economy.

We believe that personnel is policy. We will nominate and appoint regulators and officials who are not beholden to the industries they regulate—people with a track record of standing up to power and safeguarding the public trust. We will crack down on the revolving door between the private sector—particularly Wall Street—and the federal government. We will ban golden parachutes for those taking government jobs. We will limit conflicts of interest by requiring bank and corporate regulators to recuse themselves from official work on particular matters that would directly benefit their former employers. And we will bar financial service regulators from lobbying their former colleagues for at least two years.

We will protect and defend the Federal Reserve's independence to carry out the dual mandate assigned to it by Congress—for both full employment and low inflation—against threats from new legislation. We will also reform the Federal Reserve to make it more representative of America as a whole, and we will fight to enhance its independence by ensuring that executives of financial institutions are not allowed to serve on the boards of regional Federal Reserve banks or to select members of those boards.

At a time when many of the largest banks have shunned communities across America, Democrats believe that we need to give Americans affordable banking options, including by empowering the United States Postal Service to facilitate the delivery of basic banking services.

#### *Promoting Competition by Stopping Corporate Concentration*

Large corporations have concentrated their control over markets to a greater degree than Americans have seen in decades—further evidence that the deck is stacked for those at the top. Democrats will take steps to stop corporate concentration in any industry where it is unfairly limiting competition. We will make competition policy and antitrust stronger and more responsive to our economy today, enhance the antitrust enforcement arms of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and encourage other agencies to police anti-competitive practices in their areas of jurisdiction.

We support the historic purpose of the antitrust laws to protect competition and prevent excessively consolidated economic and political power, which can be corrosive to a healthy democracy. We support reinvigorating DOJ and FTC enforcement of antitrust laws to prevent abusive behavior by dominant companies, and protecting the public interest against abusive, discriminatory, and unfair methods of commerce. We support President Obama's recent Executive Order, directing all agencies to identify specific actions they can take in their areas of jurisdiction to detect anticompetitive practices—such as tying arrangements, price fixing, and exclusionary conduct—and to refer practices that appear to violate federal antitrust law to the DOJ and FTC.

#### *Making the Wealthy Pay Their Fair Share of Taxes*

At a time of massive income and wealth inequality, we believe the wealthiest Americans and largest corporations must pay their fair share of taxes. Democrats will claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, eliminate tax breaks for big oil and gas companies, and crack down on inversions and other methods companies use to dodge their tax responsibilities. We will make sure that our tax code rewards businesses that make investments and provide good-paying jobs here in the United States, not businesses that walk out on America. We will end deferrals so

that American corporations pay United States taxes immediately on foreign profits and can no longer escape paying their fair share of U.S. taxes by stashing profits abroad. We will then use the revenue raised from fixing the corporate tax code to reinvest in rebuilding America and ensuring economic growth that will lead to millions of good-paying jobs.

We will ensure those at the top contribute to our country's future by establishing a multimillionaire surtax to ensure millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share. In addition, we will shut down the "private tax system" for those at the top, immediately close egregious loopholes like those enjoyed by hedge fund managers, restore fair taxation on multimillion dollar estates, and ensure millionaires can no longer pay a lower rate than their secretaries. At a time of near-record corporate profits, slow wage growth, and rising costs, we need to offer tax relief to middle-class families—not those at the top.

Democrats believe that no one should be able avoid paying their fair share by hiding money abroad, and that corrupt leaders and terrorists should not be able to use the system of international finance to their advantage. We will work to crack down on tax evasion and promote transparency to fight corruption and terrorism. And we will make sure that law-abiding Americans living abroad are not unfairly penalized by finding the right solutions for them to the requirements under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR).

We will offer tax relief to hard working, middle-class families for the cost squeeze they have faced for years from rising health care, childcare, education, and other expenses. Donald Trump and the Republican Party would do the opposite and provide trillions in tax cuts for millionaires, billionaires, and corporations at the expense of working families, seniors, and the health of our economy.

#### *Promoting Trade That is Fair and Benefits American Workers*

Democrats acknowledge that for millions of Americans, global trade has failed to live up to its promise—with too many countries breaking the rules and too many corporations outsourcing jobs at the expense of American workers and communities.

Over the past three decades, America has signed too many trade deals that have not lived up to the hype. Trade deals often boosted the profits of large corporations, while at the same time failing to protect workers' rights, labor standards, the environment, and public health. We need to end the race to the bottom and develop trade policies that support jobs in America. That is why Democrats believe we should review agreements negotiated years ago to update them to reflect these principles. Any future trade agreements must make sure our trading partners cannot undercut American workers by taking shortcuts on labor policy or the environment. They must not undermine democratic decision-making through special privileges and private courts for corporations, and trade negotiations must be transparent and inclusive.

Democrats' priority is to significantly strengthen enforcement of existing trade rules and the tools we have, including by holding countries accountable on currency manipulation and significantly expanding enforcement resources. China and other countries are using unfair trade practices to tilt the playing field against American workers and businesses. When they dump

cheap products into our markets, subsidize state-owned enterprises, devalue currencies, and discriminate against American companies, our middle class pays the price. That has to stop. Democrats will use all our trade enforcement tools to hold China and other trading partners accountable—because no country should be able to manipulate their currencies to gain a competitive advantage.

While we believe that openness to the world economy is an important source of American leadership and dynamism, we will oppose trade agreements that do not support good American jobs, raise wages, and improve our national security. We believe any new trade agreements must include strong and enforceable labor and environmental standards in their core text with streamlined and effective enforcement mechanisms. Trade agreements should crack down on the unfair and illegal subsidies other countries grant their businesses at the expense of ours. It should promote innovation and access to lifesaving medicines. And it should protect a free and open internet. We should never enter into a trade agreement that prevents our government, or other governments, from putting in place rules that protect the environment, food safety, or the health of American citizens or others around the world.

These are the standards Democrats believe must be applied to all trade agreements, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

### **Bring Americans Together and Remove Barriers to Opportunities**

Democrats believe that everyone deserves the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. We know that there are barriers standing in the way of that goal, from the enduring scourge of systemic racism to our deeply broken immigration system to discrimination against people on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity—and we are committed to facing those problems and fixing them. Being stronger together means reaching communities that have been left out and left behind for too long, from coal country to Indian Country to neighborhoods held back by multigenerational poverty. In America, we do not tear each other down—we lift each other up.

#### *Ending Systemic Racism*

Democrats will fight to end institutional and systemic racism in our society. We will challenge and dismantle the structures that define lasting racial, economic, political, and social inequity. Democrats will promote racial justice through fair, just, and equitable governing of all public-serving institutions and in the formation of public policy. Democrats support removing the Confederate battle flag from public properties, recognizing that it is a symbol of our nation's racist past that has no place in our present or our future. We will push for a societal transformation to make it clear that black lives matter and that there is no place for racism in our country.

#### *Closing the Racial Wealth Gap*

America's economic inequality problem is even more pronounced when it comes to racial and ethnic disparities in wealth and income. It is unacceptable that the median wealth for African Americans and Latino Americans is roughly one-tenth that of white Americans. These disparities are also stark for American Indians and certain Asian American subgroups, and may become

even more significant when considering other characteristics such as age, disability status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

The racial wealth and income gaps are the result of policies that discriminate against people of color and constrain their ability to earn income and build assets to the same extent as other Americans. It has accumulated over time and is made worse by ongoing policies and practices. For example, African Americans and Latinos lost more than half of their net worth as a result of the housing crisis and the Great Recession, because they lost jobs at a much faster rate than white workers and because they were disproportionately targeted for subprime, predatory, and fraudulent mortgages during the run-up to the housing crisis.

Democrats believe it is long past time to close this racial wealth gap. Disparities in wealth cannot be solved by the free market alone, but instead, the federal government must play a role in eliminating systemic barriers to wealth accumulation for different racial groups and improving opportunities for people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds to build wealth. Federal policies must remove barriers to achieving sustainable homeownership, provide for greater diversity in federal and state contracting practices, incentivize and expand access to retirement investment programs, increase opportunities for quality jobs and education, and challenge the deeply rooted structures that perpetuate and exacerbate current disparities and ultimately stagnate the nation's economic growth and security.

#### *Reforming our Criminal Justice System*

Democrats are committed to reforming our criminal justice system and ending mass incarceration. Something is profoundly wrong when almost a quarter of the world's prison population is in the United States, even though our country has less than five percent of the world's population. We will reform mandatory minimum sentences and close private prisons and detention centers. Research and evidence, rather than slogans and sound bites, must guide criminal justice policies.

We will rebuild the bonds of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Across the country, there are police officers inspiring trust and confidence, honorably doing their duty, deploying creative and effective strategies, and demonstrating that it is possible to prevent crime without relying on unnecessary force. They deserve our respect and support, and we should learn from those examples and build on what works.

We will work with police chiefs to invest in training for officers on issues such as de-escalation and the creation of national guidelines for the appropriate use of force. We will encourage better police-community relations, require the use of body cameras, and stop the use of weapons of war that have no place in our communities. We will end racial profiling that targets individuals solely on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin, which is un-American and counterproductive. We should report national data on policing strategies and provide greater transparency and accountability. We will require the Department of Justice to investigate all questionable or suspicious police-involved shootings, and we will support states and localities who help make those investigations and prosecutions more transparent, including through reforming the grand jury process. We will assist states in providing a system of public defense that is adequately resourced and which meets American Bar Association standards. And we will



reform the civil asset forfeiture system to protect people and remove perverse incentives for law enforcement to “police for a profit.”

Instead of investing in more jails and incarceration, we need to invest more in jobs and education, and end the school-to-prison pipeline. We will remove barriers to help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully re-enter society by “banning the box,” expanding reentry programs, and restoring voting rights. We think the next President should take executive action to ban the box for federal employers and contractors, so applicants have an opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications before being asked about their criminal records.

The “war on drugs” has led to the imprisonment of millions of Americans, disproportionately people of color, without reducing drug use. Whenever possible, Democrats will prioritize prevention and treatment over incarceration when tackling addiction and substance use disorder. We will build on effective models of drug courts, veterans’ courts, and other diversionary programs that seek to give nonviolent offenders opportunities for rehabilitation as opposed to incarceration.

Because of conflicting federal and state laws concerning marijuana, we encourage the federal government to remove marijuana from the list of “Schedule 1” federal controlled substances and to appropriately regulate it, providing a reasoned pathway for future legalization. We believe that the states should be laboratories of democracy on the issue of marijuana, and those states that want to decriminalize it or provide access to medical marijuana should be able to do so. We support policies that will allow more research on marijuana, as well as reforming our laws to allow legal marijuana businesses to exist without uncertainty. And we recognize our current marijuana laws have had an unacceptable disparate impact in terms of arrest rates for African Americans that far outstrip arrest rates for whites, despite similar usage rates.

We will abolish the death penalty, which has proven to be a cruel and unusual form of punishment. It has no place in the United States of America. The application of the death penalty is arbitrary and unjust. The cost to taxpayers far exceeds those of life imprisonment. It does not deter crime. And, exonerations show a dangerous lack of reliability for what is an irreversible punishment.

We have been inspired by the movements for criminal justice that directly address the discriminatory treatment of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and American Indians to rebuild trust in the criminal justice system.

#### *Fixing our Broken Immigration System*

The United States was founded as, and continues to be, a country of immigrants from throughout the world. It is no coincidence that the Statue of Liberty is one of our most profound national symbols. And that is why Democrats believe immigration is not just a problem to be solved, it is a defining aspect of the American character and our shared history.

The Democratic Party supports legal immigration, within reasonable limits, that meets the needs of families, communities, and the economy as well as maintains the United States’ role as a beacon of hope for people seeking safety, freedom, and security. People should come to the

United States with visas and not through smugglers. Yet, we recognize that the current immigration system is broken.

More than 11 million people are living in the shadows, without proper documentation. The immigration bureaucracy is full of backlogs that result in U.S. citizens waiting for decades to be reunited with family members, and green card holders waiting for years to be reunited with their spouses and minor children. The current quota system discriminates against certain immigrants, including immigrants of color, and needs to be reformed to the realities of the 21st century. And there are real questions about our detention and deportation policies that must be addressed.

Democrats believe we need to urgently fix our broken immigration system—which tears families apart and keeps workers in the shadows—and create a path to citizenship for law-abiding families who are here, making a better life for their families and contributing to their communities and our country. We should repeal the 3-year, 10-year and permanent bars, which often force persons in mixed status families into the heartbreaking dilemma of either pursuing a green card by leaving the country and their loved ones behind, or remaining in the shadows. We will work with Congress to end the forced and prolonged expulsion from the country that these immigrants endure when trying to adjust their status.

We must fix family backlogs and defend against those who would exclude or eliminate legal immigration avenues and denigrate immigrants. Those immigrants already living in the United States, who are assets to their communities and contribute so much to our country, should be incorporated completely into our society through legal processes that give meaning to our national motto: *E Pluribus Unum*.

And while we continue to fight for comprehensive immigration reform, we will defend and implement President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans executive actions to help DREAMers, parents of citizens, and lawful permanent residents avoid deportation. We will build on these actions to provide relief for others, such as parents of DREAMers. We will support efforts by states to make DREAMers eligible for driver's licenses and in-state college tuition. We will invest in culturally-appropriate immigrant integration services, expand access to English language education, and promote naturalization to help the millions of people who are eligible for citizenship take that last step.

We believe immigration enforcement must be humane and consistent with our values. We should prioritize those who pose a threat to the safety of our communities, not hardworking families who are contributing to their communities. We will end raids and roundups of children and families, which unnecessarily sow fear in immigrant communities. We disfavor deportations of immigrants who served in our armed forces, and we want to create a faster path for such veterans to citizenship.

We should ensure due process for those fleeing violence in Central America and work with our regional partners to address the root causes of violence. We must take particular care with children, which is why we should guarantee government-funded counsel for unaccompanied children in immigration courts. We should consider all available means of protecting these individuals from the threats to their lives and safety—including strengthening in-country and

third-country processing, expanding the use of humanitarian parole, and granting Temporary Protected Status.

We will promote best practices among local law enforcement, in terms of how they collaborate with federal authorities, to ensure that they maintain and build trust between local law enforcement and the communities they serve. We will also vigorously oversee any programs put in place, to make sure that there are no abuses and no arbitrary deportation programs. We will establish an affirmative process for workers to report labor violations and to request deferred action. We will work to ensure that all Americans—regardless of immigration status—have access to quality health care. That means expanding community health centers, allowing all families to buy into the Affordable Care Act exchanges, supporting states that open up their public health insurance programs to all persons, and finally enacting comprehensive immigration reform. And we will expand opportunities for DREAMers to serve in the military and to then receive expedited pathways to citizenship.

We will fight to end federal, state, and municipal contracts with for-profit private prisons and private detention centers. In order to end family detention, we will ensure humane alternatives for those who pose no public threat. We recognize that there are vulnerable communities within our immigration system who are often seeking refuge from persecution abroad, such as LGBT families, for whom detention can be unacceptably dangerous.

We reject attempts to impose a religious test to bar immigrants or refugees from entering the United States. It is un-American and runs counter to the founding principles of this country.

Finally, Democrats will not stand for the divisive and derogatory language of Donald Trump. His offensive comments about immigrants and other communities have no place in our society. This kind of rhetoric must be rejected.

#### *Guaranteeing Civil Rights*

Democrats will always fight to end discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. We need to promote civility and speak out against bigotry and other forms of intolerance that have entered our political discourse. It is unacceptable to target, defame, or exclude anyone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. While freedom of expression is a fundamental constitutional principle, we must condemn hate speech that creates a fertile climate for violence. We condemn Donald Trump's demonization of prisoners of war, women, Muslims, Mexicans, and people with disabilities; his playing coy with white supremacists; and the climate of bigotry he is creating. We also condemn the recent uptick in other forms of hate speech, like anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

#### *Guaranteeing Women's Rights*

We are committed to ensuring full equality for women. Democrats will fight to end gender discrimination in the areas of education, employment, health care, or any other sphere. We will combat biases across economic, political, and social life that hold women back and limit their opportunities and also tackle specific challenges facing women of color. After 240 years, we will

finally enshrine the rights of women in the Constitution by passing the Equal Rights Amendment. And we will urge U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

#### *Guaranteeing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights*

Democrats applaud last year's decision by the Supreme Court that recognized that LGBT people—like other Americans—have the right to marry the person they love. But there is still much work to be done. LGBT kids continue to be bullied at school, restaurants can refuse to serve transgender people, and same-sex couples are at risk of being evicted from their homes. That is unacceptable and must change. Democrats will fight for the continued development of sex discrimination law to cover LGBT people. We will also fight for comprehensive federal non-discrimination protections for all LGBT Americans, to guarantee equal rights in areas such as housing, employment, public accommodations, credit, jury service, education, and federal funding. We will oppose all state efforts to discriminate against LGBT individuals, including legislation that restricts the right to access public spaces. We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate. We will combat LGBT youth homelessness and improve school climates. We will support LGBT elders, ensure access to necessary health care, and protect LGBT people from violence—including ending the crisis of violence against transgender Americans. We will also promote LGBT human rights and ensure America's foreign policy is inclusive of LGBT people around the world.

#### *Guaranteeing Rights for People with Disabilities*

No one should face discrimination based on disability status. Democrats are committed to realizing the full promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will protect and expand the right of Americans with disabilities to get the accommodations and support they need to live in integrated community settings. We will improve access to meaningful and gainful employment for people with disabilities. We will provide tax relief to help the millions of families caring for aging relatives or family members with chronic illnesses or disabilities. And we will continue to fight for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

#### *Respecting Faith and Service*

Democrats know that our nation, our communities, and our lives are made vastly stronger and richer by faith in many forms and the countless acts of justice, mercy, and tolerance it inspires. We believe in lifting up and valuing the good work of people of faith and religious organizations and finding ways to support that work where possible.

We believe in the power of national service to solve problems and break down barriers by bringing people of all backgrounds together in common purpose. National service expands opportunity for people across America, strengthening our communities and our country. And those who serve earn education awards that they can use for college while building valuable work skills. We will support and strengthen AmeriCorps with the goal that every American who wants to participate in full-time national service will have the opportunity to do so.

### *Investing in Rural America*

We will work to build a stronger rural and agricultural economy. Democrats will increase funding to support the next generation of farmers and ranchers, with particular attention given to promoting environmentally sustainable agricultural practices. We will encourage programs to protect and enhance family farms, a cherished way of life for millions of Americans. We will expand local food markets and regional food systems and provide a focused safety net to assist family operations that need support during challenging times. And we will promote clean energy leadership and collaborative stewardship of our natural resources, while expanding opportunities in rural communities across America. While the EPA's new Agricultural Worker Protection Standard goes a long way to protect farmworkers from harmful pesticides and herbicides, we recognize there is a lot more we can do. The Democratic Party supports stronger agricultural worker protections including regulation of work hours, elimination of child labor, ensuring adequate housing for migrant workers, and sanitary facilities in the field.

Democrats will spur investment to power the rural economy. We support strengthening rural water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure to make rural businesses more competitive. We will expand access to equity capital for businesses and expand the New Markets Tax Credit to better serve rural small businesses. We will promote collaborative stewardship of our natural resources, while developing clean fuels that will grow our economy, lower our energy bills, combat climate change, and make America the clean energy superpower of the 21st century. We will provide assistance to producers who conserve and improve natural resources on their farms and double loan guarantees that support the bio-based economy's dynamic growth.

### *Ending Poverty and Investing in Communities Left Behind*

We reaffirm our commitment to eliminate poverty. Democrats will develop a national strategy, coordinated across all levels of government, to combat poverty. We will direct more federal resources to lifting up communities that have been left out and left behind, such as the 10-20-30 model, which directs 10 percent of program funds to communities where at least 20 percent of the population has been living below the poverty line for 30 years or more. We will also focus on communities that suffer from persistent poverty, including empowerment zones and areas that targeted government data indicate are in persistent poverty.

In the richest country in the world, no one, especially our children, should go hungry. This is why Democrats will protect proven programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—our nation's most important anti-hunger program—that help struggling families put food on the table. We will also help people grow their skills through jobs and skills training opportunities. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program should be expanded for low-wage workers not raising children, including extending the credit to young workers starting at age 21. The Child Tax Credit (CTC) should be expanded, for example, by making more of it refundable, or indexed to inflation to stem the erosion of the credit.

Democrats will also do more to invest in our most distressed communities—from our cities to coal country to the Rust Belt. We will create good-paying jobs and enhance opportunities by investing in small business, youth employment, and reentry programs for formerly incarcerated people. We will expand and make permanent the New Markets Tax Credit. We will improve

safety by repairing crumbling infrastructure in communities that need it most as well as on tribal lands. And we will make investments in affordable housing near good jobs and good schools.

#### *Building Strong Cities and Metro Areas*

Democrats have a comprehensive agenda to invest in America's cities, grounded on the premise that local leaders are best equipped to create a better future for their residents—but need the resources and flexibility to get the job done. We also recognize there is no easy way to build strong neighborhoods and strong cities, but rather we must address the challenge across many interconnected fronts—from housing, to schools, to jobs, to transportation, to health.

We will dramatically increase federal infrastructure funding for our cities—making significant new investments in roads and bridges, public transit, drinking and wastewater systems, broadband, schools, and more. Democrats also will revitalize communities being dragged down by physical decay by building on programs like the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and the Hardest Hit Fund, which have helped cities across the country begin to address these challenges. We will provide resources to help overcome blight, expand Community Development Block Grant funds, provide more housing support to high-poverty communities, and build more affordable rental housing units.

We will support entrepreneurship and small business growth in cities by providing mentoring and training to entrepreneurs and small business owners in underserved communities as well as expanding federal funding for the New Markets Tax Credit, community development financial institutions, and the State Small Business Credit Initiative.

#### *Promoting Arts and Culture*

Democrats are proud of our support for arts funding and education. We are committed to continuing the policies and programs that have already done so much for our creative arts industry and economy. Investment in the arts strengthens our communities and contributes to our nation's rich cultural heritage. We will continue to support public funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, for the National Endowment for the Humanities, and for programs providing art and music education in primary and secondary schools. The entire nation prospers when we protect and promote the unique artistic and cultural contributions of the women and men who create and preserve our nation's heritage.

#### *Honoring Indigenous Tribal Nations*

We have a profound moral and legal responsibility to the Indian tribes—throughout our history we have failed to live up to that trust. That is why the Democratic Party will fulfill, honor, and strengthen to the highest extent possible the United States' fundamental trust responsibility, grounded in the Constitution, treaties, and case law to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

We recognize the inherent sovereignty of Indian nations and will work to enact laws and policies that strengthen, not reduce, the powers of Indian nations over people who interact with them in Indian Country. We will work on a government-to-government basis to continue to empower Indian nations, and to provide sufficient and meaningful resources to Indian tribes to bolster economic development and self-determination. As Democrats, we will constantly seek to ensure that American Indian communities are safe, healthy, educated, innovative, and prosperous.

We will restore tribal lands by continuing to streamline the land-into-trust process and recognize the right of all tribes to protect their lands, air, and waters. We will continue to work on a government-to-government basis to address chronic underfunding, and provide meaningful resources and financial investments that will empower American Indian tribes through increased economic development and infrastructure improvements on tribal lands.

We will strengthen the operation of tribal housing programs, and reauthorize the Indian Housing Block Grant Program. We will increase affordable and safe housing and fight to significantly reduce homelessness on and off Indian reservations, especially among Native youth and veterans.

We will invest in Indian education from early childhood through higher education. We will fully fund the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), strengthen self-determination to enable culturally-tailored learning unique to each tribal nation, and help to recruit and retain qualified teachers for Native learners. Democrats will continue to support President Obama's Generation Indigenous initiative that has made important strides in promoting new investments and increased engagement with American Indian youth, including by continuing efforts to reform the BIE to provide students attending BIE-funded schools with a world-class culturally-based education. We also support the elimination of school and sports mascots that reflect derogatory stereotypes and that perpetuate racism.

We will strengthen tribal sovereignty and tribal jurisdiction by enacting laws and policies that enhance the ability of Indian nations to govern their territories, keep their communities safe, and prosecute crimes committed on tribal lands. We will build on the important provisions in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which reaffirmed the right of Indian tribes to prosecute perpetrators regardless of race who commit domestic violence on tribal lands. Democrats will continue to work to address criminal justice gaps that undermine the safety of tribal communities. And we will back these efforts through robust investments in effective tribal law enforcement and tribal courts.

We believe that health care is a core federal trust responsibility, and we support a robust expansion of the health care provided by the Indian Health Service. We will work to fully fund the Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban Indian health care system and to ensure that all American Indians have adequate, safe, and affordable access to primary care providers, including oral health, mental health practitioners, and substance abuse treatment options.

We acknowledge the past injustices and the misguided, harmful federal and state policies and actions based on outdated and discredited values and beliefs that resulted in the destruction of the Indian nations' economies, social, and religious systems, the taking of their lands, and the creation of intergenerational trauma that exists to this day. We believe that we have a moral and profound duty to honor, respect, and uphold our sacred obligation to the Indian nations and Indian peoples.

We will manage for tribal sacred places, and empower tribes to maintain and pass on traditional religious beliefs, languages, and social practices without fear of discrimination or suppression.

We also believe that Native children are the future of tribal nations and that the Indian Child Welfare Act is critical to the survival of Indian culture, government, and communities and must be enforced with the statutory intent of the law.

We will strengthen Indian voting rights, including improved access to polling locations. We will build on federal programs to reduce the disproportionate incarceration of American Indian and Alaska Native men and women, reduce disparities in prison sentencing, protect the religious rights of Native prisoners, reduce barriers to prisoner reentry, and offer access to housing and employment upon reentry.

We are committed to principles of environmental justice in Indian Country and we recognize that nature in all its life forms has the right to exist, persist, maintain, and regenerate its vital cycles. We call for a climate change policy that protects tribal resources, protects tribal health, and provides accountability through accessible, culturally appropriate participation and strong enforcement. Our climate change policy will cut carbon emission, address poverty, invest in disadvantaged communities, and improve both air quality and public health. We support the tribal nations efforts to develop wind, solar, and other clean energy jobs.

We will engage in meaningful and productive consultation with Tribal Leaders, and will host a White House Tribal Nations Conference annually bringing together cabinet and senior level federal officials to gather input from Tribal Nations when formulating federal policy impacting tribes. Democrats believe that American Indian/Alaska Natives shall be represented in the federal government to properly reflect their needs and will work to appoint American Indian/Alaska Natives to key positions, including retaining a senior level policy position in the White House Domestic Policy Council. We will strengthen the White House Council on Native American Affairs. Democrats will increase engagement with American Indians/Alaska Natives living outside of tribal communities.

Democrats also support efforts for self-governance and self-determination of Native Hawaiians. Native Hawaiians are the indigenous, aboriginal people of Hawai'i whose values and culture are the foundation of the Hawaiian Islands. We support proactive actions by the federal government to enhance Native Hawaiian culture, health, language, and education. We recognize and honor the contributions and sacrifices made in service to our country by Native Hawaiians.

#### *Fighting for the People of Puerto Rico*

And we are committed to addressing the extraordinary challenges faced by our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico. Many stem from the fundamental question of Puerto Rico's political status. Democrats believe that the people of Puerto Rico should determine their ultimate political status from permanent options that do not conflict with the Constitution, laws, and policies of the United States. Democrats are committed to promoting economic opportunity and good-paying jobs for the hardworking people of Puerto Rico. We also believe that Puerto Ricans must be treated equally by Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs that benefit families. Puerto Ricans should be able to vote for the people who make their laws, just as they should be treated equally. All American citizens, no matter where they reside, should have the right to vote for the President of the United States. Finally, we believe that federal officials must respect Puerto



Rico's local self-government as laws are implemented and Puerto Rico's budget and debt are restructured so that it can get on a path towards stability and prosperity.

### *Honoring the People of the Territories*

We also recognize and honor the contributions and the sacrifices made in service of our country by the Americans living in the territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. We support self-government and self-determination for the people of the territories, and their right to decide their future status. All Americans should be able to vote for the people who make their laws, just as they should be treated equally. And all American citizens, no matter where they reside, should have the right to vote for the President of the United States. We will work as partners to the people of Guam on military matters, believe veterans from Guam and the Virgin Islands should have access to timely and quality Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) care, and take seriously the unique health care challenges that Pacific Island communities face. And we support reviewing the feasibility of extending the ACA to all the territories and increasing the Medicaid cap. For all those who live under our flag, we support strong economic development and will work towards fair and equitable treatment under federal programs.

### **Protect Voting Rights, Fix Our Campaign Finance System, and Restore Our Democracy**

Democrats know that Americans' right to vote is sacred and fundamental. We believe that we must protect Americans' right to vote, while stopping corporations' outsized influence in elections. We must rectify the Supreme Court decision gutting the Voting Rights Act, which is a profound injustice. We will stop efforts by Republican governors and legislatures to disenfranchise people of color, low-income people, and young people, and prevent these voters from exercising their right to vote through onerous restrictions. We will ensure that election officials comply with voting protections, including provisions mandating bilingual materials and voter assistance. And we will fight to reform our broken campaign finance system, which gives outsized influence to billionaires and big corporations. It's time we give back control of our elections to those to whom it belongs—the American people.

### *Protecting Voting Rights*

The Democratic Party was founded on the promise of an expanded democracy. The right to vote is at the heart of our national vision. It is a core principle of the Democratic Party to maximize voter participation for all Americans. Our democracy suffers when nearly two thirds of our citizens do not or cannot participate, as in the last midterm elections. Democrats believe we must make it easier to vote, not harder.

We must restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. We will bring our democracy into the 21st century by expanding early voting and vote-by-mail, implementing universal automatic voter registration and same day voter registration, ending partisan and racial gerrymandering, and making Election Day a national holiday. We will restore voting rights for those who have served their sentences. And we will continue to fight against discriminatory voter identification laws, which disproportionately burden young voters, diverse communities, people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities, the elderly, and women.

We support fully funding the Help America Vote Act and will work to fulfill the promise of election reform, including fighting to end long lines at voting booths and ensuring that all registration materials, voting materials, polling places, and voting machines are truly accessible to seniors, Americans with disabilities, and citizens with limited English proficiency. We will support local, county, and state governments in their efforts to upgrade old voting equipment and machines with modern systems, including voter-verified paper ballots, to ensure that all voters are able to exercise this sacred right in the quickest, most convenient, secure and accurate manner possible.

Republicans have enacted various voter suppression tactics from Ohio to Florida, and even though some federal courts have already found that these measures go too far, Democrats will continue to fight these laws to preserve the fundamental right to vote. We support efforts to defeat ill-motivated voter suppression tactics. We also support Ohio's proposed Voters Bill of Rights amendment, North Carolina's Moral Monday movement, and similar initiatives to permanently safeguard this inalienable right.

#### *Fixing Our Broken Campaign Finance System*

Democrats believe we must fight to preserve the essence of the longest standing democracy in the world: a government that represents the American people, not just a handful of powerful and wealthy special interests. We will fight for real campaign finance reform now. Big money is drowning out the voices of everyday Americans, and we must have the necessary tools to fight back and safeguard our electoral and political integrity.

Democrats support a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's decisions in *Citizens United* and *Buckley v. Valeo*. We need to end secret, unaccountable money in politics by requiring, through executive order or legislation, significantly more disclosure and transparency—by outside groups, federal contractors, and public corporations to their shareholders. We need to amplify the voices of the American people through a small donor matching public financing system. We need to overhaul and strengthen the Federal Election Commission so that there is real enforcement of campaign finance laws. And we need to fight to eliminate super PACs and outside spending abuses.

Our vision for American democracy is a nation in which all people, regardless of their income, can participate in the political process and can run for office without needing to depend on large contributions from the wealthy and the powerful.

#### *Appointing Judges*

We will appoint judges who defend the constitutional principles of liberty and equality for all, and will protect a woman's right to safe and legal abortion, curb billionaires' influence over elections because they understand that *Citizens United* has fundamentally damaged our democracy, and believe the Constitution protects not only the powerful, but also the disadvantaged and powerless.

### *Securing Statehood for Washington, D.C.*

Restoring our democracy also means finally passing statehood for the District of Columbia, so that the American citizens who reside in the nation's capital have full and equal congressional rights as well as the right to have the laws and budget of their local government respected without Congressional interference.

### *Strengthening Management of Federal Government*

Democrats understand responsible fiscal stewardship is key to American democracy and to the country's long-term economic prosperity. We believe that by making those at the top and the largest corporations pay their fair share we can pay for ambitious progressive investments that create good-paying jobs and offer security to working families without adding to the debt. This stands in contrast to Donald Trump, whose plans could add more than \$30 trillion to the debt and who casually suggests defaulting on America's debt, ending more than 200 years in which the full faith and credit of the United States has been sacrosanct.

We will also ensure that new spending and tax cuts are offset so that they do not add to the nation's debt over time. We will tackle waste, fraud, and abuse to make sure government dollars are spent wisely and efficiently. Democrats believe that we should not be contracting, outsourcing, or privatizing work that is inherently governmental in nature, including postal services, school services, and state and local government services. We are committed to a strong, effective, accountable civil service, delivering the quality public services Americans have every right to expect.

Democrats believe that, in general, the most effective way to identify problems facing our country and develop good solutions is by enacting evidence-based public policy. We recognize the value of data in allowing us to count and carefully consider the needs of different communities. That is why we will preserve and enhance the integrity and accuracy of the census and the American Community Survey (ACS). We will equip the Census Bureau with the resources needed to prepare for and conduct a cost effective, complete and accurate census, as well as improve counting segments of the population that are historically and persistently undercounted, specifically communities of color, immigrants, LGBT people, young children, those with disabilities, and rural and low-income populations. We will also maintain the legal requirement for the public to participate and be counted.

Democrats also believe that government services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate and that data should be disaggregated for those communities, like Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, where it is necessary to fully understand and address their needs.

Finally, Democrats will make government simpler and more user-friendly. The federal government too often operates with websites designed from another era that are too complicated, too hard to use, and rarely designed for mobile phones or tablets. We will build on the creation of the United States Digital Service (USDS) and give it the resources it needs to transform and digitize the top 25 federal government programs that directly serve citizens. We will eliminate internal barriers to government modernization. And we will use technology to improve outcomes and government accountability by embracing prioritized goal setting and performance tracking for the federal government.

## **Combat Climate Change, Build a Clean Energy Economy, and Secure Environmental Justice**

Climate change is an urgent threat and a defining challenge of our time. Fifteen of the 16 hottest years on record have occurred this century. While Donald Trump has called climate change a “hoax,” 2016 is on track to break global temperature records once more. Cities from Miami to Baltimore are already threatened by rising seas. California and the West have suffered years of brutal drought. Alaska has been scorched by wildfire. New York has been battered by superstorms, and Texas swamped by flash floods. The best science tells us that without ambitious, immediate action across our economy to cut carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, all of these impacts will be far worse in the future. We cannot leave our children a planet that has been profoundly damaged.

Democrats share a deep commitment to tackling the climate challenge; creating millions of good-paying middle class jobs; reducing greenhouse gas emissions more than 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050; and meeting the pledge President Obama put forward in the landmark Paris Agreement, which aims to keep global temperature increases to “well below” two degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius. We believe America must be running entirely on clean energy by mid-century. We will take bold steps to slash carbon pollution and protect clean air at home, lead the fight against climate change around the world, ensure no Americans are left out or left behind as we accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy, and be responsible stewards of our natural resources and our public lands and waters. Democrats reject the notion that we have to choose between protecting our planet and creating good-paying jobs. We can and we will do both.

### *Building a Clean Energy Economy*

We are committed to getting 50 percent of our electricity from clean energy sources within a decade, with half a billion solar panels installed within four years and enough renewable energy to power every home in the country. We will cut energy waste in American homes, schools, hospitals, and offices through energy efficient improvements; modernize our electric grid; and make American manufacturing the cleanest and most efficient in the world. These efforts will create millions of new jobs and save families and businesses money on their monthly energy bills. We will transform American transportation by reducing oil consumption through cleaner fuels, vehicle electrification increasing the fuel efficiency of cars, boilers, ships, and trucks. We will make new investments in public transportation and build bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure across our urban and suburban areas. Democrats believe the tax code must reflect our commitment to a clean energy future by eliminating special tax breaks and subsidies for fossil fuel companies as well as defending and extending tax incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy.

Democrats believe that carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases should be priced to reflect their negative externalities, and to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy and help meet our climate goals. Democrats believe that climate change is too important to wait for climate deniers and defeatists in Congress to start listening to science, and support using every tool available to reduce emissions now. Democrats are committed to defending, implementing, and extending smart pollution and efficiency standards, including the Clean Power Plan, fuel

economy standards for automobiles and heavy-duty vehicles, building codes and appliance standards. We are also committed to expanding clean energy research and development.

Democrats recognize the importance of climate leadership at the local level and know that achieving our national clean energy goals requires an active partnership with states, cities, and rural communities where so much of our country's energy policy is made. We will ensure that those taking the lead on clean energy and energy efficiency have the tools and resources they need to succeed. The federal government should lead by example, which is why we support taking steps to power the government with 100 percent clean electricity.

Democrats are committed to closing the Halliburton loophole that stripped the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of its ability to regulate hydraulic fracturing, and ensuring tough safeguards are in place, including Safe Drinking Water Act provisions, to protect local water supplies. We believe hydraulic fracturing should not take place where states and local communities oppose it. We will reduce methane emissions from all oil and gas production and transportation by at least 40 to 45 percent below 2005 levels by 2025 through common-sense standards for both new and existing sources and by repairing and replacing thousands of miles of leaky pipes. This will both protect our climate and create thousands of good-paying jobs.

We will work to expand access to cost-saving renewable energy by low-income households, create good-paying jobs in communities that have struggled with energy poverty, and oppose efforts by utilities to limit consumer choice or slow clean energy deployment. We will streamline federal permitting to accelerate the construction of new transmission lines to get low-cost renewable energy to market, and incentivize wind, solar, and other renewable energy over the development of new natural gas power plants.

We support President Obama's decision to reject the Keystone XL pipeline. As we continue working to reduce carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gas emissions, we must ensure federal actions do not "significantly exacerbate" global warming. We support a comprehensive approach that ensures all federal decisions going forward contribute to solving, not significantly exacerbating, climate change.

Democrats believe that our commitment to meeting the climate challenge must also be reflected in the infrastructure investments we make. We need to make our existing infrastructure safer and cleaner and build the new infrastructure necessary to power our clean energy future. To create good-paying middle class jobs that cannot be outsourced, Democrats support high labor standards in clean energy infrastructure and the right to form or join a union, whether in renewable power or advanced vehicle manufacturing. During the clean energy transition, we will ensure landowners, communities of color, and tribal nations are at the table.

#### *Securing Environmental and Climate Justice*

Democrats believe clean air and clean water are basic rights of all Americans. Yet as we saw in Flint, Michigan, low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately home to environmental justice "hot spots," where air pollution, water pollution, and toxic hazards like lead increase health and economic hardship. The impacts of climate change will also disproportionately affect low-income and minority communities, tribal nations, and Alaska

Native villages—all of which suffer the worst losses during extreme weather and have the fewest resources to prepare. Simply put, this is environmental racism.

Democrats believe we must make it a national priority to eradicate lead poisoning, which disproportionately impacts low-income children and children of color and can lead to lifelong health and educational challenges. We will prioritize hiring and training workers from affected communities to clean up toxic brownfields and expand clean energy, energy efficiency, and resilient infrastructure.

The fight against climate change must not leave any community out or behind—including the coal communities who kept America's lights on for generations. Democrats will fight to make sure these workers and their families get the benefits they have earned and the respect they deserve, and we will make new investments in energy-producing communities to help create jobs and build a brighter and more resilient economic future. We will also oppose threats to the public health of these communities from harmful and dangerous extraction practices, like mountaintop removal mining operations.

All corporations owe it to their shareholders to fully analyze and disclose the risks they face, including climate risk. Those who fail to do so should be held accountable. Democrats also respectfully request the Department of Justice to investigate allegations of corporate fraud on the part of fossil fuel companies accused of misleading shareholders and the public on the scientific reality of climate change.

#### *Protecting Our Public Lands and Waters*

Democrats believe in the conservation and collaborative stewardship of our shared natural heritage: the public lands and waterways, the oceans, Everglades, Great Lakes, the Arctic, and all that makes America's great outdoors priceless. As a nation, we need policies and investments that will keep America's public lands public, strengthen protections for our natural and cultural resources, increase access to parks and public lands for all Americans, protect native species and wildlife, and harness the immense economic and social potential of our public lands and waters.

Democrats will work to establish an American Parks Trust Fund to help expand local, state, and national recreational opportunities, rehabilitate existing parks, and enhance America's great outdoors—from our forests and coasts to neighborhood parks—so “America's Best Idea” is held in trust for future generations, and all Americans can access and enjoy natural spaces. Democrats are committed to doubling the size of the outdoor economy, creating nearly hundreds of billions of dollars in new economic activity and millions of new jobs.

Democrats will approach conservation of our public lands and waters in a way that reflects the diversity of our country, by actively engaging all Americans in the great outdoors and protecting natural landscapes and cultural sites that tell the story of America's complex history. To help meet these goals, we will work to build a diverse workforce in agencies that manage America's public lands, waters, and cultural sites.

We oppose drilling in the Arctic and off the Atlantic coast, and believe we need to reform fossil fuel leasing on public lands. We will phase down extraction of fossil fuels from our public lands,

starting with the most polluting sources, while making our public lands and waters engines of the clean energy economy and creating jobs across the country. Democrats will work to expand the amount of renewable energy production on federal lands and waters, from wind in Wyoming to solar in Nevada.

Democrats oppose efforts to undermine the effectiveness of the Endangered Species Act to protect threatened and endangered species.

Because the Bristol Bay drainages of Alaska produce the world's largest salmon fisheries, we support efforts by the EPA under the Clean Water Act to establish proactively science-based restrictions on discharges of dredged or fill material associated with a potential Pebble mine and urge that such restrictions must apply to potential mines at other metallic sulfide deposits in those drainages.

Agricultural lands account for nearly half of the total land area in America and our agricultural practices have a significant impact on our water, land, oceans, and the climate. Therefore, we believe that in order to be effective in keeping our air and water clean and combating climate change, we must enlist farmers as partners in promoting conservation and stewardship.

### **Provide Quality and Affordable Education**

Democrats know that every child, no matter who they are, how much their families earn, or where they live, should have access to a high-quality education, from preschool through high school and beyond. But the United States still lags behind other advanced economies in providing high-quality, universal preschool programs to help all of our kids get a strong start to their educations. Our schools are more segregated today than they were when *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided, and we see wide disparities in educational outcomes across racial and socioeconomic lines. A college degree or another form of post-secondary education is increasingly required for jobs that pay a middle-class wage, but graduation rates have stagnated for low-income students. And the high cost of college has required too many Americans to take out staggering student loans or put a degree out of reach entirely. We are selling our children and our young people short. Democrats are committed to making good public schools available to every child, no matter what zip code they live in, and at last making debt-free college a reality for all Americans.

#### *Making Debt-Free College a Reality*

Democrats believe that in America, if you want a higher education, you should always be able to get one: money should never stand in the way. Cost should not be a barrier to getting a degree or credential, and debt should not hold you back after you graduate. Bold new investments by the federal government, coupled with states reinvesting in higher education and colleges holding the line on costs, will ensure that Americans of all backgrounds will be prepared for the jobs and economy of the future. Democrats are unified in their strong belief that every student should be able to go to college debt-free, and working families should not have to pay any tuition to go to public colleges and universities.

We will also make community college free, while ensuring the strength of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions. The federal government will push more colleges and universities to take quantifiable, affirmative steps in increasing the percentages of racial and ethnic minority, low-income, and first-generation students they enroll and graduate. Achieving these goals depends on state and federal investment in both students and their teachers. Whether full-time or adjunct, faculty must be supported to make transformative educational experiences possible.

*Providing Relief from Crushing Student Debt*

As we make college affordable for future students, we will not forget about the millions of borrowers with unsustainable levels of student debt, who need help right now. Democrats will allow those who currently have student debt to refinance their loans at the lowest rates possible. We will simplify and expand access to income-based repayment so that no student loan borrowers ever have to pay more than they can afford. And we will significantly cut interest rates for future undergraduates because we believe that making college more affordable is more important than the federal government making billions of dollars in profit off those loans. Democrats will also fight for a student borrower bill of rights to ensure borrowers get adequate information about options to avoid or get out of delinquency or default. We will hold lenders and loan servicers to high standards to help borrowers in default rehabilitate and repay their debts. We will continue the important Public Service Loan Forgiveness and loan discharge programs begun by the Obama Administration. Finally, Democrats will restore the prior standard in bankruptcy law to allow borrowers with student loans to be able to discharge their debts in bankruptcy as a measure of last resort. To make progress toward these goals, the government should offer a moratorium on student loan payments to all federal loan borrowers so they have the time and get the resources they need to consolidate their loans, enroll in income-based repayment programs, and take advantage of opportunities to reduce monthly payments and fees.

*Supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions*

We will strengthen our nation's public and private Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Predominantly Black Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions, and minority-serving institutions. Many of these schools educate disproportionate percentages of growing populations of Americans: students who are racial and ethnic minorities, low-income students, and first-generation students. As the nation is grappling with how to expand educational access and increase success, especially for communities of color and low-income students and families, there is evidence that the nation's HBCUs and Minority Serving Institutions have honed promising models for educating these students to prepare them for high- and critical-need positions while containing costs. We will create a robust and historic dedicated fund to keep costs down, provide quality education, and ensure dedicated support to improve student outcomes and completion rates. We will provide further assistance to students at these schools, as well as other students across the country, by restoring year-round Pell funding so that low- and middle-income students from all backgrounds can get the support they need to make progress toward a college degree throughout the year.



### *Cracking Down on Predatory For-Profit Schools*

We will continue to crack down on for-profit schools that take millions in federal financial aid—often as their principal source of revenue—and then exploit students and burden them with debt rather than educating them. That is why we will strengthen the gainful employment rule to ensure that for-profit schools enable students to complete their degrees and prepare them for work. We will go after for-profits that engage in deceptive marketing, fraud, and other illegal practices. We will also exercise our responsibility in oversight over the Department of Education to carry out their obligation to close down those for-profit schools that consistently engage in fraudulent and illegal conduct. It is unacceptable that for-profit schools with low graduation rates keep encouraging their students to take out federal loans they will have trouble paying back. Therefore, to the maximum extent possible, we will also encourage widespread relief and the forgiveness of debt to those students harmed by the practices of fraudulent institutions.

### *Guaranteeing Universal Preschool and Good Schools for Every Child*

Democrats believe we must have the best-educated population and workforce in the world. That means making early childhood education and universal preschool a priority, especially in light of new research showing how much early learning can impact life-long success. Democrats will invest in early childhood programs like Early Head Start and provide every family in America with access to high-quality childcare and high-quality preschool programs. We support efforts to raise wages for childcare workers, and to ensure that early childhood educators are experienced and high-quality.

We will ensure there are great schools for every child no matter where they live. Democrats know the federal government must play a critical role in making sure every child has access to a world-class education. We believe that a strong public education system is an anchor of our democracy, a propeller of the economy, and the vehicle through which we help all children achieve their dreams. Public education must engage students to be critical thinkers and civic participants while addressing the wellbeing of the whole child.

We also support increased investments in afterschool and summer learning programs, which help working families, keep kids safe, and inspire learning at a time when many students are left unsupervised. We must find ways to encourage mentoring programs that support students in reaching their full potential. Mentoring is a strategy to ensure that children living in poverty have the encouragement and support to aim high and enter the middle class. We will focus on group mentoring, which is a low-cost, high-yield investment that offers the benefit of building a supportive network of peers who push one another towards success.

Democrats believe all students should be taught to high academic standards. Schools should have adequate resources to provide programs and support to help meet the needs of every child. We will hold schools, districts, communities, and states accountable for raising achievement levels for all students—particularly low-income students, students of color, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.

We must fulfill our national commitment to provide a meaningful education to students with disabilities, and work towards full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act so that students with disabilities can receive the extra resources and services they need. With an

appropriate educational foundation, children with disabilities can thrive and become adults with greater opportunities and more meaningful life experiences.

We are also deeply committed to ensuring that we strike a better balance on testing so that it informs, but does not drive, instruction. To that end, we encourage states to develop a multiple measures approach to assessment, and we believe that standardized tests must be reliable and valid. We oppose high-stakes standardized tests that falsely and unfairly label students of color, students with disabilities and English Language Learners as failing; the use of standardized test scores as basis for refusing to fund schools or to close schools; and the use of student test scores in teacher and principal evaluations, a practice which has been repeatedly rejected by researchers. We support enabling parents to opt their children out of standardized tests without penalty for either the student or their school.

Democrats recognize and honor all the professionals who work in public schools to support students' education—teachers, education support professionals, and specialized staff. We know that good teachers are essential to improving student learning and helping all students to meet high academic standards. Democrats will launch a national campaign to recruit and retain high-quality teachers. We will ensure that teachers receive the tools and ongoing professional development they need to succeed in the classroom and provide our children with a world-class education. We also must lift up and trust our educators, continually build their capacity, and ensure that our schools are safe, welcoming, collaborative, and well-resourced places for our students, educators, and communities.

We will invest in high-quality STEAM classes, community schools, computer science education, arts education, and expand link learning models and career pathways. We will end the school-to-prison pipeline by opposing discipline policies which disproportionately affect African Americans and Latinos, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, students with disabilities, and youth who identify as LGBT. We will support the use of restorative justice practices that help students and staff resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully while helping to improve the teaching and learning environment. And we will work to improve school culture and combat bullying of all kinds.

The Democratic Party is committed to eliminating opportunity gaps—particularly those that lead to students from low-income communities arriving on day one of kindergarten several years behind their peers. This means advocating for labor and public assistance laws that ensure poor parents can spend time with their children. This means raising household incomes in poor communities. It means ensuring children have health care, stable housing free of contaminants, and a community free of violence in order to minimize the likelihood of cognitive delays. It means enriching early childhood programming to prepare children in areas such as literacy, numeracy, civic engagement, and emotional intelligence. It means supporting equitable and adequate state funding for public education, and expanding Title I funding for schools that serve a large number or high concentration of children in poverty. It means ending curriculum gaps that maintain and exacerbate achievement gaps.

We support policies that motivate rather than demoralize our educators. We are committed to ensuring that schools that educate children in poverty are not treated unfairly, which is why we

will end the test-and-punish version of accountability that does no more than reveal the many opportunity gaps facing students from low-income communities.

Democrats are committed to providing parents with high-quality public school options and expanding these options for low-income youth. We support democratically governed, great neighborhood public schools and high-quality public charter schools, and we will help them disseminate best practices to other school leaders and educators. Democrats oppose for-profit charter schools focused on making a profit off of public resources. We believe that high-quality public charter schools should provide options for parents, but should not replace or destabilize traditional public schools. Charter schools must reflect their communities, and thus must accept and retain proportionate numbers of students of color, students with disabilities and English Language Learners in relation to their neighborhood public schools. We support increased transparency and accountability for all charter schools.

### **Ensure the Health and Safety of All Americans**

Democrats have been fighting to secure universal health care for the American people for generations, and we are proud to be the party that passed Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Being stronger together means finally achieving that goal. We are going to fight to make sure every American has access to quality, affordable health care. We will tackle the problems that remain in our health care system, including cracking down on runaway prescription drug prices and addressing mental health with the same seriousness that we treat physical health. We will fight Republican efforts to roll back the clock on women's health and reproductive rights, and stand up for Planned Parenthood. And we will tackle the epidemics of substance abuse and gun violence, which each claim tens of thousands of lives every year.

#### *Securing Universal Health Care*

Democrats believe that health care is a right, not a privilege, and our health care system should put people before profits. Thanks to the hard work of President Obama and Democrats in Congress, we took a critically important step toward the goal of universal health care by passing the Affordable Care Act, which has covered 20 million more Americans and ensured millions more will never be denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition. Democrats will never falter in our generations-long fight to guarantee health care as a fundamental right for every American. As part of that guarantee, Americans should be able to access public coverage through a public option, and those over 55 should be able to opt in to Medicare. Democrats will empower the states, which are the true laboratories of democracy, to use innovation waivers under the ACA to develop unique locally tailored approaches to health coverage. This will include removing barriers to states which seek to experiment with plans to ensure universal health care to every person in their state. By contrast, Donald Trump wants to repeal the ACA, leaving tens of millions of Americans without coverage.

For too many of us, health care costs are still too high, even for those with insurance. And medical debt is a problem for far too many working families, with one-quarter of Americans reporting that they or someone in their household had problems or an inability to pay medical bills in the past year. Democrats will also work to end surprise billing and other practices that

lead to out-of-control medical debt that place an unconscionable economic strain on American households. We will repeal the excise tax on high-cost health insurance and find revenue to offset it because we need to contain the long-term growth of health care costs, but should not risk passing on too much of the burden to workers. Democrats will keep costs down by making premiums more affordable, reducing out-of-pocket expenses, and capping prescription drug costs. And we will fight against insurers trying to impose excessive premium increases.

Democrats will fight any attempts by Republicans in Congress to privatize, voucherize, or “phase out” Medicare as we know it. And we will oppose Republican plans to slash funding and block grant Medicaid and SNAP, which would harm millions of Americans.

We will keep fighting until the ACA’s Medicaid expansion has been adopted in every state. Nineteen states have not yet expanded Medicaid. This means that millions of low-income Americans still lack health insurance and are not getting the care they need. Additionally, health care providers, clinics, hospitals, and taxpayers are footing a higher bill when people without insurance visit expensive emergency rooms.

Democrats believe your zip code or census tract should not be a predictor of your health, which is why we will make health equity a central part of our commitment to revitalizing communities left behind. Democrats believe that all health care services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate, and that neither fear nor immigration status should be barriers that impede health care access.

#### *Supporting Community Health Centers*

We must renew and expand our commitment to Community Health Centers, as well as community mental health centers and family planning centers. These health centers provide critically important, community-based prevention and treatment in underserved communities, prevent unnecessary and expensive trips to emergency rooms, and are essential to the successful implementation of the ACA. We will fight for a comprehensive system of primary health care, including dental, mental health care, and low-cost prescription drugs by doubling of funding for federally qualified community health centers over the next decade, which currently serve 25 million people.

Democrats also know that one of the key ingredients to the success of these health centers is a well-supported and qualified workforce in community-based settings. We will fight to train and support this workforce, encourage providers to work with underserved populations through the National Health Service Corps, and create a comprehensive strategy to increase the pool of primary health care professionals.

#### *Reducing Prescription Drug Costs*

It is unacceptable that the United States pays, by far, the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs and that too many Americans between the ages of 18 and 64 cannot afford to fill their prescriptions. A lifesaving drug is no good if it is unaffordable to the very people who need it most. And many drug companies are spending more on advertising than on research. The largest pharmaceutical companies are making billions of dollars per year in profits at higher margins compared to other industries while many stash their profits in offshore tax havens.

Meanwhile, they charge Americans thousands of dollars for new drugs—often at much higher costs than in other developed nations. Democrats are committed to investing in the research, development, and innovation that creates lifesaving drugs and lowers overall health costs, but the profiteering of pharmaceutical companies is simply unacceptable.

We will crack down on price gouging by drug companies and cap the amount Americans have to pay out-of-pocket every month on prescription drugs. We will prohibit anti-competitive “pay for delay” deals that keep generic drugs off the market, and we will allow individuals, pharmacists, and wholesalers to import prescription drugs from licensed pharmacies in Canada and other countries with appropriate safety protections. Democrats will also fight to make sure that Medicare will negotiate lower prices with drug manufacturers.

#### *Enabling Cutting-Edge Medical Research*

Democrats believe we must accelerate the pace of medical progress, ensuring that we invest more in our scientists and give them the resources they need to invigorate our fundamental studies in the life sciences in a growing, stable, and predictable way. We must make progress against the full range of diseases, including Alzheimer’s, HIV and AIDS, cancer, and other diseases, especially chronic ones. We recognize the critical importance of a fully-funded National Institutes of Health to accelerate the pace of medical progress.

#### *Combating Drug and Alcohol Addiction*

We must confront the epidemic of drug and alcohol addiction, specifically the opioid crisis and other drugs plaguing our communities, by vastly expanding access to prevention and treatment, supporting recovery, helping community organizations, and promoting better practices by prescribers. The Democratic Party is committed to assisting the estimated 20 million people struggling with addiction in this country to find and sustain healthy lives by encouraging full recovery and integration into society and working to remove common barriers to gainful employment, housing, and education. We will continue to fight to expand access to care for addiction services, and ensure that insurance coverage is equal to that for any other health conditions. We think it is time for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor, and state regulatory agencies to fully implement the protections of the Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act of 2008—which means that American medical insurers, including the federal government, will need to disclose how they make their medical management decisions.

We should also do more to educate our youth, as well as their families, teachers, coaches, mentors, and friends, to intervene early to prevent drug and alcohol abuse and addiction. We should help state and local leaders establish evidence-based, age-appropriate, and locally-tailored prevention programs. These programs include school-based drug education programs that have been shown to have meaningful effects on risky behavior; community-based peer mentorship and leadership programs; and after-school activities that deter drug use and encourage life skills.

#### *Treating Mental Health*

We must treat mental health issues with the same care and seriousness that we treat issues of physical health, support a robust mental health workforce, and promote better integration of the behavioral and general health care systems. Recognizing that maintaining good mental health is

critical to all people, including young people's health and development, we will work with health professionals to ensure that all children have access to mental health care. We must also expand community-based treatment for substance abuse disorders and mental health conditions and fully enforce our parity law. And we should create a national initiative around suicide prevention across the lifespan—to move toward the HHS-promoted Zero Suicide commitment.

#### *Supporting Those Living with Autism and their Families*

Democrats believe that our country must make supporting the millions of individuals with autism and those diagnosed in the future and their families a priority. We will conduct a nationwide early screening outreach campaign to ensure that all children, and in particular children from underserved backgrounds, can get screened for autism. We will expand services and support for adults and individuals transitioning into adulthood, including employment and housing assistance. And we will push states to require health insurance coverage for autism services in private insurance plans as well as state marketplaces so that people with autism are not denied care.

#### *Securing Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice*

Democrats are committed to protecting and advancing reproductive health, rights, and justice. We believe unequivocally, like the majority of Americans, that every woman should have access to quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion—regardless of where she lives, how much money she makes, or how she is insured. We believe that reproductive health is core to women's, men's, and young people's health and wellbeing. We will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers, which provide critical health services to millions of people. We will continue to oppose—and seek to overturn—federal and state laws and policies that impede a woman's access to abortion, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment. We condemn and will combat any acts of violence, harassment, and intimidation of reproductive health providers, patients, and staff. We will defend the ACA, which extends affordable preventive health care to women, including no-cost contraception, and prohibits discrimination in health care based on gender.

We will address the discrimination and barriers that inhibit meaningful access to reproductive health care services, including those based on gender, sexuality, race, income, disability, and other factors. We recognize that quality, affordable comprehensive health care, evidence-based sex education and a full range of family planning services help reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and thereby also reduce the need for abortions.

And we strongly and unequivocally support a woman's decision to have a child, including by ensuring a safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth, and by providing services during pregnancy and after the birth of a child, including adoption and social support services, as well as protections for women against pregnancy discrimination. We are committed to creating a society where children are safe and can thrive physically, emotionally, educationally, and spiritually. We recognize and support the importance of civil structures that are essential to creating this for every child.

### *Ensuring Long-Term Care, Services, and Supports*

Our country faces a long-term care crisis that prevents too many seniors and people with disabilities from being able to live with dignity at home or in their communities. The vast majority of people who are aging or living with a disability want to do so at home, but face challenges finding and affording the support they need to do so. Programs that emphasize independence rather than institutionalization must be better structured to support them. Democrats will take steps to strengthen and expand the home care workforce, give seniors and people with disabilities access to quality, affordable long-term care, services, and supports, and ensure that all of these resources are readily available at home or in the community.

### *Protecting and Promoting Public Health*

Investment in our nation's crumbling public health infrastructure is critical to ensuring preparedness for emerging threats; for preventing disease, illness, and injury in communities; and for promoting good health and wellbeing. Inadequate access to public health services has a disparate impact on poor, rural, and minority communities where public health services are a significant source of health care. Democrats will fight for increased investments in public health to better address emerging threats and the needs across our country. To further that end, the Democratic Party will continue to oppose Republican attempts to cut public health services and funding. We will ensure adequate funding of public health education at the undergraduate, graduate, and medical school levels as well as adequate funding of residency training programs in public health, preventive medicine, and its subspecialties.

We must take a number of proactive steps so that all Americans—regardless of location, income or history—have the opportunity to live full, healthy lives. Democrats will fight for increased investments and coordination in public health to better address emerging threats as well as persistent needs across our country. Health equity among Americans remains elusive—higher income is strongly associated with longer life expectancy and the gap in life expectancy between the richest and poorest Americans is increasing. We continue to see unacceptable differences in health outcomes by race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. A growing body of research demonstrates the link between social factors—such as poverty, unemployment, experience of discrimination, and housing instability—and poor health. Democrats will continue to pursue policies addressing these social factors and empowering communities to respond to their most pressing health needs.

### *Ending Violence Against Women*

Democrats are committed to ending the scourge of violence against women wherever it occurs—whether in our homes, streets, schools, military, or elsewhere. We will continue to support the Violence Against Women Act to provide law enforcement with the tools it needs to combat this problem. We will support comprehensive services for survivors of violence and increase prevention efforts in our communities and on our campuses. Democrats will fight to bring an end to sexual assault—wherever it occurs, including on campuses—because everyone deserves a safe environment where they can learn and thrive, not live in fear. We will provide comprehensive support to survivors, and ensure a fair process for all on-campus disciplinary proceedings and in the criminal justice system. We will increase sexual violence prevention education programs that cover issues like consent and bystander intervention, not only in college, but also in secondary school.

### *Preventing Gun Violence*

With 33,000 Americans dying every year, Democrats believe that we must finally take sensible action to address gun violence. While responsible gun ownership is part of the fabric of many communities, too many families in America have suffered from gun violence. We can respect the rights of responsible gun owners while keeping our communities safe. To build on the success of the lifesaving Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, we will expand and strengthen background checks and close dangerous loopholes in our current laws; repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA) to revoke the dangerous legal immunity protections gun makers and sellers now enjoy; and keep weapons of war—such as assault weapons and large capacity ammunition magazines (LCAM's)—off our streets. We will fight back against attempts to make it harder for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to revoke federal licenses from law breaking gun dealers, and ensure guns do not fall into the hands of terrorists, intimate partner abusers, other violent criminals, and those with severe mental health issues. There is insufficient research on effective gun prevention policies, which is why the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must have the resources it needs to study gun violence as a public health issue.

### **Principled Leadership**

Democrats believe that America must lead in the world to grow our economy, protect our interests and values, and make our country safer and more prosperous. We cannot walk away from our position of global leadership and allow other countries to make decisions about our lives, jobs, and safety.

Democrats further believe that when America leads, it must be as a principled force for peace and prosperity in the world. We believe all people deserve to live in dignity and have their rights respected. We believe protecting rights and opportunities for women and girls is essential for security and economic growth. We believe providing access to education and employment for young people and safeguarding the rights of minorities is important to ensuring stability. We believe the smart use of diplomacy, development, and economic statecraft can prevent crises, foster stability, and make us safer. And we believe that we are stronger when we work with our partners and allies, rather than try to go it alone. Our global network of alliances is not a burden—it is a source of tremendous strategic advantage.

We believe that while our military must be the strongest in the world, it should only be sent into combat when the terms of engagement are clearly presented to the American people and our troops have what they need to fulfill their mission. We believe that war must always be the last resort, never the first choice.

These principles have underpinned important progress in the last eight years. When President Obama and Vice President Biden assumed office, the world economy was in the worst crisis since the Great Depression, our alliances were strained, Osama bin Laden remained at large, Iran was racing toward a nuclear weapon, and we were mired in two costly wars. We brought bin Laden to justice, crippled al Qaeda's core leadership, saved America from a second Great



Depression, repaired our alliances, reestablished relations with Cuba while pressing for reforms, and—without firing a shot, dropping a bomb, or putting a single American soldier in harm's way—blocked Iran's ability to pursue a nuclear weapon. America is stronger abroad and safer at home because of this principled leadership.

But there is much more to do to keep our country prosperous and safe. From defeating terrorism and combating climate change to managing China's rise and strengthening our nation's cybersecurity, the next Democratic administration will confront the complex challenges that lie ahead by staying true to our principles and core values.

Donald Trump has a different approach. There has never been a major party candidate less qualified or less fit for the office of President of the United States or to be Commander-in-Chief than Donald Trump. He wants more countries to have nuclear weapons. He thinks our military should engage in war crimes. He wants to build walls and keep people—including Americans—from entering the country based on their race, religion, ethnicity, and national origin. He has no strategy for dealing with key threats facing our country, including climate change and ISIS. He wants to abandon our allies and empower our adversaries. His dangerous, incoherent policies would undo the progress we have made.

Donald Trump believes America is weak and an embarrassment. We believe America is unlike any other nation on earth. Our ingenuity is unparalleled, our military unrivaled, our economy the largest, most dynamic, and innovative, and our values an enduring source of strength and inspiration the world over. We are not a country that cowers behind walls. We lead with purpose. With American leadership, guided by our principles and in concert with our allies and partners, the coming years can be the most stable, secure, and prosperous time we and the world have ever known.

### **Support Our Troops and Keep Faith with Our Veterans**

Democrats believe America must continue to have the strongest military in the world. Donald Trump has called our military “a disaster.” We reject that view of our brave men and women in serving in the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. They perform admirably while sacrificing immeasurably.

#### *Defense Spending*

We support a smart, predictable defense budget that meets the strategic challenges we face, not the arbitrary cuts that the Republican Congress enacted as part of sequestration. We must prioritize military readiness by making sure our Active, Reserve, and National Guard components remain the best trained and equipped in the world. We will seek a more agile and flexible force and rid the military of outdated Cold War-era systems.

We must end waste in the defense budget. We will audit the Pentagon, launch a high-level commission to review the role of defense contractors, and take greater action against those who have been involved in fraud. And we will ensure that the Department of Defense invests its budget wisely.

### *Veterans and Service Members*

Our country has a sacred, moral responsibility to keep faith with all our veterans and wounded warriors. We must take care of those who have put their lives on the line to defend us. That is why we will push for more educational benefits and job training, end chronic homelessness and combat suicide, and protect and preserve the post-9/11 GI Bill for future generations. We will also ensure that reservists and Guard members are treated fairly when it comes to employment, health, education benefits, deployment, and reintegration.

We are outraged by the systemic problems plaguing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). We will fight for every veteran to have timely access to high-quality health care and timely processing of claims and appeals. We must also look for more ways to make certain the VA provides veteran-centric care, such as providing women with full and equal treatment, including reproductive health services; expanding mental health programs; continuing efforts to identify and treat invisible, latent, and toxic wounds of war; treating post-traumatic stress; and expanding the post-9/11 veteran's caregiver program to include all veterans. We reject attempts by Republicans to sell out the needs of veterans by privatizing the VA. We believe that the VA must be fully resourced so that every veteran gets the care that he or she has earned and deserves, including those suffering from sexual assault, mental illness and other injuries or ailments.

### *Military Families*

Democrats honor the sacrifice of military families who serve alongside our service members. We recognize the unique concerns and challenges they face, especially after 15 years of continuous deployments. We will support military families with jobs, education, childcare, and health care. We will promote family-friendly policies and champion efforts to care for our military family members, especially for the spouses and children who have to rebuild their lives after the loss of a loved one or life-altering injury or disability.

### *A Strong Military*

Democrats welcome and honor all Americans who want to serve and will continue to fight for their equal rights and recognition. We are proud of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and we commit ourselves to insuring fair treatment for LGBT veterans, including by proactively reviewing and upgrading discharge records for veterans who were discharged because of their sexual orientation. We are also proud of the opening of combat positions to women. Our military is strongest when people of all races, religions, sexual orientations, and gender identities are honored for their service to our country.

Democrats are committed to addressing the scourge of military sexual assault. We must increase efforts to prevent sexual assault and rape, and aggressively investigate and prosecute allegations. And we must make sure victims receive timely, appropriate and comprehensive treatment for physical, emotional, and psychological trauma resulting from sexual assault.

## Confront Global Threats

Democrats will protect our country. We will strengthen our homeland security, deal wisely and firmly with those who seek to imperil America or our partners, deter aggression, and promote peace. We will use all the tools of American power, especially diplomacy and development, to confront global threats and ensure war is the last resort.

### *Terrorism*

We must defeat ISIS, al Qaeda, and their affiliates, and prevent other groups from emerging in their place. Democrats will continue to lead a broad coalition of allies and partners to destroy ISIS' stronghold in Iraq and Syria. We will press those in the region, especially the Gulf countries and local forces on the ground, to carry their weight in prosecuting this fight. We will dismantle the global network of terror, which supplies terrorists with money, arms, and fighters, and stop them from recruiting and inspiring potential radicals. We will improve our intelligence capabilities, with appropriate safeguards here at home, and ensure that the intelligence community and law enforcement is prepared to deal effectively with the threats we face. We will harden our defenses as well as those of our partners against external and homegrown threats. We will secure the homeland, investing more resources to improve mass transit, aviation, infrastructure, and port security. And we will remain a resilient nation, always coming together to stand up to terror.

Democrats will seek an updated Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) that is more precise about our efforts to defeat ISIS and that does not involve large-scale combat deployment of American troops.

As we prosecute the fight against terrorism, Democrats will repudiate vile tactics that would do us harm. We reject Donald Trump's vilification of Muslims. It violates the religious freedom that is the bedrock of our country and feeds into ISIS' nefarious narrative. It also alienates people and countries who are crucial to defeating terrorism; the vast majority of Muslims believe in a future of peace and tolerance. We reject Donald Trump's suggestion that our military should engage in war crimes, like torturing prisoners or murdering civilian family members of suspected terrorists. These tactics run counter to American principles, undermine our moral standing, cost innocent lives, and endanger Americans. We also firmly reject Donald Trump's willingness to mire tens of thousands of our combat troops in another misguided ground war in the Middle East, which would only further embolden ISIS. There is nothing smart or strong about such an approach.

### *Syria*

The Syrian crisis is heartbreaking and dangerous, and its impact is threatening the region, Europe, and beyond. Donald Trump would inflame the conflict by alienating our allies, inexplicably allowing ISIS to expand in Syria, and potentially starting a wider war. This is a reckless approach. Democrats will instead root out ISIS and other terrorist groups and bring together the moderate Syrian opposition, international community, and our regional allies to reach a negotiated political transition that ends Assad's rule. Given the immense scale of human suffering in Syria, it is also imperative that we lead the international community in providing greater humanitarian assistance to the civilian victims of war in Syria and Iraq, especially displaced refugees.

### *Afghanistan*

In Afghanistan, we will work with the NATO-led coalition of partners to bolster the democratically-elected government as it assumes a primary role in tackling terrorism, forges a more secure future for the country, and safeguards advances, like securing women's rights. Democrats will continue to push for an Afghan-led peace process and press both Afghanistan and Pakistan to deny terrorists sanctuary on either side of the border. We support President Obama's decision to maintain a limited troop presence in Afghanistan into 2017 and ensure that Afghanistan never again serves as a haven for terrorists to plan and launch attacks on our homeland.

### *Iran*

We support the nuclear agreement with Iran because, as it is vigorously enforced and implemented, it verifiably cuts off all of Iran's pathways to a bomb without resorting to war. We reject Donald Trump's view that we should have walked away from a deal that peacefully dismantles Iran's nuclear program. We will continue the work of this administration to ensure that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon and will not hesitate to take military action if Iran races towards one.

Democrats will also address the detrimental role Iran plays in the region and will robustly enforce and, if necessary, strengthen non-nuclear sanctions. Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism. It violates the human rights of its population, denies the Holocaust, vows to eliminate Israel, and has its fingerprints on almost every conflict in the Middle East. Democrats will push back against Iran's destabilizing activities including its support for terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, counter Iran's ballistic missile program, bolster the capabilities of our Gulf partners, and ensure that Israel always has the ability to defend itself. Finally, Democrats recognize that the Iranian people seek a brighter future for their country and greater engagement with the international community. We will embrace opportunities for cultural, academic and other exchanges with the Iranian people.

### *North Korea*

North Korea is perhaps the most repressive regime on the planet, run by a sadistic dictator. It has conducted several nuclear tests and is attempting to develop the capability to put a nuclear warhead on a long-range missile that could directly threaten the United States. The regime is also responsible for grave human rights abuses against the North Korean people. Yet Donald Trump praises North Korea's dictator; threatens to abandon our treaty allies, Japan and South Korea; and encourages the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region. This approach is incoherent and rather than solving a global crisis, would create a new one. Democrats will protect America and our allies, press China to restrain North Korea, and sharpen the choices for Pyongyang to compel it to abandon its illegal nuclear and missile programs.

### *Russia*

Russia is engaging in destabilizing actions along its borders, violating Ukraine's sovereignty and attempting to recreate spheres of influence that undermine American interests. It is also propping up the Assad regime in Syria, which is brutally attacking its own citizens. Donald Trump would overturn more than 50 years of American foreign policy by abandoning NATO partners—

countries who help us fight terrorism every day—and embracing Russian President Vladimir Putin instead. We believe in strong alliances and will deter Russian aggression, build European resilience, and protect our NATO allies. We will make it clear to Putin that we are prepared to cooperate with him when it is in our interest—as we did on reducing nuclear stockpiles, ensuring Iran could not obtain a nuclear weapon, sanctioning North Korea, and resupplying our troops in Afghanistan—but we will not hesitate to stand up to Russian aggression. We will also continue to stand by the Russian people and push the government to respect the fundamental rights of its citizens.

#### *Cybersecurity and Online Privacy*

Democrats will protect our industry, infrastructure, and government from cyberattacks. We will strengthen our cybersecurity, seek to establish global norms in cyberspace, and impose consequences on those who violate the rules. We will do this while protecting the privacy and civil liberties of the American people. We will also ensure a coherent strategy across federal agencies by building on the Obama Administration's Cybersecurity National Action Plan, especially the empowerment of a federal Chief Information Security Officer, the modernization of federal information technology, and upgrades to government-wide cybersecurity.

Democrats reject the false choice between privacy interests and keeping Americans safe. We need liberty and security, and each makes the other possible. We will protect the privacy and civil liberties of the American people—standing firm against the type of warrantless surveillance of American citizens that flourished during the Bush Administration. We support recent reforms to government bulk data collection programs so the government is not collecting and holding millions of files on innocent Americans.

We will support a national commission on digital security and encryption to bring together technology and public safety communities to address the needs of law enforcement, protect the privacy of Americans, assess how innovation might point to new policy approaches, and advance our larger national security and global competitiveness interests.

#### *Non-Proliferation of Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Weapons*

Democrats are committed to preventing the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and to eventually ridding the planet of these catastrophic weapons. We believe America will be safer in a world with fewer weapons of mass destruction. Donald Trump encourages the spread of nuclear weapons across Asia and the Middle East, which would weaken the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and he is unwilling to rule out using a nuclear weapon against ISIS.

Democrats want to reduce the number of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons around the world, as well as their means of delivery, while retaining a strong deterrent as long as others maintain nuclear strike capabilities. We will strengthen the NPT, push for the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and stop the spread of loose nuclear material. Democrats will be informed by a new Nuclear Posture Review in determining continued ways to appropriately shape our nuclear deterrent, with the aim of reducing our reliance on nuclear weapons while meeting our national security obligations. Democrats will also seek new opportunities for further arms control and avoid taking steps that create incentives for the

expansion of existing nuclear weapons programs. To this end, we will work to reduce excessive spending on nuclear weapons-related programs that are projected to cost \$1 trillion over the next 30 years.

### *Global Climate Leadership*

Climate change poses an urgent and severe threat to our national security, and Democrats believe it would be a grave mistake for the United States to wait for another nation to take the lead in combating the global climate emergency. According to the military, climate change is a threat multiplier that is already contributing to new conflicts over resources, catastrophic natural disasters, and the degradation of vital ecosystems across the globe. While Donald Trump says that climate change is a “hoax” created by and for the Chinese, Democrats recognize the catastrophic consequences facing our country, our planet, and civilization.

We believe the United States must lead in forging a robust global solution to the climate crisis. We are committed to a national mobilization, and to leading a global effort to mobilize nations to address this threat on a scale not seen since World War II. In the first 100 days of the next administration, the President will convene a summit of the world’s best engineers, climate scientists, policy experts, activists, and indigenous communities to chart a course to solve the climate crisis. Our generation must lead the fight against climate change and we applaud President Obama’s leadership in forging the historic Paris climate change agreement. We will not only meet the goals we set in Paris, we will seek to exceed them and push other countries to do the same by slashing carbon pollution and rapidly driving down emissions of potent greenhouse gases like hydrofluorocarbons. We will support developing countries in their efforts to mitigate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, deploy more clean energy, and invest in climate resilience and adaptation.

As a proud Arctic nation, we are against putting the region at risk through drilling in the Arctic Ocean or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Instead, while protecting our strategic interests, we will seek collaborative, science-based approaches to be good stewards of the rapidly changing Arctic region.

## **Protect Our Values**

Our values of inclusion and tolerance inspire hope around the world and make us safer at home. The world will be more secure, stable, and peaceful when all people are able to reach their God-given potential and live in freedom and dignity. We strive to ensure that the values upon which our country was built, including our belief that all people are created equal, are reflected in everything our nation does. That is why we will promote peacebuilding, protect democracy, and champion human rights defenders. And we will seek to safeguard vulnerable minorities, including LGBT people and people with disabilities.

### *Women and Girls*

We believe the United States must continue to be a strong advocate for the rights and opportunities of women and girls around the world. Elevating their status is not just the right thing to do—it is also a strategic imperative that advances American interests in prosperity and

stability. When women and girls are healthy, educated, and able to participate economically, their families and communities prosper, poverty decreases, and economies grow. And when women participate in conflict resolution and post-conflict processes, it improves the likelihood of securing sustainable peace. Democrats are committed to advancing the rights and opportunities of women and girls as a central focus of American diplomacy, development, and defense efforts and will continue to support the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. We will work to end the epidemic of gender-based violence around the world. We will urge ratification of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

We will support sexual and reproductive health and rights around the globe. In addition to expanding the availability of affordable family planning information and contraceptive supplies, we believe that safe abortion must be part of comprehensive maternal and women's health care and included as part of America's global health programming. Therefore, we support the repeal of harmful restrictions that obstruct women's access to health care information and services, including the "global gag rule" and the Helms Amendment that bars American assistance to provide safe, legal abortion throughout the developing world.

#### *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People*

Democrats believe that LGBT rights are human rights and that American foreign policy should advance the ability of all persons to live with dignity, security, and respect, regardless of who they are or who they love. We applaud President Obama's historic Presidential Memorandum on International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons, which combats criminalization, protects refugees, and provides foreign assistance. We will continue to stand with LGBT people around the world, including fighting efforts by any nation to infringe on LGBT rights or ignore abuse.

#### *Trafficking and Modern Slavery*

We will stop the scourge of human trafficking and modern slavery of men, women, boys, and girls. We will use the full force of the law against those who engage in modern-day forms of slavery, including the commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor of men, women, and children. Building on the accomplishments of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, we call for increased diplomatic efforts with foreign governments to root out complicit public officials who facilitate or perpetrate this evil. We will also work to increase the provision of services and protections for trafficking survivors.

#### *Young People*

The majority of the developing world is under the age of 30. These countries will be more prosperous and stable if young people have access to education and employment opportunities. Democrats will promote the rights of young people and nurture young leaders. We will work with people around the world who seek greater opportunities, including by promoting job creation, expanding education and health care, and fostering partnerships between peoples.

### *Religious Minorities*

We are horrified by ISIS' genocide and sexual enslavement of Christians and Yezidis and crimes against humanity against Muslims and others in the Middle East. We will do everything we can to protect religious minorities and the fundamental right of freedom of religion.

### *Refugees*

The world is experiencing a major refugee crisis with more than 60 million people displaced as a result of conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, and Eastern Europe. We support President Obama's call for an international summit to address this crisis so that every country assumes its responsibility to meet this humanitarian challenge. While Donald Trump proposes banning Muslim refugees, we will look for ways to help innocent people who are fleeing persecution while ensuring rigorous screening and vetting.

### *Civil Society*

Democrats support progress toward more accountable governance and universal rights. As autocrats and strongmen around the world crack down on civil society and imprison those who speak out to demand greater freedom, we will continue to bolster groups and individuals who fight for fundamental human rights, democracy, and rule of law. We will support strong legislatures, independent judiciaries, free press, vibrant civil society, honest police forces, religious freedom, and equality for women and minorities. We will bolster the development of civil society and representative institutions that can protect fundamental human rights and improve the quality of life for all citizens, including independent and democratic unions. In non-democratic countries, we will work with international partners to assist the efforts of those struggling to promote peaceful political reforms.

Democrats will protect Americans citizens abroad. We condemn the practice of unlawful detentions or imprisonment, especially of journalists and civil rights activists.

### *Anti-Corruption*

Democrats believe that we need to end corruption worldwide and increase transparency. We will fight corruption, promote good governance, and support the rule of law. We will also seek to close offshore tax havens, which corrupt rulers, individuals, and corporations exploit to shelter ill-gotten gains or avoid paying taxes at home.

### *Torture*

We will always seek to uphold our values at home and abroad, not just when it is easy, but when it is hard. That is why President Obama banned torture without exception in his first week in office and why Democrats condemn Donald Trump's statements that he would engage in torture and other war crimes. We agree with military and national security experts who acknowledge that torture is not an effective interrogation technique.

### *Closing Guantánamo Bay*

The Democratic Party remains committed to closing the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay and ending indefinite detention without trial or conviction. Keeping the facility open is a blemish on our record, serves as a recruiting tool for extremists, and undermines our standing in the world.



### *Development Assistance*

We believe that development assistance is an essential instrument of American power. It can prevent threats, enhance stability, and reduce the need for military force. With less than one percent of the federal budget, our development assistance has helped cut extreme poverty in half, drastically decreased maternal and child mortality, reduced global hunger, provided food security, countered deadly pandemics, promoted education, and put an AIDS-free generation within reach. This investment reflects the best of America and makes us safer. We need to continue this work and make more progress on important global goals like ending extreme poverty and hunger.

We will support local development efforts, recognizing the self-determination of the peoples and countries we assist to direct their own futures. We will also learn from recent conflicts to improve civilian capacity for conflict prevention and stabilization.

### *Global Health*

America has made critical investments in global health, including in the areas of maternal and child health, HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. It is vital that we continue this work—which has saved millions of lives around the world and is essential to our nation's health security. While the Republican Party refuses to fund important measures that could contain and address the Zika pandemic, Democrats are ready to limit the reach of Zika—just as we did with Ebola—and support funding for diagnostic tests for the virus, vaccine, and treatment. We will also prepare for potential pandemics, like avian influenza and H1N1, by working with first responders and health officials to reduce the risks associated with unintentional or deliberate outbreaks of infectious diseases.

### *HIV and AIDS*

Democrats believe an AIDS-free generation is within our grasp. But today far too many Americans living with HIV are without access to quality care and too many new infections occur each year. That is why we will implement the National HIV and AIDS Strategy; increase research funding for the National Institutes of Health; cap pharmaceutical expenses for people living with HIV and AIDS; reform HIV criminalization laws; and expand access for harm reduction programs and HIV prevention medications, particularly for the populations most at risk of infection. Abroad, we will continue our commitment to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and increase global funding for HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment. Democrats will always protect those living with HIV and AIDS from stigma and discrimination.

### *International Labor*

Democrats believe that a key element of American leadership is growing our economy and protecting American jobs. We also believe that the world will be safer when there is greater prosperity. That is why we will prioritize and strongly enforce provisions on decent work and worker's rights in all American diplomatic, trade, and programmatic efforts. We think it is wrong for workers in the United States to have to compete against poverty-wage, child, or slave labor.

Democrats will fight to end child labor. We will promote broad-based economic growth across the world, pursuing a global economic agenda that promotes rising wages and invests in quality

public services, workers' rights, and environmental protections. We believe that we need to coordinate our economic actions with other countries to address economic insecurity, specifically youth un- and underemployment, gender inequality, the digital transformation, and the transition towards green jobs.

### **A Leader in the World**

American leadership is essential to keeping us safe and our economy growing in the years ahead. It would be a dangerous mistake for America to abandon our responsibilities. We cannot, as Donald Trump suggests, cede the mantle of leadership for global peace and security to others who will not have our best interests in mind.

#### *Asia-Pacific*

From the Asia Pacific to the Indian Ocean, we will deepen our relationships in the region with Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand. We will honor our historic commitment to Japan. We will continue to invest in a long-term strategic partnership with India—the world's largest democracy, a nation of great diversity, and an important Pacific power. We will build on the historic opening with Burma and advocate for greater human rights protections and national reconciliation among Burma's many different ethnic groups. We will help Pakistan stabilize its polity and build an effective relationship with the predominantly young population of this strategically located, nuclear-armed country. We will also work with our allies and partners to fortify regional institutions and norms as well as protect freedom of the seas in the South China Sea.

Democrats will push back against North Korean aggression and press China to play by the rules. We will stand up to Beijing on unfair trade practices, currency manipulation, censorship of the internet, piracy, and cyberattacks. And we will look for areas of cooperation, including on combatting climate change and nuclear proliferation. We will promote greater respect for human rights, including the rights of Tibetans. We are committed to a "One China" policy and the Taiwan Relations Act and will continue to support a peaceful resolution of Cross-Strait issues that is consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan.

#### *Middle East*

In the Middle East, Democrats will push for more inclusive governance in Iraq and Syria that respects the equal rights of all citizens; provide support and security for Lebanon and Jordan, two countries that are hosting a disproportionate number of refugees; maintain our robust security cooperation with Gulf countries; and stand by the people of the region as they seek greater economic opportunity and freedom. A strong and secure Israel is vital to the United States because we share overarching strategic interests and the common values of democracy, equality, tolerance, and pluralism. That is why we will always support Israel's right to defend itself, including by retaining its qualitative military edge, and oppose any effort to delegitimize Israel, including at the United Nations or through the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement.

We will continue to work toward a two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiated directly by the parties that guarantees Israel's future as a secure and democratic

Jewish state with recognized borders and provides the Palestinians with independence, sovereignty, and dignity. While Jerusalem is a matter for final status negotiations, it should remain the capital of Israel, an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths. Israelis deserve security, recognition, and a normal life free from terror and incitement. Palestinians should be free to govern themselves in their own viable state, in peace and dignity.

### *Europe*

Europe remains America's indispensable partner and a cornerstone of global security. Democrats will stand with our European allies and partners to deter Russian aggression, address security challenges to Europe's south, and deal with unprecedented economic and social challenges. We will maintain our steadfast commitment to the special relationship with United Kingdom and the transatlantic partnership with the European Union. We will seek to strengthen our strategic partnership with Turkey while pushing for reforms, end the division of Cyprus, and continue to support a close relationship with states that seek to strengthen their ties to NATO and Europe, such as Georgia and Ukraine.

We reject Donald Trump's threats to abandon our European and NATO allies, all while he praises Putin. When the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001, our NATO allies invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, stating that an attack against one is an attack against all—for the first and only time in its history. Our NATO allies fought alongside us in Afghanistan and are still there today. We will maintain our Article 5 collective security commitments to NATO because we are stronger when we have our allies at our side. And we will continue to push NATO members to contribute their fair share.

### *Americas*

The Americas are a region of singular strategic, economic, and cultural importance and opportunity for the United States. Democrats reject Donald Trump's proposal to build a wall on our southern border and alienate Mexico, a valuable partner. We will instead embrace our neighbors and pursue strong, fruitful partnerships across the region, from Canada to Latin America and the Caribbean. We will bolster democratic institutions, promote economic opportunity and prosperity, and tackle the rise of drugs, transnational crime, and corruption. We will strengthen the U.S.-Caribbean regional relationship through economic development and comprehensive immigration reform. And we will build on our long-term commitment to Colombia and work with Central American countries to stabilize the Northern Triangle.

In Cuba, we will build on President Obama's historic opening and end the travel ban and embargo. We will also stand by the Cuban people and support their ability to decide their own future and to enjoy the same human rights and freedoms that people everywhere deserve. In Venezuela, we will push the government to respect human rights and respond to the will of its people. And in Haiti, we will support local and international efforts to bolster the country's democratic institutions and economic development. We will also help more Haitians take advantage of Temporary Protected Status. Finally, we will close the School of the Americas, now known as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, because we believe that military and police forces should support democracy, not subvert it.

### *Africa*

Africa is home to many of the fastest growing economies in the world. Democrats will strengthen our partnership and collaboration with the African Union, emphasizing trade while increasing development assistance to bolster the continent's domestic economies. We will engage our African partners on the full range of global challenges and opportunities, and we will continue to strengthen democratic institutions and human rights, fair trade and investment, development, and global health. We will help our African partners improve their capacity to respond to crises and protect citizens, especially women and girls. And we will work to end the reign of terror promulgated by Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, AQIM, and ISIS.

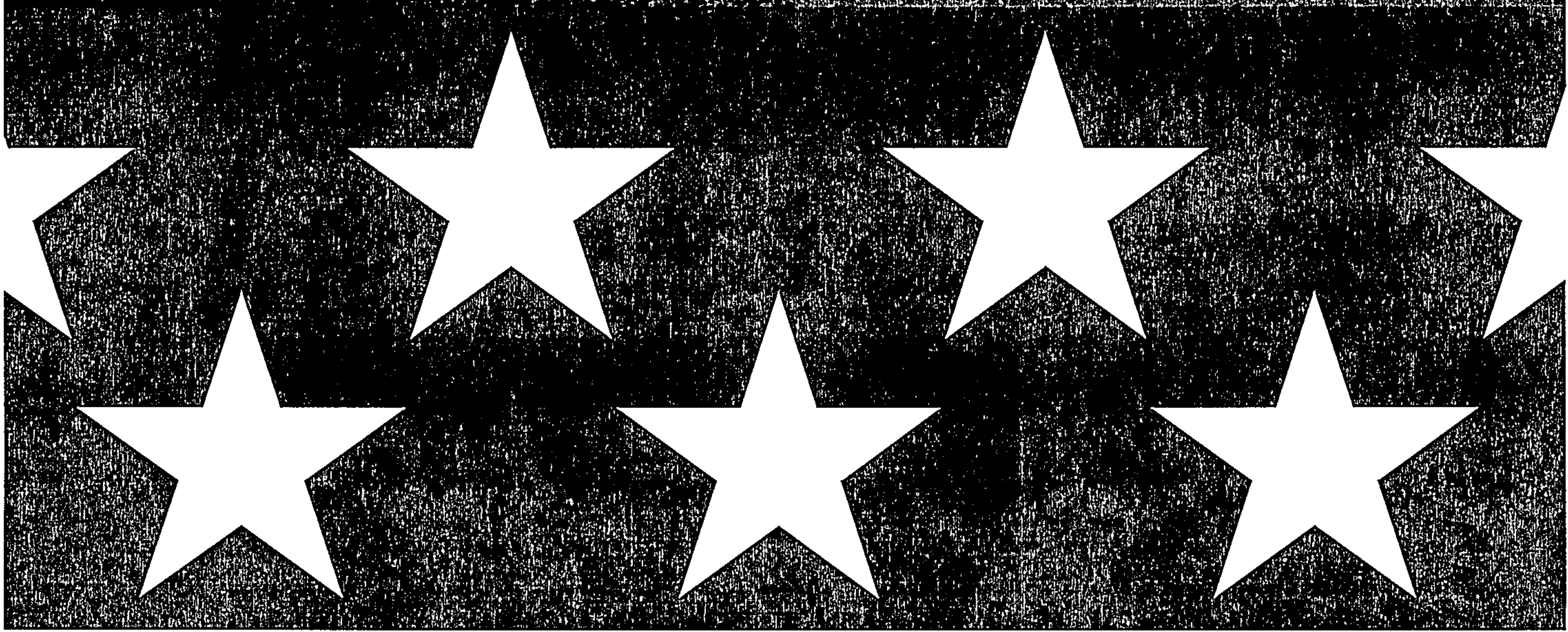
Democrats applaud President Obama's National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking, and his commitment to preserving the earth's natural beauty for future generations. Democrats support science-based management of iconic wildlife in Africa, including stronger regulations banning the importation into the United States of hunting trophies that are not supported by current science-based evidence and are related to or funded by non-scientific special interests.

### *Global Economy and Institutions*

Democrats will protect and grow the global economy. While Donald Trump wants to default on our debt, which would lead to a disastrous global economic crisis, we believe we must be responsible stewards and work with our partners to prevent another worldwide financial crisis.

Democrats believe that global institutions—most prominently the United Nations—and multilateral organizations have a powerful role to play and are an important amplifier of American strength and influence. Many of these organizations need reform and updating, but it would be reckless to follow Donald Trump and turn our back on the international system that our country built. It has provided decades of stability and economic growth for the world and for America.

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2016



*We dedicate this platform with admiration and gratitude*



To all who stand strong in the face of danger  
So that the American people may be protected against it —  
The men and women of our military,  
of our law enforcement, and the first responders  
of every community in our land —  
And to their families.

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# Preamble

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With this platform, we the Republican Party reaffirm the principles that unite us in a common purpose.

We believe in American exceptionalism.

We believe the United States of America is unlike any other nation on earth.

We believe America is exceptional because of our historic role — first as refuge, then as defender, and now as exemplar of liberty for the world to see.

We affirm — as did the Declaration of Independence: that all are created equal, endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We believe in the Constitution as our founding document.

We believe the Constitution was written not as a flexible document, but as our enduring covenant.

We believe our constitutional system — limited government, separation of powers, federalism, and the rights of the people — must be preserved uncompromised for future generations.

We believe political freedom and economic freedom are indivisible.

When political freedom and economic freedom are separated — both are in peril; when united, they are invincible.

We believe that people are the ultimate resource — and that the people, not the government, are the best stewards of our country's God-given natural resources.

As Americans and as Republicans we wish for peace — so we insist on strength. We will make America safe. We seek friendship with all peoples and all nations, but we recognize and are prepared to deal with evil in the world.

Based on these principles, this platform is an invitation and a roadmap. It invites every American to join us and shows the path to a stronger, safer, and more prosperous America.

This platform is optimistic because the

American people are optimistic.

This platform lays out — in clear language — the path to making America great and united again.

For the past 8 years America has been led in the wrong direction.

Our economy has become unnecessarily weak with stagnant wages. People living paycheck to paycheck are struggling, sacrificing, and suffering.

Americans have earned and deserve a strong and healthy economy.

Our standing in world affairs has declined significantly — our enemies no longer fear us and our friends no longer trust us.

People want and expect an America that is the most powerful and respected country on the face of the earth.

The men and women of our military remain the world's best. They have been shortchanged in numbers, equipment, and benefits by a Commander in Chief who treats the Armed Forces and our veterans as a necessary inconvenience.

The President and the Democratic party have dismantled Americans' system of healthcare. They have replaced it with a costly and complicated scheme that limits choices and takes away our freedom.

The President and the Democratic party have abandoned their promise of being accountable to the American people.

They have nearly doubled the size of the national debt.

They refuse to control our borders but try to control our schools, farms, businesses, and even our religious institutions. They have directly attacked the production of American energy and the industry-related jobs that have sustained families and communities.



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The President has been regulating to death a free market economy that he does not like and does not understand. He defies the laws of the United States by refusing to enforce those with which he does not agree. And he appoints judges who legislate from the bench rather than apply the law.

We, as Republicans and Americans, cannot allow this to continue. That is why the many sections of this platform affirm our trust in the people, our faith in their judgment, and our determination to help them take back their country.

This means removing the power from unelected, unaccountable government.

This means relieving the burden and expense of punishing government regulations.

And this means returning to the people and the states the control that belongs to them. It is the control and the power to make their own decisions about what's best for themselves and their families and communities.

This platform is many things: A handbook for returning decision-making to the people. A guide to the constitutional rights of every American. And a manual for the kind of sustained growth that will bring opportunity to all those on the sidelines of our society.

Every time we sing, "God Bless America," we are asking for help. We ask for divine help that our country can fulfill its promise. We earn that help by recommitting ourselves to the ideas and ideals that are the true greatness of America.



*Mary Fallin*

**Governor Mary Fallin**  
CO-CHAIR



*John Barrasso*

**Senator John Barrasso**  
CHAIRMAN



*Virginia Foxx*

**Representative Virginia Foxx**  
CO-CHAIR

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# Restoring the American Dream



## **Rebuilding the Economy and Creating Jobs**

We are the party of a growing economy that gives everyone a chance in life, an opportunity to learn, work, and realize the prosperity freedom makes possible.

Government cannot create prosperity, though government can limit or destroy it. Prosperity is the product of self-discipline, enterprise, saving and investment by individuals, but it is not an end in itself. Prosperity provides the means by which citizens and their families can maintain their independence from government, raise their children by their own values, practice their faith, and build communities of cooperation and mutual respect. It is also the foundation for our nation's global leadership, for it is the vigor of our economy which makes possible our military strength and our national security.

Pundits and Democrats tell us that we should accept the new normal of a slow-growing economy. The consequences are too dire to ever accept that:

President Obama and his party will set a record of being the first modern president ever to leave office without a single calendar year of three percent economic growth. As a result, the number of Americans living in poverty has increased by 7 million, our nation's economy has lost nearly \$8 trillion of cumulative output compared with an average recovery, and the economic growth shortfall has left a cumulative real after-tax per person personal income shortfall of nearly \$17,000 compared with an average recovery.

Under President Obama and the Democrats, new private-sector jobs are three million below where they should have been with just average modern post-recession growth. Our labor force participation rate has plunged to at or below 63 percent for far too long, lows last seen two gen-

erations ago before President Reagan was elected in 1980. Business closures have exceeded business startups throughout the Obama Presidency. Strong growth, more jobs, increasing incomes, and expanding opportunity are all in short supply under President Obama and the Democrats.

We repudiate the absurd idea this is the best America can do. The American people rejected that nonsense the last time it was offered, in the historic election of 1980, and we ask them to join us now to again repudiate the false gospel of America's diminishment and retreat. We offer instead our vision of an opportunity society based on the economics of inclusion.

## **Fair and Simple Taxes for Growth**

Republicans consider the establishment of a pro-growth tax code a moral imperative. More than any other public policy, the way government raises revenue — how much, at what rates, under what

circumstances, from whom, and for whom — has the greatest impact on our economy's performance. It powerfully influences the level of economic growth and job creation, which translates into the level of opportunity for those who would otherwise be left behind. Getting our tax system right will be the most important factor in driving the entire economy back to prosperity.

The current tax code is rightly the object of both anger and mockery. Its length is exceeded only by its complexity. We must start anew. That will be an enormous undertaking and, if it is to succeed, it must command the attention and approval of the American people. It cannot be engineered from the top down, but must have a common sense approach, and be simplified.

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Republicans consider the establishment of a pro-growth tax code a moral imperative.

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Our proposal is straightforward. Wherever tax rates penalize thrift or discourage investment, they must be lowered. Wherever current provisions of the code are disincentives for economic growth, they must be changed. We will not divide the American people into winners and losers. We will eliminate as many special interest provisions and loopholes as possible and curb corporate welfare, especially where their erosion of the tax base has created pressure for higher rates. We will be mindful of the burdens on families with children and the impact on an aging population. We will seek simplicity and clarity so that every taxpayer can understand how much of their income is consumed by the federal government.

We will welcome all to this enterprise — to discuss, debate, challenge, and amend — so that together we can restore economic growth for the American people and, even more important, renew their faith in the future.

#### **Our Tax Principles**

To ensure that past abuses will not be repeated, we assert these fundamental principles. We oppose retroactive taxation. We condemn attempts by activist judges at any level of government to seize the power of the purse from the people's elected representatives by ordering higher taxes.

We oppose tax policies that deliberately divide Americans or promote class warfare. Because of the vital role of religious organizations, charities, and fraternal benevolent societies in fostering generosity and patriotism, they should not be subject to taxation and donations to them should remain deductible. To guard against hypertaxation of the American people in any restructuring of the federal tax system, any value added tax or national sales tax must be tied to the simultaneous repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment, which established the federal income tax.

#### **A Competitive America**

Competitiveness equals jobs. That equation governs our policies regarding U.S. corporations in the global economy. Private investment is a key driver of economic growth and job creation. After falling dramatically during the recession, private investment has recovered at a disappointing pace due

in part to high corporate tax rates and increasing regulatory burdens and uncertainty.

American businesses now face the world's highest corporate tax rates. That's like putting lead shoes on your cross-country team. It reduces companies' ability to compete overseas, encourages them to move abroad, lessens their investment, cripples job creation here at home, lowers American wages, and fosters the avoidance of tax liability — without actually increasing tax revenues. A more damaging policy is hard to imagine. We propose to level the international playing field by lowering the corporate tax rate to be on a par with, or below, the rates of other industrial nations. We endorse the recommendation of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, as well as the current Administration's Export Council, to switch to a territorial system of taxation so that profits earned and taxed abroad may be repatriated for job-creating investment here at home. We believe American companies should be headquartered in America. We should reduce barriers to accomplishing that goal.

#### **A Winning Trade Policy**

International trade is crucial for all sectors of America's economy. Massive trade deficits are not. We envision a worldwide multilateral agreement among nations committed to the principles of open markets, what has been called a "Reagan Economic Zone," in which free trade will truly be fair trade for all concerned.

We need better negotiated trade agreements that put America first. When trade agreements have been carefully negotiated with friendly democracies, they have resulted in millions of new jobs here at home supported by our exports. When those agreements do not adequately protect U.S. interests, U.S. sovereignty, or when they are violated with impunity, they must be rejected.

We cannot allow foreign governments to limit American access to their markets while stealing our designs, patents, brands, know-how, and technology. We cannot allow China to continue its currency manipulation, exclusion of U.S. products from government purchases, and subsidization of Chinese companies to thwart American imports. The current Administration's way of dealing with these vio-

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lations of world trade standards has been a virtual surrender.

Republicans understand that you can succeed in a negotiation only if you are willing to walk away from it. A Republican president will insist on parity in trade and stand ready to implement countervailing duties if other countries refuse to cooperate.

At the same time, we look to broaden our trade agreements with countries which share our values and commitment to fairness, along with transparency in our commercial and business practices. In pursuing that objective, the American people demand transparency, full disclosure, protection of our national sovereignty, and tough negotiation on the part of those who are supposed to advance the interests of U.S. workers. Significant trade agreements should not be rushed or undertaken in a Lame Duck Congress.

### **Freeing Financial Markets**

The Republican vision for American banking calls for establishing transparent, efficient markets where consumers can obtain loans they need at reasonable rates based on market conditions. Unfortunately, in response to the financial institutions crisis of 2008-2009, the Democratic-controlled Congress enacted the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, otherwise known as Dodd-Frank. They did not let the crisis go to waste but used it as an excuse to establish unprecedented government control over the nation's financial markets. The consequences have been bad for everyone except federal regulators.

Rather than address the cause of the crisis — the government's own housing policies — the new law extended government control over the economy by creating new unaccountable bureaucracies. Predictably, central planning of our financial sector has not created jobs, it has killed them. It has not limited risks, it has created more. It has not encouraged economic growth, it has shackled it.

Since the enactment of Dodd-Frank, the number of community banks has significantly declined, and the cost and complexity of complying with the law has created impediments to the remaining banks' ability to support the customers they serve. From 13,000 community banks in 1985, only 1,900 remain. Still, the majority of agricultural loans and

small business loans are made by community banks. From start-ups foregone to home loans not made, Dodd-Frank's excessive regulation and burdensome requirements have helped contribute to the slow economy we all endure today under President Obama and the Democrats.

Community banks are essential to ensuring small businesses have easy and affordable access to the capital they need to grow and prosper. Community banks should be relieved of excessive regulations. We support removing roadblocks and regulations that prevent access to capital.

The worst of Dodd-Frank is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, deliberately designed to be a rogue agency. It answers to neither Congress nor the executive, has its own guaranteed funding outside the appropriations process, and uses its slush fund to steer settlements to politically favored groups.

Its Director has dictatorial powers unique in the American Republic. Its regulatory harassment of local and regional banks, the source of most home mortgages and small business loans, advantages big banks and makes it harder for Americans to buy a home. Its one-size-fits-all approach to every issue threatens the diversity of the country's financial system and would leave us with just a few enormous institutions, as in many European countries.

If the Bureau is not abolished, it should be subjected to congressional appropriation. In that way, consumer protection in the financial markets can be advanced through measures that are both effective and constitutional. Any settlements arising from statutory violations by financial institutions must be used to make whole the harmed consumers, with any remaining proceeds given to the general Treasury. Diversion of settlement funds to politically-connected parties should be a criminal offense.

Republicans believe that no financial institution is too big to fail. We support legislation to ensure that the problems of any financial institution can be resolved through the Bankruptcy Code. We endorse prudent regulation of the banking system to ensure that FDIC-regulated banks are properly capitalized and taxpayers are protected against bailouts. We will end the government's use of disparate impact theory in enforcing anti-discrimination laws with regard to lending.

### **Responsible Homeownership and Rental Opportunities**

Homeownership expands personal liberty, builds communities, and helps Americans create wealth. “The American Dream” is not a stale slogan. It is the lived reality that expresses the aspirations of all our people. It means a decent place to live, a safe place to raise kids, a welcoming place to retire. It bespeaks the quiet pride of those who work hard to shelter their family and, in the process, create caring neighborhoods.

The Great Recession devastated the housing market. U.S. taxpayers paid billions to rescue Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, the latter managed and controlled by senior officials from the Carter and Clinton Administrations, and to cover the losses of the poorly-managed Federal Housing Administration. Millions lost their homes, millions more lost value in their homes.

More than six million households had to move from homeownership to renting. Rental costs escalated so that today nearly 12 million families spend more than 50 percent of their incomes just on rent. The national homeownership rate has sharply fallen and the rate for minority households and young adults has plummeted. So many remain unemployed or underemployed, and for the lucky ones with jobs, rising rents make it harder to save for a mortgage.

There is a growing sense that our national standard of living will never be as high as it was in the past. We understand that pessimism but do not share it, for we believe that sound public policies can restore growth to our economy, vigor to the housing market, and hope to those who are now on the margins of prosperity.

Our goal is to advance responsible homeownership while guarding against the abuses that led to the housing collapse. We must scale back the federal role in the housing market, promote responsibility on the part of borrowers and lenders, and avoid future taxpayer bailouts. Reforms should provide clear and prudent underwriting standards and guidelines on predatory lending and acceptable lending practices. Compliance with regulatory standards should constitute a legal safe harbor to guard against opportunistic litigation by trial lawyers.

We call for a comprehensive review of federal

regulations, especially those dealing with the environment, that make it harder and more costly for Americans to rent, buy, or sell homes.

For nine years, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been in conservatorship and the current Administration and Democrats have prevented any effort to reform them. Their corrupt business model lets shareholders and executives reap huge profits while the taxpayers cover all losses. The utility of both agencies should be reconsidered as a Republican administration clears away the jumble of subsidies and controls that complicate and distort home-buying.

The Federal Housing Administration, which provides taxpayer-backed guarantees in the mortgage market, should no longer support high-income individuals, and the public should not be financially exposed by risks taken by FHA officials. We will end the government mandates that required Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and federally-insured banks to satisfy lending quotas to specific groups. Discrimination should have no place in the mortgage industry.

Zoning decisions have always been, and must remain, under local control. The current Administration is trying to seize control of the zoning process through its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation. It threatens to undermine zoning laws in order to socially engineer every community in the country. While the federal government has a legitimate role in enforcing non-discrimination laws, this regulation has nothing to do with proven or alleged discrimination and everything to do with hostility to the self-government of citizens.

### **America on the Move**

Our country's investments in transportation and other public construction have traditionally been non-partisan. Everyone agrees on the need for clean water and safe roads, rail, bridges, ports, and airports. President Eisenhower established a tradition of Republican leadership in this regard by championing the creation of the interstate highway system. In recent years, bipartisan cooperation led to major legislation improving the nation's ports and waterways.

Our Republican majority ended the practice of earmarks, which often diverted transportation

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spending to politically favored projects. In the current Congress, Republicans have secured the longest reauthorization of the Highway Trust Fund in a decade and are advancing a comprehensive reform of the Federal Aviation Administration to make flying easier and more secure.

The current Administration has a different approach. It subordinates civil engineering to social engineering as it pursues an exclusively urban vision of dense housing and government transit. Its ill-named Livability Initiative is meant to “coerce people out of their cars.” This is the same mentality that once led Congress to impose by fiat a single maximum speed limit for the entire nation, from Manhattan to Montana. Our 1980 Republican Platform pledged to repeal that edict. After the election of Ronald Reagan, we did.

Now we make the same pledge regarding the current problems in transportation policy. We propose to remove from the Highway Trust Fund programs that should not be the business of the federal government.

More than a quarter of the Fund’s spending is diverted from its original purpose. One fifth of its funds are spent on mass transit, an inherently local affair that serves only a small portion of the population, concentrated in six big cities. Additional funds are used for bike-share programs, sidewalks, recreational trails, landscaping, and historical renovations. Other beneficiaries of highway money are ferry boats, the federal lands access program, scenic byways, and education initiatives. These worthwhile enterprises should be funded through other sources.

We propose to phase out the federal transit program and reform provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act which can delay and drive up costs for transportation projects. We renew our call for repeal of the Davis-Bacon law, which limits employment and drives up construction and maintenance costs for the benefit of unions. Recognizing that, over time, additional revenue will be needed to expand the carrying capacity of roads and bridges,

we will remove legal roadblocks to public-private partnership agreements that can save the taxpayers’ money and bring outside investment to meet a community’s needs. With most of the states increasing their own funding for transportation, we oppose a further increase in the federal gas tax.

Although unionization has never been permitted in any government agency concerned with national security, the current Administration has reversed that policy for the Transportation Security Administration. We will correct that mistake. Americans understand that, with the threat of terrorism, their travel may encounter delays, but unacceptably long lines at security checks can have the same impact as a collapsed bridge or washed

out highway. TSA employees should always be seen as guardians of the public’s safety, not as just another part of the federal workforce.

Amtrak is an extremely expensive railroad for the American taxpayers, who must subsidize every ticket. The federal government should allow private ventures to provide passenger service in the northeast corridor. The same holds true with regard to high-speed and intercity rail across the country. We reaffirm our intention to end

federal support for boondoggles like California’s high-speed train to nowhere.

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We envision  
government at all  
levels as a partner  
with individuals  
and industries  
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progress, not a  
meddlesome monitor.

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### **Building the Future: Technology**

The digital revolution has transformed how we work, learn, sell, shop, socialize — in short, how we live. Technological change drives our positions with regard to STEM education, business and corporate involvement with educational certifications, workforce issues, privacy, cyber and national security, energy development, regulation, and other elements of our campaign for growth and jobs. It is why we propose to simplify the tax code, reduce corporate rates, transition to a territorial system, and create incentives for investment and innovation.

We envision government at all levels as a partner with individuals and industries in technologi-

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cal progress, not a meddling monitor. We want to create a business climate that rewards risk and promotes innovation, a learning system that gives Americans the skills needed to seize the opportunities of the 21st century, and an international order that maintains a fair and open global market for America's goods and services. We intend to advance policies that protect data privacy while fostering innovation and growth and ensuring the free flow of data across borders.

Together, broadband and good ideas have become the 21st century engines of American ingenuity. Innovation, by its nature, is disruptive. In challenging legacy forms of business, innovation creates new jobs, gives access to new markets, opens opportunity to underserved populations, and expands consumer choice. Government must give America's innovators the freedom to create and, on their merits, succeed or fail.

Our agenda includes balanced protections for intellectual property, explained elsewhere in this document. We intend to facilitate access to spectrum by paving the way for high-speed, next-generation broadband deployment and competition on the internet and for internet services. We want government to encourage the sharing economy and on-demand platforms to compete in an open market, and we believe public policies should encourage the innovation and competition that are essential for an Internet of Things to thrive.

Government must keep pace with the technology deployed in the private sector. There is an urgent need to modernize the federal government's legacy systems and to recruit the skilled technical personnel who can advance the adoption of innovation in the public sector. At the cost of billions, the current Administration has done little to advance our goal of universal broadband coverage. That hurts rural America, where farmers, ranchers, and small business people need connectivity to operate in real time with the world's producers. Almost ten million Americans have given up wired broadband connections in just the last two years alone, and millions more have never been connected in the first place.

We encourage public-private partnerships to provide predictable support for connecting rural

areas so that every American can fully participate in the global economy.

The public-private partnerships between NASA, the Department of Defense, and commercial companies have given us technological progress that has reduced the cost of accessing space and extended America's space leadership in the commercial, civil, and national security spheres. The entrepreneurship and innovation culture of the free market is revitalizing the nation's space capabilities, saving taxpayer money, and advancing technology critical to maintain America's edge in space and in other fields.

To protect our national security interests and foster innovation and competitiveness, we must sustain our preeminence in space by launching more scientific missions, guaranteeing unfettered access, and ensuring that our space-related industries remain a source of scientific leadership and education.

#### **Building the Future: America's Electric Grid**

Our nation's interstate electric transmission system has long been a catalyst for developing and delivering low cost energy while spurring economic growth throughout the United States. The grid is aging, vulnerable to cyber and terrorist threats, and unprepared to serve our energy needs of tomorrow. It should not take seven to ten years to plan and construct a transmission line. We support expedited siting processes and the thoughtful expansion of the grid so that consumers and businesses continue to have access to affordable and reliable electricity.

#### **Start-up Century: Small Business and Entrepreneurship**

A central reason why the 20th century came to be called the American Century was the ability of individuals to invent and create in a land of free markets. Back then they were called risk-takers, dreamers, and small business owners. Today they are the entrepreneurs, independent contractors, and small business men and women of our new economy. Their innovation drives improvement and forces long-established institutions to adapt or fade away. Many of them are so young they remember little if anything of the last century because dy-



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dynamic progress does not look back. As in the past, they still create most new jobs and form the commercial network that holds communities together. Their enterprise is the lifeblood of our economy, but it is weakening.

More businesses are closing in our country than are starting. Older firms are an increasing proportion of companies. Productivity growth has slowed. This is not the way to jumpstart a new era of growth. We need to consider the effect of capital gains rates on the availability of venture capital, as well as the positive impact of expensing on start-up firms.

We should reduce the occupational licensing laws that shut untold millions of potential workers out of entrepreneurial careers. We must overturn the regulatory nightmare, created by the Dodd-Frank law, for the community banks and savings and loans that provide nearly half of all small-business loans and over three-quarters of all agricultural loans. Indeed, the world of the app economy cries out for the comprehensive regulatory reform proposed elsewhere in this platform. We must challenge established interests and traditional business patterns to facilitate market entry of new business models, including inventive means of transport, delivery, and communication.

As incubators of unconventional thinking, our country's existing research infrastructure — the National Labs, the National Institutes of Health, NASA, and elements of the Defense Department — have the potential to form partnerships with small businesses to create an American Start-Up Century.

### **The Federal Reserve**

Because the Federal Reserve's monetary policy decisions affect job creation, upward mobility for workers, and equitable prosperity, they should be transparent. Similarly, the Federal Reserve's important role as a lender of last resort should also be carried out in a more transparent manner. The Republican Party will advance legislation that brings transparency and accountability to the Federal Reserve, the Federal Open Market Committee, and the Federal Reserve's dealing with foreign banks.

The first step is through an annual audit of the Federal Reserve's activities. Such an audit would need to be carefully implemented so that

the Federal Reserve remains insulated from political pressures and its decisions are based on sound economic principles and sound money rather than political pressures for easy money and loose credit.

Determined to crush the double-digit inflation that was part of the Carter Administration's economic legacy, President Reagan, shortly after his inauguration, established a commission to consider the feasibility of a metallic basis for U.S. currency. In 2012, facing the task of cleaning up the wreckage of the current Administration's policies, we proposed a similar commission to investigate ways to set a fixed value for the dollar.

With Republican leadership, the House of Representatives has passed legislation to set up just such a commission. We recommend its enactment by the full Congress and the commission's careful consideration of ways to secure the integrity of our currency.

### **Workplace Freedom for a 21st Century Workforce**

The greatest asset of the American economy is the hard-working American. That is why our first priority is getting people back to work by fostering the kind of growth that creates jobs. That overarching goal unites all the sections of this platform. It runs through our commitments on education and workforce development. It underlies our approach to welfare reform, regulatory reform, and our determination to advance the kind of trade agreements that multiply opportunities for workers here at home. It also impels us to challenge the anachronistic labor laws that limit workers' freedom and lock them into the workplace rules of their great-grandfathers.

Instead of facilitating change, the current Administration and its agents at the National Labor Relations Board are determined to reverse it. They are attacking the franchise model of business development, which is essential to the flexibility and creativity of the new economy. They are wielding provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act from the 1930s, designed to fit a manufacturing workplace, to deny flexibility to both employers and employees. They have repealed union transparency rules that allowed members to discover what was being

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done with their dues. They have outlawed alternatives to unions even when they were favored by the workers.

Their Project Labor Agreements discriminate against the overwhelming majority of workers by barring them from jobs on taxpayer-funded projects. Their patronizing and controlling approach leaves workers in a form of peonage to the NLRB. We intend to restore fairness and common sense to that agency.

Technology has already created jobs that did not exist fifteen years ago, and today's workers need flexibility and family-friendly options to make the most of them, especially portability in pension plans and health insurance.

We intend to encourage those trends by bringing labor law into the 21st century. It should encourage cooperation between management and workers, not conflict. All workers, including union members, must be free to accept raises and rewards without veto power from union officials. All unionized workers should be able to find out what is going on in their union trust funds and in their executive compensation. We support the right of states to enact Right-to-Work laws and call for a national law to protect the economic liberty of the modern workforce.

All Americans deserve the opportunity to pursue their American dream free from discrimination. Clear nondiscrimination policies ensure all employees have the chance to succeed based solely on their merits. These policies are vital to creating an inclusive, innovative, and competitive workforce.

Republicans believe that the employer-employee relationship of the future will be built upon employee empowerment and workplace flexibility. We therefore endorse employee stock ownership plans that enable workers to become capitalists, expand the realm of private property,

and energize a free enterprise economy.

Minimum wage is an issue that should be handled at the state and local level.

### **A Federal Workforce Serving the People**

The federal workforce is larger and more highly paid than ever. The taxpayers spend an average of \$35,000 a year per employee on non-cash benefits, triple the average non-cash compensation of the average worker in the private sector. Federal employees receive extraordinary pension benefits and vacation time wildly out of line with those of the private sector.

We urge Congress to bring federal compensation and benefits in line with the standards of most American employees. A Republican administration should streamline personnel procedures to expedite the firing of bad workers, tax cheats, and scammers. The unionization of the federal workforce, first permitted by Democrat presidents in the 1960s, should be reviewed by the appropriate congressional committees to examine its effects on the cost, quality, and performance of the civil service. Union representatives in the federal workforce should not be paid to conduct union business on the public's time.

### **Reducing the Federal Debt**

Our national debt is a burden on our economy and families. The huge increase in the national debt demanded by and incurred during the current Administration has placed a significant burden on future generations. We must impose firm caps on future debt, accelerate the repayment of the trillions we now owe in order to reaffirm our principles of responsible and limited government, and remove the burdens we are placing on future generations.

A strong economy is one key to debt reduction, but spending restraint is a necessary component that must be vigorously pursued.

# A Rebirth of Constitutional Government



## **We the People**

We are the party of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The Declaration sets forth the fundamental precepts of American government: That God bestows certain inalienable rights on every individual, thus producing human equality; that government exists first and foremost to protect those inalienable rights; that man-made law must be consistent with God-given, natural rights; and that if God-given, natural, inalienable rights come in conflict with government, court, or human-granted rights, God-given, natural, inalienable rights always prevail; that there is a moral law recognized as “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God”; and that American government is to operate with the consent of the governed. We are also the party of the Constitution, the greatest political document ever written. It is the solemn compact built upon principles of the Declaration that enshrines our God-given individual rights and ensures that all Americans stand equal before the law, defines the purposes and limits of government, and is the blueprint for ordered liberty that makes the United States the world’s freest and most prosperous nation.

We reaffirm the Constitution’s fundamental principles: limited government, separation of powers, individual liberty, and the rule of law. We denounce bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic prejudice, and religious intolerance. Therefore, we oppose discrimination based on race, sex, religion, creed, disability, or national origin and support statutes to end such discrimination. As the Party of Abraham Lincoln, we must continue to foster solutions to America’s difficult challenges when it comes to race relations today. We continue to encourage equality for all citizens and access to the American Dream. Merit and hard work should determine advancement in our society, so we reject unfair preferences, quotas, and set-asides as forms

of discrimination. Our ranks include Americans from every faith and tradition, and we respect the right of each American to follow his or her deeply held beliefs.

Our Constitution is in crisis. More than 90 percent of federal requirements are now imposed by regulatory agencies, without any vote of the House or Senate or signature of the President. The current Administration has exceeded its constitutional authority, brazenly and flagrantly violated the separation of powers, sought to divide America into groups and turn citizen against citizen. The President has refused to defend or enforce laws he does not like, used executive orders to enact national policies in areas constitutionally reserved solely to Congress, made unconstitutional “recess” appointments to Senate-confirmed positions, directed regulatory agencies to overstep their statutory authority, and failed to consult Congress regarding military action overseas. He has changed what John Adams called “a government of laws and not of men” into just the opposite.

Democrats in Congress have enabled, supported, and defended each of these breaches. They have applauded the President’s efforts to do an end-run around Congress and stymied Republican efforts to restrain executive lawlessness. Democrats in Congress have also endorsed an anti-constitutional agenda of their own. Forty-eight Democratic senators, for instance, voted to amend the Bill of Rights to give government officials control over political speech. Democrats in Congress have likewise proposed bills that would limit religious liberty, undermine property rights, and eviscerate the Second Amendment.

In a free society, the primary role of government is to protect the God-given, inalienable rights of its citizens. These constitutional rights are not negotiable for any American. We affirm that all legislation, regulation, and official actions must

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conform to the Constitution's original meaning as understood at the time the language was adopted.

Our most urgent task as a Party is to restore the American people's faith in their government by electing a president who will enforce duly enacted laws, honor constitutional limits on executive authority, and return credibility to the Oval Office. We need a Republican president who will end abuses of power by departments and agencies, like the IRS and the EPA, and by the White House itself. Safeguarding our liberties requires a president who will respect the Constitution's separation of powers, including the authority of Congress to write legislation and define agency authority. Americans also deserve a president who will speak for our nation's history and values, not apologize for them to our enemies.

### **The Judiciary**

The rule of law is the foundation of our Republic. A critical threat to our country's constitutional order is an activist judiciary that usurps powers properly reserved to the people through other branches of government. Only a Republican president will appoint judges who respect the rule of law expressed within the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, including the inalienable right to life and the laws of nature and nature's God, as did the late Justice Antonin Scalia. We are facing a national crisis in our judiciary. We understand that only by electing a Republican president in 2016 will America have the opportunity for up to five new constitutionally-minded Supreme Court justices appointed to fill vacancies on the Court. Only such appointments will enable courts to begin to reverse the long line of activist decisions — including *Roe*, *Obergefell*, and the Obamacare cases — that have usurped Congress's and states' lawmaking authority, undermined constitutional protections, expanded the power of the judiciary at the expense of the people and their elected representatives, and stripped the people of their power to govern themselves. We believe in the constitutional checks and balances and that the Founders intended the judiciary to be the weakest branch. We encourage Congress to use the check of impeachment for judges who unconstitutionally usurp Article I

powers. In tandem with a Republican Senate, a new Republican president will restore to the Court a strong conservative majority that will follow the text and original meaning of the Constitution and our laws.

The legitimate powers of government are rooted in the consent of the American people. Judicial activism that includes reliance on foreign law or unratified treaties undermines American sovereignty. Foreign laws and precedents should not be used to interpret our Constitution or laws, nor should foreign sources of law be used in state courts' adjudication of criminal or civil matters.

We also affirm the wisdom of President George Washington's warning to avoid foreign entanglements and unnecessary alliances. We therefore oppose the adoption or ratification of treaties that would weaken or encroach upon American sovereignty or that could be construed by courts to do so. We will not recognize as binding upon the United States any international agreement forged without the constitutionally required assent of two-thirds of the United States Senate.

### **Administrative Law**

Article I of the Constitution directs that "All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States..." For more than a century, however, Congress has delegated increasing amounts of legislative authority to executive departments, agencies, and commissions, laying the foundation for today's vast administrative state. Unelected bureaucrats in the executive branch now write countless rules with the force of law and arbitrarily punish individuals who disobey those rules. The Constitution makes clear that these powers were granted to Congress by the people and must therefore remain solely with the people's elected representatives. We call on Congress to begin reclaiming its constitutional powers from the bureaucratic state by requiring that major new federal regulations be approved by Congress before they can take effect, such as through the Regulation Freedom Amendment. We further affirm that courts should interpret laws as written by Congress rather than allowing executive agencies to rewrite those laws to suit administration priorities.

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### **Defending Marriage Against an Activist Judiciary**

Traditional marriage and family, based on marriage between one man and one woman, is the foundation for a free society and has for millennia been entrusted with rearing children and instilling cultural values. We condemn the Supreme Court's ruling in *United States v. Windsor*, which wrongly removed the ability of Congress to define marriage policy in federal law. We also condemn the Supreme Court's lawless ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which in the words of the late Justice Antonin Scalia, was a "judicial Putsch" — full of "silly extravagances" — that reduced "the disciplined legal reasoning of John Marshall and Joseph Storey to the mystical aphorisms of a fortune cookie." In *Obergefell*, five unelected lawyers robbed 320 million Americans of their legitimate constitutional authority to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The Court twisted the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment beyond recognition. To echo Scalia, we dissent. We, therefore, support the appointment of justices and judges who respect the constitutional limits on their power and respect the authority of the states to decide such fundamental social questions.

### **The First Amendment: Religious Liberty**

The Bill of Rights lists religious liberty, with its rights of conscience, as the first freedom to be protected. Religious freedom in the Bill of Rights protects the right of the people to practice their faith in their everyday lives. As George Washington taught, "religion and morality are indispensable supports" to a free society. Similarly, Thomas Jefferson declared that "No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority." Ongoing attempts to compel individuals, businesses, and institutions of faith to transgress their beliefs are part of a

misguided effort to undermine religion and drive it from the public square. As a result, many charitable religious institutions that have demonstrated great success in helping the needy have been barred from receiving government grants and contracts. Government officials threaten religious colleges and universities with massive fines and

seek to control their personnel decisions. Places of worship for the first time in our history have reason to fear the loss of tax-exempt status merely for espousing and practicing traditional religious beliefs that have been held across the world for thousands of years, and for almost four centuries in America. We value the right of America's religious leaders to preach, and Americans to speak freely, according to their faith. Republicans believe the federal government, specifically the IRS, is constitutionally prohibited from policing or

censoring speech based on religious convictions or beliefs, and therefore we urge the repeal of the Johnson Amendment.

We pledge to defend the religious beliefs and rights of conscience of all Americans and to safeguard religious institutions against government control. We endorse the First Amendment Defense Act, Republican legislation in the House and Senate which will bar government discrimination against individuals and businesses for acting on the belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. This Act would protect the non-profit tax status of faith-based adoption agencies, the accreditation of religious educational institutions, the grants and contracts of faith-based charities and small businesses, and the licensing of religious professions — all of which are under assault by elements of the Democratic Party. We encourage every state to pass similar legislation. We likewise endorse the efforts of Republican state legislators and governors who have defied intimidation from corporations and the media in defending religious liberty. We support laws to confirm the longstanding

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American tradition that religious individuals and institutions can educate young people, receive government benefits, and participate in public debates without having to check their religious beliefs at the door.

Our First Amendment rights are not given to us by the government but are rights we inherently possess. The government cannot use subsequent amendments to limit First Amendment rights. The Free Exercise Clause is both an individual and a collective liberty protecting a right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. Therefore, we strongly support the freedom of Americans to act in accordance with their religious beliefs, not only in their houses of worship, but also in their everyday lives.

We support the right of the people to conduct their businesses in accordance with their religious beliefs and condemn public officials who have proposed boycotts against businesses that support traditional marriage. We pledge to protect those business owners who have been subjected to hate campaigns, threats of violence, and other attempts to deny their civil rights.

We support the public display of the Ten Commandments as a reflection of our history and our country's Judeo-Christian heritage and further affirm the rights of religious students to engage in voluntary prayer at public school events and to have equal access to school facilities. We assert the First Amendment right of freedom of association for religious, private, service, and youth organizations to set their own membership standards.

**The First Amendment:  
Constitutionally Protected Speech**

The rights of citizenship do not stop at the ballot box. Freedom of speech includes the right to devote resources to whatever cause or candidate one supports. We oppose any restrictions or conditions that would discourage citizens from participating in the public square or limit their ability to promote their ideas, such as requiring private organizations to publicly disclose their donors to the government. Limits on political speech serve only to protect the powerful and insulate incumbent officeholders. We support repeal of federal restrictions on political

parties in McCain-Feingold, raising or repealing contribution limits, protecting the political speech of advocacy groups, corporations, and labor unions, and protecting political speech on the internet. We likewise call for an end to the so-called Fairness Doctrine, and support free-market approaches to free speech unregulated by government.

We believe the forced funding of political candidates through union dues and other mandatory contributions violates the First Amendment. Just as Americans have a First Amendment right to devote resources to favored candidates or views, they have a First Amendment right not to be forced to individually support individuals or ideologies that they oppose. We agree with Thomas Jefferson that "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical."

**The Second Amendment:  
Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms**

We uphold the right of individuals to keep and bear arms, a natural inalienable right that predates the Constitution and is secured by the Second Amendment. Lawful gun ownership enables Americans to exercise their God-given right of self-defense for the safety of their homes, their loved ones, and their communities.

We salute the Republican Congress for defending the right to keep and bear arms by preventing the President from installing a new liberal majority on the Supreme Court. The confirmation to the Court of additional anti-gun justices would eviscerate the Second Amendment's fundamental protections. Already, local officials in the nation's capital and elsewhere are defying the Court's decisions upholding an individual right to bear arms as affirmed by the Supreme Court in *Heller* and *McDonald*. We support firearm reciprocity legislation to recognize the right of law-abiding Americans to carry firearms to protect themselves and their families in all 50 states. We support constitutional carry statutes and salute the states that have passed them. We oppose ill-conceived laws that would restrict magazine capacity or ban the sale of the most popular and common modern rifle. We also oppose any effort to deprive

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individuals of their right to keep and bear arms without due process of law.

We condemn frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers and the current Administration's illegal harassment of firearm dealers. We oppose federal licensing or registration of law-abiding gun owners, registration of ammunition, and restoration of the ill-fated Clinton gun ban. We call for a thorough investigation — by a new Republican administration — of the deadly "Fast and Furious" operation perpetrated by Department of Justice officials who approved and allowed illegal sales of guns to known violent criminals.

**The Fourth Amendment:  
Liberty and Privacy**

Affirming the Fourth Amendment "right of the people to be secure in their houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures," we call for strict limitations on the use of aerial surveillance on U.S. soil, with the exception of patrolling our national borders for illegal entry and activity. We oppose any attempts by government to require surveillance devices in our daily lives, including tracking devices in motor vehicles.

In recent years, technology companies have responded to market demand for products and services that protect the privacy of customers through increasingly sophisticated encryption technology. These increased privacy protections have become crucial to the digital economy. At the same time, however, such innovations have brought new dangers, especially from criminals and terrorists who seek to use encryption technology to harm us. No matter the medium, citizens must retain the right to communicate with one another free from unlawful government intrusion. It will not be easy to balance privacy rights with the government's legitimate need to access encrypted information. This issue is too important to be left to the courts. A Republican president and a Republican Congress must listen to the American people and forge a consensus solution.

The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and the Foreign Bank and Asset Reporting Requirements result in government's warrantless seizure of personal financial information without

reasonable suspicion or probable cause. Americans overseas should enjoy the same rights as Americans residing in the United States, whose private financial information is not subject to disclosure to the government except as to interest earned. The requirement for all banks around the world to provide detailed information to the IRS about American account holders outside the United States has resulted in banks refusing service to them. Thus, FATCA not only allows "unreasonable search and seizures" but also threatens the ability of overseas Americans to lead normal lives. We call for its repeal and for a change to residency-based taxation for U.S. citizens overseas.

**The Fifth Amendment:  
Protecting Human Life**

The Constitution's guarantee that no one can "be deprived of life, liberty or property" deliberately echoes the Declaration of Independence's proclamation that "all" are "endowed by their Creator" with the inalienable right to life. Accordingly, we assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to children before birth.

We oppose the use of public funds to perform or promote abortion or to fund organizations, like Planned Parenthood, so long as they provide or refer for elective abortions or sell fetal body parts rather than provide healthcare. We urge all states and Congress to make it a crime to acquire, transfer, or sell fetal tissues from elective abortions for research, and we call on Congress to enact a ban on any sale of fetal body parts. In the meantime, we call on Congress to ban the practice of misleading women on so-called fetal harvesting consent forms, a fact revealed by a 2015 investigation. We will not fund or subsidize healthcare that includes abortion coverage.

We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We oppose the non-consensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment,

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including food and water, from individuals with disabilities, newborns, the elderly, or the infirm, just as we oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide.

We affirm our moral obligation to assist, rather than penalize, women who face an unplanned pregnancy. In order to encourage women who face an unplanned pregnancy to choose life, we support legislation that requires financial responsibility for the child be equally borne by both the mother and father upon conception until the child reaches adulthood. Failure to require a father to be equally responsible for a child places an inequitable burden on the mother, creating a financial and

social hardship on both mother and child. We celebrate the millions of Americans who open their hearts, homes, and churches to mothers in need and women fleeing abuse. We thank and encourage providers of counseling, medical services, and adoption assistance for empowering women experiencing an unintended pregnancy to choose life. We support funding for ultrasounds and adoption assistance. We salute the many states that now protect women and girls through laws requiring informed consent, parental consent, waiting periods, and clinic regulation. We condemn the Supreme Court's activist decision in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* striking down commonsense Texas laws providing for basic health and safety standards in abortion clinics.

We applaud the U.S. House of Representatives for leading the effort to add enforcement to the Born-Alive Infant Protection Act by passing the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which imposes appropriate civil and criminal penalties on healthcare providers who fail to provide treatment and care to an infant who survives an abortion, including early induction delivery whether the death of the infant is intended. We strongly oppose infanticide. Over a dozen states have passed Pain-

Capable Unborn Child Protection Acts prohibiting abortion after twenty weeks, the point at which current medical research shows that unborn babies can feel excruciating pain during abortions, and we call on Congress to enact the federal version. Not only is it good legislation, but it enjoys the support of a majority of the American people. We support state and federal efforts against the cruelest forms of abortion, especially dismemberment abortion procedures, in which unborn babies are literally torn apart limb from limb.

We call on Congress to ban sex-selection abortions and abortions based on disabilities — discrimination in its most lethal form. We oppose embryonic stem cell research. We oppose federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. We support adult stem cell research and urge the restoration of the national placental stem cell bank created by President George H.W. Bush but abolished by his Democrat successor, President Bill Clinton. We oppose federal funding for harvesting embryos and call for a ban on human cloning.

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out of step with the American people. Because of their opposition to simple abortion clinic safety procedures, support for taxpayer-funded abortion, and rejection of pregnancy resource centers that provide abortion alternatives, the old Clinton mantra of "safe, legal, and rare" has been reduced to just "legal." We are proud to be the party that protects human life and offers real solutions for women.

**The Fifth Amendment:  
Protecting Private Property**

The Framers of our government knew, from history and experience, that when private property is not secure, freedom is at risk. That is why the Fifth



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Amendment declares that private property may not be “taken for public use without just compensation.” The Supreme Court’s *Kelo* decision undermined this safeguard by allowing local governments to seize a person’s home or land not only for vital public use, but also for “public purpose,” which thus allowed the government to seize it for transfer to private developers or other private entities. We call on any state legislatures that have not already done so to nullify the impact of *Kelo* within their jurisdiction by legislation or state constitutional amendments declaring that private property may be taken only for true public use, and we join House Republicans in supporting the Private Property Rights Protection Act.

The government at every level must always pay just compensation whenever it takes private property to achieve a compelling public use, with the money coming from the budget of the agency performing the taking. This includes the taking of water rights and the taking of property by environmental regulations that destroy or diminish the property’s value.

Civil asset forfeiture was originally intended as a way to cripple organized crime through the seizure of property used in a criminal enterprise. Regrettably, it has become a tool for unscrupulous law enforcement officials, acting without due process, to profit by destroying the livelihood of innocent individuals, many of whom never recover the lawful assets taken from them. When the rights of the innocent can be so easily violated, no one’s rights are safe. We call on Congress and state legislatures to enact reforms to protect law-abiding citizens against abusive asset forfeiture tactics.

**The Fifth Amendment:  
Intellectual Property Rights**

Private property includes not only physical property such as lands and homes, but also intellectual property like books and patents. Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the power to safeguard intellectual property rights for “Authors and Inventors.” By protecting the proprietary rights of creators and innovators, the Constitution promotes the general welfare by providing incentives for investment in all sorts of technology and artistic works. Intellectual property

is a driving force in today’s global economy of constant innovation. It is the wellspring of American economic growth and job creation. With the rise of the digital economy, it has become even more critical that we protect intellectual property rights and preserve freedom of contract rather than create regulatory barriers to creativity, growth, and innovation.

Protecting intellectual property is also a national security issue. We must guard against counterfeit parts that can compromise the reliability of our weapons systems and the safety of military personnel. Today, the worst offenses against intellectual property rights come from abroad, especially in China. We call for strong action by Congress and a new Republican president to enforce intellectual property laws against all infringers, whether foreign or domestic.

**The Ninth Amendment:  
The People’s Retained Rights**

The Ninth Amendment to the Constitution declares that “[t]he enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” This provision codifies the principle that our national government derives its power from the governed and that all powers not delegated to the government are retained by the people. We call upon legislators to give full force to this fundamental principle. We welcome to our ranks all citizens who are determined to reclaim the rights of the people that have been ignored or usurped by the federal and intrusive state governments.

**The Tenth Amendment: Federalism  
as the Foundation of Personal Liberty**

Federalism is a cornerstone of our constitutional system. Every violation of state sovereignty by federal officials is not merely a transgression of one unit of government against another; it is an assault on the liberties of individual Americans. Hence the promise of the Tenth Amendment: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” The Constitution gives the federal government very few powers, and they are specifically enumerated;

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the states and the people retain authority over all unenumerated powers. In obedience to that principle, we condemn the current Administration's unconstitutional expansion into areas beyond those specifically enumerated, including bullying of state and local governments in matters ranging from voter identification (ID) laws to immigration, from healthcare programs to land use decisions, and from forced education curricula to school restroom policies. We pledge to restore the proper balance and vertical separation of powers between the federal government and state governments — the governments closest to, and most reflective of, the American people. We encourage states to reinvigorate their traditional role as the laboratories of democracy, propelling the nation forward through local and state innovation.

Big government undermines federalism through more than 1,100 grants-in-aid programs that consume more than one-sixth of the federal budget for matters that should be the exclusive responsibility of the states. Through these programs, money originating from state taxpayers is returned to the states, usually greatly reduced, with myriad strings attached. These grants turn state and local elected officials into agents of the federal government. The web of conditions and regulations — especially the requirement of matching funds that comes with federal grants — transforms recipients into appendages of the Washington bureaucracy. We call upon Congress to help a Republican president to reduce and ultimately eliminate this system of conditioned grants so that state and local taxpayers can decide for themselves what is best for their own communities.

### **Honest Elections and the Electoral College**

We oppose the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact and any other scheme to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College. An unconstitutional effort to impose National Popular Vote would be a grave threat to our federal system and a guarantee of corruption, as every ballot box in every state would offer a chance to steal the

presidency. We urge state legislatures that have voted for this proposal to rescind their approval.

### **Honest Elections and the Right to Vote**

Honest elections are the foundation of representative government. We pledge to protect the voting rights of every citizen, as well as their rights of conscience when they are harassed or denied a job because of their contributions to a candidate or a cause. We support state efforts to ensure ballot access for the elderly, the handicapped, military personnel, and all legitimate voters. We urge state and local officials to take all appropriate steps to allow voters to cast their ballots in a timely manner. We are concerned, however, that some voting procedures may be open to abuse. For this reason, we support legislation to require proof of citizenship when registering to vote and secure photo ID when voting. We strongly oppose litigation against states exercising their sovereign authority to enact such laws. In addition, to guarantee that everyone's vote is counted, we urge that electronic voting systems have a voter-verified paper audit trail. We urge every state to join the Interstate Voter Registration Cross Check Program to keep voter rolls accurate and to prevent people from voting in more than one state in the same election. To guard against foreign involvement in our elections, we call for vigilance regarding online credit card contributions to candidates and campaigns.

The members of our Armed Forces must not be denied the basic rights that they are defending for others. Our troops, wherever stationed, must be allowed to vote in a timely manner. We call upon the entire military chain of command to ensure the voting rights of our citizen soldiers.

The Constitution gives Congress authority to conduct the decennial census "in such Manner as they shall by Law direct." In order to preserve the principle of one person, one vote, we urge our elected representatives to ensure that citizenship, rather than mere residency, be made the basis for the apportionment of representatives among the states.

# America's Natural Resources: Agriculture, Energy, and the Environment



We are the party of America's growers, producers, farmers, ranchers, foresters, miners, commercial fishermen, and all those who bring from the earth the crops, minerals, energy, and the bounties of our seas that are the lifeblood of our economy. Their labor and ingenuity, their determination in bad times and love of the land at all times, powers our economy, creates millions of jobs, and feeds billions of people around the world. Only a few years ago, a bipartisan consensus in government valued the role of extractive industries and rewarded their enterprise by minimizing its interference with their work. That has radically changed. We look in vain within the Democratic Party for leaders who will speak for the people of agriculture, energy and mineral production.

## **Abundant Harvests**

Agricultural production and exports are central to the Republican agenda for jobs, growth, expanded trade, and prosperity. Because our farmers and ranchers care for the land, the United States does not depend on foreign imports for sustenance. Americans spend a smaller percentage of their income on food than any other nation. On average, one American farm produces enough food to feed 155 people. No other nation has been as generous with food aid to the needy. We have good reason to celebrate our domestic security in food.

We are the largest agricultural exporter in the world, and our exports are vital for other sectors of our economy. Those exports drive additional economic growth as each dollar of agricultural exports generates another \$1.27 in business activity. That is why we remain committed to expanding trade opportunities and opening new markets for agriculture. Under a Republican president, America's trade negotiators will insist that our global trading partners adhere to science-based standards with

regard to food and health regulations. We will not tolerate the use of bogus science and scare tactics to bar our products from foreign markets, nor will we allow insufficient health and safety standards for products imported for our consumption.

We must also ensure that domestic policies do not compromise our global competitiveness through overregulation and undue interference in the marketplace. There is growing recognition that federal dairy policies, crafted during the Great Depression, are increasingly an impediment to the ability of our dairy producers to meet the expected doubling in global demand coming by 2030. We oppose the policies pushed by special interest groups seeking to stop or make more expensive our current system of safe, efficient, and humane production of meat. Congress has repeatedly had to block the current Administration's draconian rules concerning the marketing of poultry and livestock. This regulatory impulse must be curbed, not on a case-by-case basis, but through a fundamental restructuring of the regulatory process. In the meantime, the intrusive and expensive federal mandates on food options and menu labeling should be ended as soon as possible by a Republican Congress. We oppose the mandatory labeling of genetically modified food, which has proven to be safe, healthy, and a literal life-saver for millions in the developing world.

The Democratic Administration's sustained support for additional regulation of agriculture has directly resulted in higher costs of production for those who produce the food we eat. This federal regulatory overreach has resulted and will continue to result in higher food prices for Americans. These higher food costs are particularly challenging for those Americans struggling to make ends meet.

Like the rest of the economy, agriculture has suffered through eight years of the Democrats'

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regulatory juggernaut, particularly from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). States, not Washington bureaucrats, are best equipped to engage farmers and ranchers to develop sound farm oversight policies. The EPA's Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule, issued jointly with the Army Corps of Engineers, is a travesty. It extends the government's jurisdiction over navigable waters into the micro-management of puddles and ditches on farms, ranches, and other privately-held property. Ditches, dry creek beds, stock ponds, prairie potholes, and other non-navigable wet areas are already regulated by the states. WOTUS is now subject to judicial review and must be invalidated, but that will not be sufficient. Unelected bureaucrats must be stopped from furthering the Democratic Party's political agenda through regulatory demands forced upon citizens and businesses beyond that which is required by law. We must never allow federal agencies to seize control of state waters, watersheds, or groundwater. State waters, watersheds, and groundwater must be the purview of the sovereign states.

Farmers and ranchers are among this country's leading conservationists. Modern farm practices and technologies, supported by programs from the Department of Agriculture, have led to reduced erosion, improved water and air quality, increased wildlife habitat, all the while maintaining improved agricultural yields. This stewardship of the land benefits everyone, and we remain committed to conservation policies based on the preservation, not the restriction, of working lands. For this reason, ranching on public lands must be fostered, developed, and encouraged. This includes providing for an abundant water supply for America's farmers, ranchers, and their communities.

Farming and ranching remain high-risk endeavors, and they cannot be isolated from market forces. No segment of agriculture can expect treatment so favorable that it seriously disadvantages workers in other trades. Federal programs to assist farmers in managing risk must be as cost-effective as they are functional, offering tools that can improve producers' ability to operate when times are tough while remaining affordable to the taxpayers. Even so, the expansion of agricultural exports through the vigorous opening of new

markets around the world is the surest path to farm security.

While uncertainty about natural weather and markets is a risk farmers and ranchers always face, government should not add to their uncertainty by inaction and delay. Thanks in large part to a lack of leadership from the current Administration and congressional Democrats, the last Farm Bill took far too long to enact, creating instability about farm policy for nearly two years. Republicans are dedicated to leading this country forward, which includes getting things done on time, including the next Farm Bill.

The Democrats play politics with farm security. Much of the Democrats' delay had nothing to do with the vital role of American agriculture. It concerned their efforts to expand welfare through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which now comprises more than 70 percent of all farm bill spending. During the last eight years of a Democratic Administration, nearly all the work requirements for able-bodied adults, instituted by our landmark welfare reform of 1996, have been removed. We will restore those provisions and, to correct a mistake made when the Food Stamp program was first created in 1964, separate the administration of SNAP from the Department of Agriculture.

Like all other sectors of our society, agriculture is directly impacted by the constant advance in technology. Agriculture now faces a revolution in the generation of "Big Data" — information produced not only through public oversight of regulations and programs, but also from private business records of farming and ranching operations. In the interest of protecting the safety of our farmers and ranchers, we will advance policies to protect the security, privacy, and most of all, the private ownership of individual farmers' and ranchers' data.

The U. S. Forest Service, within the Department of Agriculture, controls around 200 million acres of land with enormous natural resources, especially timber, a renewable resource providing jobs for thousands of workers that should be used to the best economic potential for the nation. Many of our national forests are in worsening health with the threat of invasive species, insect mortality, and the severe risk of wildfire. The increase in

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catastrophic wildfires has been needlessly killing millions of animals and destroying homes and watersheds for decades in the western states. The expense to suppress wildfires related to failed federal forest policies continues to increase. When timber is managed properly, the renewable crops will result in fewer wildfires and, at the same time, produce jobs in the timber industry for countless families. We believe in promoting active, sustainable management of our forests and that states can best manage our forests to improve forest health and keep communities safe.

### **A New Era in Energy**

Our country has greater energy resources than any other place on earth. Our engineers and miners, the men and women whose labor taps the forces of nature, are the best in the world. Together, the people of America's energy sector provide us with power that is clean, affordable, secure, and abundant. Their work can guarantee the nation's energy security for centuries to come if, instead of erecting roadblocks, government facilitates the creation of an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

We applaud congressional Republicans for doing just that through far-sighted legislation.

Both Houses have passed bills that will modernize pipelines and the electric grid, protect the grid from disruption, expedite energy exports, and lower energy costs. A Republican administration will build on those policies to find new ways to store electricity, a breakthrough of extraordinary import.

Planning for our energy future requires us to first determine what resources we have in reserve. Thirty years ago, the world's estimated reserves of oil were 645 billion barrels. Today, that figure is 1.65 trillion barrels. The more we know what we will have in the future, the better we can decide how to use it. That is why we support the opening of public lands and the outer continental shelf to exploration and responsible production, even if these resources will

not be immediately developed. Because we believe states can best promote economic growth while protecting the environment, Congress should give authority to state regulators to manage energy resources on federally controlled public lands within their respective borders.

The Democratic Party's energy policy can be summed up in a slogan currently popular among its activists: "keep it in the ground." Keeping energy in the earth will keep jobs out of reach of those who need them most. For low-income Americans, expensive energy means colder homes in the winter and hotter homes in the summer, less mobility in employment, and higher food prices. The current Administration, and particularly its EPA, seems

not to care. Its Clean Power Plan — the centerpiece of the President's war on coal — has been stayed by the Supreme Court. We will do away with it altogether. The Democratic Party does not understand that coal is an abundant, clean, affordable, reliable domestic energy resource. Those who mine it and their families should be protected from the Democratic Party's radical anti-coal agenda.

The Democratic Party's campaign to smother the U.S. energy industry takes many forms, but the permitting

process may be its most damaging weapon. It takes an average of 30 days for states to permit an oil or gas well. It takes the federal government longer than seven months. Three decades ago, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) leased 12.2 million acres. In 2014, it leased only one-tenth of that number. Our nuclear industry, cleanly generating almost 20 percent of our electricity from its 99 plants, has a remarkable safety record, but only a handful of plants have been permitted in over three decades. Permitting for a safe, non-polluting hydroelectric facility, even one that is being relicensed, can take many years because of the current President's hostility to dams. The Keystone Pipeline has become a symbol of everything wrong with the

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Our country has greater energy resources than any other place on earth. Our engineers and miners, the men and women whose labor taps the forces of nature, are the best in the world.

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current Administration's ideological approach. After years of delay, the President killed it to satisfy environmental extremists. We intend to finish that pipeline and others as part of our commitment to North American energy security.

Government should not play favorites among energy producers. The taxpayers will not soon forget the current Administration's subsidies to companies that went bankrupt without producing a kilowatt of energy. The same Administration now requires the Department of Defense, operating with slashed budgets during a time of expanding conflict, to use its scarce resources to generate 25 percent of its electricity from renewables by 2025. Climate change is far from this nation's most pressing national security issue. This is the triumph of extremism over common sense, and Congress must stop it.

We support the development of all forms of energy that are marketable in a free economy without subsidies, including coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear power, and hydropower. A federal judge has struck down the BLM's rule on hydraulic fracturing and we support upholding this decision. We respect the states' proven ability to regulate the use of hydraulic fracturing, methane emissions, and horizontal drilling, and we will end the Administration's disregard of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act with respect to the long-term storage of nuclear waste. We encourage the cost-effective development of renewable energy sources — wind, solar, biomass, biofuel, geothermal, and tidal energy — by private capital. The United States is overwhelmingly dependent on China and other nations for rare earth and other hardrock minerals. These minerals are critical to advanced technology, renewable energy, and defense manufacturing. We support expediting the permitting process for mineral production on public lands. We support lifting restrictions to allow responsible development of nuclear energy, including research into alternative processes like thorium nuclear energy.

We oppose any carbon tax. It would increase energy prices across the board, hitting hardest at the families who are already struggling to pay their bills in the Democrats' no-growth economy. We urge the private sector to focus its resources on the development of carbon capture and sequestration technology still in its early stages here and overseas.

American energy producers should be free to export their product to foreign markets. This is particularly important because of international demand for liquefied natural gas, and we must expedite the energy export terminals currently blocked by the Administration. Energy exports will create high paying jobs throughout the United States, reduce our nation's trade deficit, grow our economy, and boost the energy security of our allies and trading partners. We remain committed to aggressively expanding trade opportunities and opening new markets for American energy through multilateral and bilateral agreements, whether current, pending, or negotiated in the future.

Energy is both an economic and national security issue. We support the enactment of policies to increase domestic energy production, including production on public lands, to counter market manipulation by OPEC and other nationally-owned oil companies. This will reduce America's vulnerability to energy price volatility.

### **Environmental Progress**

Conservation is inherent in conservatism. As the pioneer of environmentalism a century ago, the Republican Party reaffirms the moral obligation to be good stewards of the God-given natural beauty and resources of our country. We believe that people are the most valuable resources and that human health and safety are the proper measurements of a policy's success. We assert that private ownership has been the best guarantee of conscientious stewardship, while some of the worst instances of degradation have occurred under government

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We support the development of all forms of energy that are marketable in a free economy without subsidies, including coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear power, and hydropower.

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control. Poverty, not wealth, is the gravest threat to the environment, while steady economic growth brings the technological advances which make environmental progress possible.

The environment is too important to be left to radical environmentalists. They are using yesterday's tools to control a future they do not comprehend. The environmental establishment has become a self-serving elite, stuck in the mindset of the 1970s, subordinating the public's consensus to the goals of the Democratic Party. Their approach is based on shoddy science, scare tactics, and centralized command-and-control regulation. Over the last eight years, the Administration has triggered an avalanche of regulation that wrecks havoc across our economy and yields minimal environmental benefits.

The central fact of any sensible environmental policy is that, year by year, the environment is improving. Our air and waterways are much healthier than they were a few decades ago. As a nation, we have drastically reduced pollution, mainstreamed recycling, educated the public, and avoided ecological degradation. Even if no additional controls are added, air pollution will continue to decline for the next several decades due to technological turnover of aging equipment. These successes become a challenge for Democratic Party environmental extremists, who must reach farther and demand more to sustain the illusion of an environmental crisis. That is why they routinely ignore costs, exaggerate benefits, and advocate the breaching of constitutional boundaries by federal agencies to impose environmental regulation. At the same time, the environmental establishment looks the other way when environmental degradation is caused by the EPA and other federal agencies as was the case during the Animas River spill.

Our agenda is high on job creation, expanding opportunity and providing a better chance at life for everyone willing to work for it. Our modern approach to environmentalism is directed to that end, and it starts with dramatic change in official Washington. We propose to shift responsibility for environmental regulation from the federal bureaucracy to the states and to transform the EPA into an independent bipartisan commission, similar to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, with

structural safeguards against politicized science. We will strictly limit congressional delegation of rule-making authority, and require that citizens be compensated for regulatory takings.

We will put an end to the legal practice known as "sue and settle," in which environmental groups sue federal agencies whose officials are complicit in the litigation so that, with the taxpayers excluded, both parties can reach agreement behind closed doors. That deceit betrays the public's trust; it will no longer be tolerated. We will also reform the Equal Access to Justice Act to cap and disclose payments made to environmental activists and return the Act to its original intent.

We will enforce the original intent of the Clean Water Act, not its distortion by EPA regulations. We will likewise forbid the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide, something never envisioned when Congress passed the Clean Air Act. We will restore to Congress the authority to set the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and modernize the permitting process under the National Environmental Policy Act so it can no longer invite frivolous lawsuits, thwart sorely needed projects, kill jobs, and strangle growth.

The federal government owns or controls over 640 million acres of land in the United States, most of which is in the West. These are public lands, and the public should have access to them for appropriate activities like hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting. Federal ownership or management of land also places an economic burden on counties and local communities in terms of lost revenue to pay for things such as schools, police, and emergency services. It is absurd to think that all that acreage must remain under the absentee ownership or management of official Washington. Congress shall immediately pass universal legislation providing for a timely and orderly mechanism requiring the federal government to convey certain federally controlled public lands to states. We call upon all national and state leaders and representatives to exert their utmost power and influence to urge the transfer of those lands, identified in the review process, to all willing states for the benefit of the states and the nation as a whole. The residents of state and local communities know best how to protect the land where they work and live. They practice boots-on-

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the-ground conservation in their states every day. We support amending the Antiquities Act of 1906 to establish Congress' right to approve the designation of national monuments and to further require the approval of the state where a national monument is designated or a national park is proposed.

There is certainly a need to protect certain species threatened worldwide with extinction. However, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) should not include species such as gray wolves and other species if these species exist elsewhere in healthy numbers in another state or country. To upset the economic viability of an area with an unneeded designation costs jobs and hurts local communities. We must ensure that this protection is done effectively, reasonably, and without unnecessarily impeding the development of lands and natural resources. The ESA should ensure that the listing of endangered species and the designation of critical habitats are based upon sound science and balance the protection of endangered species with the costs of compliance and the rights of property owners. Instead, over the last few decades, the ESA has stunted economic development, halted the construction of projects, burdened landowners, and has been used to pursue policy goals inconsistent with the ESA — all with little to no success in the actual recovery of species. For example, we oppose the listing of the lesser prairie chicken and the potential listing of the sage grouse. Neither species has been shown to be in actual danger and the listings threaten to devastate farmers, ranchers, and oil and gas production. While species threatened with extinction must be protected under the ESA, any such protection must be done in a reasonable and transparent manner with stakeholder input and

in consideration of the impact on the development of lands and natural resources.

Information concerning a changing climate, especially projections into the long-range future, must be based on dispassionate analysis of hard data. We will enforce that standard throughout the executive branch, among civil servants and presidential appointees alike. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a political mechanism, not an unbiased scientific institution. Its unreliability is reflected in its intolerance toward scientists and others who dissent from its orthodoxy. We will evaluate its recommendations accordingly. We reject the agendas of both the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which represent only the personal commitments of their signatories; no such agreement can be binding upon the United States until it is submitted to and ratified by the Senate.

We demand an immediate halt to U.S. funding for the U.N.'s Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in accordance with the 1994 Foreign Relations Authorization Act. That law prohibits Washington from giving any money to "any affiliated organization of the United Nations" which grants Palestinians membership as a state. There is no ambiguity in that language. It would be illegal for the President to follow through on his intention to provide millions in funding for the UNFCCC and hundreds of millions for its Green Climate Fund.

We firmly believe environmental problems are best solved by giving incentives for human ingenuity and the development of new technologies, not through top-down, command-and-control regulations that stifle economic growth and cost thousands of jobs.



# Government Reform



## **Making Government Work for the People**

Founding Father and Constitution Framers James Wilson declared that in America, “the people are the masters of government,” but that in other countries, “the government is master of the people.” We pledge to make government work for the people, rather than the other way around. Much of what the federal government does can be improved, much should be replaced, and much needs to be done away with or returned to the states. It is long past time for just tinkering around the edges of a bloated and unresponsive bureaucratic state. Its poorly managed programs, some begun generations ago, are ill-suited to meet present needs and future requirements. Its credit card budgets impose massive indebtedness on every American today and on children yet unborn. The more it intrudes into every aspect of American life the more it alienates the citizens who work, pay taxes, and wonder what has happened to the country they love. We agree with Thomas Jefferson that “[t]he multiplication of public offices, increase of expense beyond income, growth and entailment of a public debt, are indications soliciting the employment of the pruning knife.”

## **Balancing the Budget**

The federal fiscal burden threatens the security, liberty, and independence of our nation. The current Administration’s refusal to work with Republicans took our national debt from \$10 trillion to nearly \$19 trillion today. Left unchecked, it will hit \$30 trillion by 2026. At the same time, the Administration’s policies systematically crippled economic growth and job creation, driving up government costs and driving down revenues. When Congressional Republicans tried to reverse course, the Administration manufactured fiscal crises — phony government shutdowns — to demand excessive spending. The Administration’s

demands have focused on significantly expanding government spending and benefits for its preferred groups, paid for through loans that our children and grandchildren will have to pay. This is the path to bankrupting the next generation.

The Republican path to fiscal sanity and economic expansion begins with a constitutional requirement for a federal balanced budget. We will fight for Congress to adopt, and for the states to ratify, a Balanced Budget Amendment which imposes a cap limiting spending to the appropriate historical average percentage of our nation’s gross domestic product while requiring a super-majority for any tax increase, with exceptions only for war or legitimate emergencies. Only a constitutional safeguard such as this can prevent deficits from mounting to government default.

Republican budgets will prioritize thrift over extravagance and put taxpayers first. We support the following test: Is a particular expenditure within the constitutional scope of the federal government? If not, stop it. Has it been effective in the past and is it still absolutely necessary? If not, end it. Is it so important as to justify borrowing, especially foreign borrowing, to fund it? If not, kill it.

## **Preserving Medicare and Medicaid**

More than 100 million Americans depend on Medicare or Medicaid for their healthcare; with our population aging, that number will increase. To preserve Medicare and Medicaid, the financing of these important programs must be brought under control before they consume most of the federal budget, including national defense. The good news is that it can be done, and it can be done without endangering the elderly and the needy who depend on those programs. We intend to save Medicare by modernizing it, empowering its participants, and putting it on a secure financial footing. We will preserve the promise of Medicaid as well by making

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that program, designed for 1965 medicine, a vehicle for good health in an entirely new era.

Medicare's long-term debt is in the trillions, and it is funded by a workforce that is shrinking relative to the size of future beneficiaries. Obamacare worsened the situation — and imperiled seniors — by imposing hundreds of billions of dollars in cuts to Medicare providers to pay for its new spending. When a vital program is so clearly headed for a train wreck, it's time to put it on a more secure track. That is why we propose these reforms: Impose no changes for persons 55 or older. Give others the option of traditional Medicare or transition to a premium-support model designed to strengthen patient choice, promote cost-saving competition among providers, and better guard against the fraud and abuse that now diverts billions of dollars every year away from patient care. Guarantee to every enrollee an income-adjusted contribution toward a plan of their choice, with catastrophic protection. Without disadvantaging present retirees or those nearing retirement, set a more realistic age for eligibility in light of today's longer life span.

This is an agenda to improve healthcare, not just to manage its costs. We reject the Democrats' approach of rationing inherent in Obamacare. We recognize the de facto rationing of healthcare caused by reduced access to doctors who increasingly opt out of participating in Medicare and Medicaid. We will not accept that or any other approach which denies care — or lowers its quality — for America's elderly.

Medicaid presents related, but somewhat different challenges. As the dominant force in the health market with regard to long-term care, births, and persons with mental illness, it is the next frontier of welfare reform. It is simply too big and too flawed to be administered from Washington. Most of the vaunted expansion of health insurance coverage under Obamacare actually has been an unprecedented expansion of the Medicaid rolls in many states. We applaud the Republican governors and state legislators who have undertaken the hard work of modernizing Medicaid. We will give them a free hand to do so by block-granting the program without strings. Their initiatives — whether premium supports for purchasing insurance, refundable tax credits, alternatives to hospitalization for chronic

patients, disease prevention activities, and other innovations — are the best strategy for preserving Medicaid for those who need it the most. Block granting Medicaid is particularly needed to address mental health care. Mental illness affects people from all walks of life, but there has been little success in developing effective system-wide medical models for addressing mental health. For a variety of unique reasons, government is often the first frontier for people experiencing mental health problems — from first responders who deal with crises to publicly funded mental health facilities and prisons where large numbers of inmates suffer from mental illnesses. Using block grants would allow states to experiment with different systems to address mental health and develop successful models to be replicated in states across the nation. The current federally dictated mental health care regime is wasteful and ineffective, and moving to a block grant approach would allow for state and local governments to create solutions for individuals and families in desperate need of help in addressing mental illness. We respect the states' authority and flexibility to exclude abortion providers from federal programs such as Medicaid and other healthcare and family planning programs so long as they continue to perform or refer for elective abortions or sell the body parts of aborted children.

### **Saving Social Security**

We reject the old maxim that Social Security is the "Third Rail" of American politics, deadly for anyone who would change it. The Democratic Party still treats it that way, even though everyone knows that its current course will lead to a financial and social disaster. Younger Americans have lost all faith in the program and expect little return for what they are paying into it. As the party of America's future, we accept the responsibility to preserve and modernize a system of retirement security forged in an old industrial era beyond the memory of most Americans. Current retirees and those close to retirement can be assured of their benefits. Of the many reforms being proposed, all options should be considered to preserve Social Security. As Republicans, we oppose tax increases and believe in the power of markets to create wealth and to

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help secure the future of our Social Security system. Saving Social Security is more than a challenge. It is our moral obligation to those who trusted in the government's word.

### **Protecting Internet Freedom**

The survival of the internet as we know it is at risk. Its gravest peril originates in the White House, the current occupant of which has launched a campaign, both at home and internationally, to subjugate it to agents of government. The President ordered the chair of the supposedly independent Federal Communications Commission to impose upon the internet rules devised in the 1930s for the telephone monopoly. He has unilaterally announced America's abandonment of the international internet by surrendering U.S. control of the root zone of web names and addresses. He threw the internet to the wolves, and they — Russia, China, Iran, and others — are ready to devour it.

We salute the Congressional Republicans who have legislatively impeded his plans to turn over the Information Freedom Highway to regulators and tyrants. That fight must continue, for its outcome is in doubt. We will consistently support internet policies that allow people and private enterprise to thrive, without providing new and expanded government powers to tax and regulate so that the internet does not become the vehicle for a dramatic expansion of government power. The internet's independence is its power. It has unleashed innovation, enabled growth, and inspired freedom more rapidly and extensively than any other technological advance in human history. We will therefore resist any effort to shift control toward governance by international or other intergovernmental organizations. We will ensure that personal data receives full constitutional protection from government overreach. The only way to safeguard or improve these systems is through the private sector. The internet's free market needs to be free and open to all ideas and competition without the government or service providers picking winners and losers.

### **Immigration and the Rule of Law**

Our party is the natural home for those who come in search of freedom and justice. We welcome all to the Great Opportunity Party.

The greatest asset of the American economy is the American worker. Our immigration system must protect American working families and their wages, for citizens and legal immigrants alike, in a way that will improve the economy. Just as immigrant labor helped build our country in the past, today's legal immigrants are making vital contributions in every aspect of national life. Their industry and commitment to American values strengthens our economy, enriches our culture, and enables us to better understand and more effectively compete with the rest of the world.

We are particularly grateful to the thousands of new legal immigrants, many of them not yet citizens, who are serving in the Armed Forces and among first responders. Their patriotism should encourage all to embrace the newcomers legally among us, assist their journey to full citizenship, and

help their communities avoid isolation from the mainstream of society. We are also thankful for the many legal immigrants who continue to contribute to American society. To that end, we both encourage the preservation of heritage tongues and support English as the nation's official language, a unifying force essential for the advancement of immigrant communities and our nation as a whole.

America's immigration policy must serve the national interest of the United States, and the interests of American workers must be protected over the claims of foreign nationals seeking the same jobs. With all our fellow citizens, we have watched, in anger and disgust, the mocking of our immigration laws by a president who made himself superior to the will of the nation. We stand with the victims of his policies, especially the families of murdered innocents. Illegal immigration endangers everyone, exploits the taxpayers, and insults all who aspire to enter America legally. We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed

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America's immigration policy must serve the national interest of the United States . . .

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it. The executive amnesties of 2012 and 2014 are a direct violation of federal law and usurp the powers of Congress as outlined in Article I of the Constitution. These unlawful amnesties must be immediately rescinded by a Republican president. In a time of terrorism, drug cartels, human trafficking, and criminal gangs, the presence of millions of unidentified individuals in this country poses grave risks to the safety and sovereignty of the United States. Our highest priority, therefore, must be to secure our borders and all ports of entry and to enforce our immigration laws.

That is why we support building a wall along our southern border and protecting all ports of entry. The border wall must cover the entirety of the southern border and must be sufficient to stop both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. We insist upon workplace enforcement of verification systems so that more jobs can be available to all legal workers. Use of the E-verify program — an internet-based system that verifies the employment authorization and identity of employees — must be made mandatory nationwide. We reaffirm our endorsement of the SAVE program — Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements — to ensure that public funds are not given to persons not legally present in this country. We demand tough penalties against those who engage in identity theft, deal in fraudulent documents, and traffic in human beings. The Department of Homeland Security must use its authority to keep dangerous aliens off our streets and to expedite expulsion of criminal aliens. Gang membership should be a deportable offense. Any previously deported illegal alien who continues to show a lack of respect for our borders and rule of law must be penalized. This is why we support stiffer penalties, such as a mandatory minimum sentence of five years, for any illegal alien who illegally re-enters our nation after already having been deported.

Because “sanctuary cities” violate federal law and endanger their own citizens, they should not be eligible for federal funding. Using state licenses to reward people in the country illegally is an affront to the rule of law and must be halted.

In light of both current needs and historic practice, we urge the reform of our guest worker

programs to eliminate fraud, improve efficiency and ensure they serve the national interest. In light of the alarming levels of unemployment and underemployment in this country, it is indefensible to continue offering lawful permanent residence to more than one million foreign nationals every year. The Supreme Court has correctly recognized that states have the constitutional authority to take steps to reduce illegal immigration. We condemn the Obama Administration’s lawsuits against states that are seeking to reinforce federal law. We support the right of the states to enact laws deterring illegal aliens from residing within their states.

From its beginning, our country has been a haven of refuge and asylum. That should continue — but with major changes. Asylum should be limited to cases of political, ethnic or religious persecution. As the Director of the FBI has noted, it is not possible to vet fully all potential refugees. To ensure our national security, refugees who cannot be carefully vetted cannot be admitted to the country, especially those whose homelands have been the breeding grounds for terrorism.

### **Reforming the Treaty System**

We intend to restore the treaty system specified by the Constitution: The president negotiates agreements, submits them to the Senate, with ratification requiring two-thirds of the senators present and voting. This was good enough for George Washington but is too restrictive for the current chief executive, who presumes to bind this country to bilateral and multilateral agreements of his devising. His media admirers portray his personal commitments — whether on climate change, Iranian weapons, or other matters — as done deals. They are not, and a new Republican executive will work with the Congress to reestablish constitutional order in America’s foreign relations. All international executive agreements and political arrangements entered into by the current Administration must be deemed null and void as mere expressions of the current president’s preferences. Those which are in the national interest but would traditionally have been made by treaty must be abrogated, renegotiated as treaties, and transmitted to the Senate for its advice and consent as required by

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the Constitution. The United States will withdraw from all agreements and arrangements failing those standards.

### **Internal Revenue Service**

Many good civil servants work at the IRS, but the agency itself is toxic. Its leadership employs known tax delinquents, rehires workers previously fired for misconduct, spends user fees without congressional oversight, and awards bonuses for customer service that would put any private company out of business. Worst of all, the IRS has become an ideological attack dog for the worst elements of today's Democratic Party. It systematically targets conservative, pro-life, and libertarian organizations, harassing them with repeated audits and denying their tax exempt status. Its commissioner has lied to Congress, hidden evidence, and stonewalled investigations. He should be impeached by the House of Representatives and convicted by the Senate. We value the right of America's churches, pastors, and religious leaders to preach and speak freely according to their faith. Republicans believe the federal government, specifically the IRS, is constitutionally prohibited from policing or censoring the speech of America's churches, pastors, and religious leaders. We support repeal of the Johnson Amendment, which restricts First Amendment freedoms of all nonprofit organizations by prohibiting political speech. We also support making the federal tax code so simple and easy to understand that the IRS becomes obsolete and can be abolished.

### **Audit the Pentagon**

No major part of the Department of Defense has ever passed an audit. Republican leaders in Congress have called for a full financial audit of the Pentagon to ensure that every dollar spent is truly benefitting our national security. Every taxpayer must be prepared to pass an audit, and we urge Congress to demand the same level of accountability from the Pentagon and the Department of Defense.

### **Improving the Federal Workforce**

We recognize the dedication of most employees of the federal government and thank them for their service, with special praise for the whistleblow-

ers who risk their careers to expose waste, fraud, and misuse of power. None of them should ever be compelled to join a union or pay dues to it. In fairness to their fellow workers, union representatives should not be allowed to engage in union-related activities while on the public's time. The inability of federal managers to discipline and, if necessary, dismiss problem staff members is an affront to every conscientious worker, as is the misuse of funds for lavish conferences and routine bonuses. The appointees of a Republican president will work with career managers to end those abuses and enforce high standards for all federal employees. We reaffirm the existing protections that provide all employees of the federal government the opportunity to pursue their desire to serve their country free from discrimination.

We call for renewed efforts to reduce, rather than expand, government responsibilities, and we urge particular attention to the bloated public relations budgets of the departments and agencies. The federal government spends too much of the people's money telling the people what they should do.

### **Advancing Term Limits**

Our national platform has repeatedly endorsed term limits for Members of Congress. In response, the GOP Leadership in 1996 brought to a vote, in both the House and Senate, a constitutional amendment. It failed to secure the necessary two-thirds vote in the House, where 80 percent of Republicans voted for it and 80 percent of Democrats voted against it. Every Senate Republican voted to allow a vote on term limits, but the Democrats killed it by a filibuster. Blocked by that opposition, Republicans sought other ways to modernize the national legislature. They set term limits for their own committee chairs and leadership positions, and by law they required Congress to live by the same rules it imposes on others. To make further progress, to advance a constitutional amendment for consideration by the states, we must expand the current Republican majorities in both chambers.

### **Regulation: The Quiet Tyranny**

Over-regulation is the quiet tyranny of the "Nanny State." It hamstring American businesses

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and hobbles economic growth. The Great Recession may be over, but in the experience of most Americans, the economy is still sick. The federal regulatory burden has been a major contributor to that stagnation.

The ability of the American people to govern themselves has been undermined by a vast array of agencies with sweeping power to regulate every aspect of American life. They legislate as if they were Congress. They decide guilt and issue penalties as if they were courts. They collectively impose many billions of dollars in costs to the economy. The current President and his allies on Capitol Hill have used those agencies as a super-legislature, disregarding the separation of powers, to declare as law what they could not push through the Congress.

The Environmental Protection Agency has rewritten laws to advance the Democrats' climate change agenda. The Department of Health and Human Services has ignored the enacted text of the Affordable Care Act to do whatever it wants in healthcare. Both the Department of Labor and National Labor Relations Board have scrapped decades of labor law to implement the agenda of big labor. The Dodd-Frank law, the Democrats' legislative Godzilla, is crushing small and community banks and other lenders. The Federal Communications Commission is imperiling the freedom of the internet. We support reinstating the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 which prohibits commercial banks from engaging in high-risk investment.

Sensible regulations can be compatible with a vibrant economy. They can prevent the strong from exploiting the weak. Right now, the regulators are exploiting everyone. We are determined to make regulations minimally intrusive, confined to their legal mandate, and respectful toward the creation of new and small businesses. We will revisit existing laws that delegate too much authority to regulatory agencies and review all current regulations for possible reform or repeal. We endorse Republican legislation, already passed by the House, to require approval by both houses of Congress for any rule or regulation that would impose significant costs on the American people. Further, Congress should work towards legislation that requires removal of

a regulation of equal or greater economic burden when a new regulation is enacted.

Because regulations are just another tax on the consumers, Congress should consider a regulatory budget that would cap the costs federal agencies could impose on the economy in any given year.

### **Crony Capitalism and Corporate Welfare**

Cronyism is inherent in the progressive vision of the administrative state. When government uses taxpayer funding and resources to give special advantages to private companies, it distorts the free market and erodes public trust in our political system. By enlarging the scope of government and placing enormous power in the hands of bureaucrats, it multiplies opportunities for corruption and favoritism. It is the enemy of reform in education, the workplace, and healthcare. It gives us financial regulation that protects the large at the cost of the small. It is inherent in every part of the current healthcare law, which is packed with corporate welfare. Crony capitalism gives us special interest tax breaks, custom-designed regulations, and special exemptions for favored parties. The Solyndra debacle is a perfect example. It creates both subsidies and restrictions to tilt the market one way or the other. By putting the weight of government behind the status quo, it leads to economic stagnation. We applaud the Republican Members of Congress who have taken the lead in fighting crony capitalism and urge others to rally to their cause.

### **Honoring Our Relationship with American Indians**

Based on both treaty and other law, the federal government has a unique government-to-government relationship with and trust responsibility for Indian Tribal Governments, American Indians, and Alaska Natives. These obligations have not been sufficiently honored. The social and economic problems that plague Indian country have grown worse over the last several decades; we must reverse that trend. Ineffective federal programs deprive American Indians of the services they need, and long-term failures threaten to undermine tribal sovereignty itself.

American Indians have established elected

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tribal governments to carry out the public policies of the tribe, administer services to its tribal member constituents, and manage relations with federal, state, and local governments. We respect the tribal governments as the voice of their communities and encourage federal, state, and local governments to heed those voices in developing programs and partnerships to improve the quality of life for American Indians and their neighbors in their communities.

Republicans believe that economic self-sufficiency is the ultimate answer to the challenges confronting Indian country. We believe that tribal governments and their communities, not Washington bureaucracies, are best situated to craft solutions that will end systemic problems that create poverty and disenfranchisement. Just as the federal government should not burden states with regulations, it should not stifle the development of resources within the reservations, which need federal assistance to advance their commerce nationally through roads and technology. Federal and state regulations that thwart job creation must be withdrawn or redrawn so that tribal governments acting on behalf of American Indians are not disadvantaged. It is especially egregious that the Democratic Party has persistently undermined tribal sovereignty in order to provide advantage to union bosses in the tribal workplace. Native communities should have the same authority as state governments in labor matters, so that union bosses and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) cannot undermine the authority of tribal governments.

Republicans recognize that each tribe has the right of consultation before any new regulatory policy is implemented on tribal land. To the extent possible, such consultation should take place in Indian country with the tribal government and its members. Before promulgating and imposing any new laws or regulations affecting trust land or members, the federal government should encourage Indian tribes to develop their own policies to achieve program objectives, and should defer to tribes to develop their own standards, or standards in conjunction with state governments.

Republicans reject a one-size-fits-all approach to federal-tribal-state partnerships and will work to expand local autonomy where tribal governments seek it. Better partnerships will help us to expand

economic opportunity, deliver top-flight education to future generations, modernize and improve the Indian Health Service to make it more responsive to local needs, and build essential infrastructure in Indian country in cooperation with tribal neighbors. Our approach is to empower American Indians, through tribal self-determination and self-governance policies, to develop their greatest assets, human resources and the rich natural resources on their lands, without undue federal interference.

Like all Americans, American Indians want safe communities for their families; but inadequate resources and neglect have, over time, allowed criminal activities to plague Indian country. To protect everyone — and especially the most vulnerable: children, women, and elders — the legal system in tribal communities must provide stability and protect property rights. Everyone's due process and civil rights must be safeguarded.

We support efforts to ensure equitable participation in federal programs by American Indians, including Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, and to preserve their culture and languages that we consider to be national treasures. Lastly, we recognize that American Indians have responded to the call for military service in percentage numbers far greater than have other groups of Americans. We honor that commitment, loyalty, and sacrifice of all American Indians serving in the military today and in years past and will ensure that all veterans and their families receive the care and respect they have earned through their loyal service to America.

#### **Americans in the Territories**

Throughout the history of our nation, the patriotism exhibited by our brothers and sisters in the territories of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico has often gone unacknowledged. Year after year, the citizens quietly, without fanfare, send their sons and daughters into the U.S. Armed Services. We honor the extraordinary sacrifices of the men and women of the territories who protect our freedom through their service in the U.S. Armed Forces. Geographically, the territories and commonwealths, especially those in the Pacific, are of vital importance to our national secu-

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rity as the outermost line of defense and gateway to America against potential encroachment by foreign powers. We welcome their greater participation in all aspects of the political process and affirm their right to seek the full extension of the Constitution with all the rights and responsibilities that entails.

We recognize the challenges facing all the U.S. territories in an era of dramatic global economic change. They need venture capital to retain existing industries and develop new ones. A stronger private sector can reduce dependence on public employment and lead toward self-sufficiency. Their development of local energy options will be crucial to reduce dependence on costly imported fuel.

The territories' economic stability and potential for growth must be considered in any trade agreements between the United States and other Pacific nations. They should be given flexibility or exemption from laws that increase costs for their populations, such as the minimum wage and the Jones Act concerning shipping. All unreasonable impediments to their prosperity should be removed, including unreasonable U.S. customs practices. Territories such as American Samoa should be able to properly develop their resources, including fishing, when jobs and the economy depend on it.

We call for the appointment of a commonwealth and territories advisory committee consisting of representatives from all five U.S. territories. The committee will be integrated into the president's transition team and be tasked with performing a holistic review of all federal regulations affecting the territories and commonwealths. We further call for the appointment of a Special Assistant to the President responsible for day-to-day interaction with the territories and commonwealths. This position will be the direct connection for the Office of Insular Affairs, the citizens of the territories and commonwealths, and the White House.

### **The Territory of Puerto Rico**

We support the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign state. We further recognize the historic significance of the 2012 local referendum in which a 54 percent majority voted to end Puerto Rico's current status as a U.S. territory, and 61 percent chose statehood over options for sovereign

nationhood. We support the federally sponsored political status referendum authorized and funded by an Act of Congress in 2014 to ascertain the aspirations of the people of Puerto Rico. Once the 2012 local vote for statehood is ratified, Congress should approve an enabling act with terms for Puerto Rico's future admission as the 51st state of the Union.

### **Preserving the District of Columbia**

The nation's capital city is a special responsibility of the federal government because it belongs both to its residents and to all Americans, millions of whom visit it every year. Congressional Republicans have fostered homeownership and open access to higher education for Washington residents. Against the opposition of the current President and leaders of the Democratic Party, they have established and expanded the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, through which thousands of low-income children have been able to attend a school of their choice and receive a quality education.

Republicans have been in the forefront of combating chronic corruption among the city's top Democratic officials. We call for congressional action to enforce the spirit of the Home Rule Act, assuring minority representation on the City Council. That council, backed by the current mayor, is attempting to seize from the Congress its appropriating power over all funding for the District. The illegality of their action mirrors the unacceptable spike in violent crime and murders currently afflicting the city. We expect Congress to assert, by whatever means necessary, its constitutional prerogatives regarding the District.

Since the Supreme Court's decisions affirming the Second Amendment rights of its citizens, city officials have engaged in a campaign of massive resistance by denying virtually all applications for gun ownership. The Republican Congress should be prepared, upon the inauguration of a Republican president, to enact legislation allowing law-abiding Washingtonians to own and carry firearms.

Statehood for the District can be advanced only by a constitutional amendment. Any other approach would be invalid. A statehood amendment was soundly rejected by the states when last proposed in 1976 and should not be revived.



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# Great American Families, Education, Healthcare, and Criminal Justice



## **American Values**

We are the party of independent individuals and the institutions they create together — families, schools, congregations, neighborhoods — to advance their ideals and make real their dreams. Those institutions, standing between the citizen and the power of government, are the pillars of a free society. They create spaces where the power of government should not intrude. They allow Americans to work together to solve most of the problems facing their communities. They thus reduce the need for intervention by government in the form of more and bigger programs or a larger public workforce. They minimize decision-making by those who hold or are appointed to office. That is precisely why today's progressives distrust and seek to control them — because this is more than a conflict of ideas. It is a struggle for power.

Our society is at a crossroads. For several generations, an expansive federal regime has marginalized and supplanted the institutions holding our society together. No wonder, then, that so much seems to be coming apart now. The question is whether we are going to reinvigorate the private-sector institutions under citizen control or allow their continued erosion by the forces of centralized social planning. In that divide, the Republican Party stands with the people.

## **Marriage, Family, and Society**

Foremost among those institutions is the American family. It is the foundation of civil society, and the cornerstone of the family is natural marriage, the union of one man and one woman. Its daily lessons — cooperation, patience, mutual respect, responsibility, self-reliance — are fundamental to the order and progress of our Republic. Strong families, depending upon God and one another, advance the cause of liberty by lessening the need for government in their daily lives. Conversely, as

we have learned over the last five decades, the loss of faith and family life leads to greater dependence upon government. That is why Republicans formulate public policy, from taxation to education, from healthcare to welfare, with attention to the needs and strengths of the family.

It is also why everyone should be concerned about the state of the American family today, not because of ideology or doctrine, but because of the overwhelming evidence of experience, social science, and common sense. All of which give us these truths about traditional marriage: Children raised in a two-parent household tend to be physically and emotionally healthier, more likely to do well in school, less likely to use drugs and alcohol, engage in crime or become pregnant outside of marriage. We oppose policies and laws that create a financial incentive for or encourage cohabitation. Moreover, marriage remains the greatest antidote to child poverty. The 40 percent of children who now are born outside of marriage are five times more likely to live in poverty than youngsters born and raised by a mother and father in the home. Nearly three-quarters of the \$450 billion government annually spends on welfare goes to single-parent households. This is what it takes for a governmental village to raise a child, and the village is doing a tragically poor job of it.

The data and the facts lead to an inescapable conclusion: Every child deserves a married mom and dad. The reality remains that millions of American families do not have the advantages that come with that structure. We honor the courageous efforts of those who bear the burdens of parenting alone and embrace the principle that all Americans should be treated with dignity and respect. But respect is not enough. Our laws and our government's regulations should recognize marriage as the union of one man and one woman and actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous

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society. For that reason, as explained elsewhere in this platform, we do not accept the Supreme Court's redefinition of marriage and we urge its reversal, whether through judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment returning control over marriage to the states. We oppose government discrimination against businesses or entities which decline to sell items or services to individuals for activities that go against their religious views about such activities.

Families formed or enlarged by adoption strengthen our communities and ennoble our nation. Private entities which facilitate adoptions enrich our communities. We support measures such as the First Amendment Defense Act to ensure these entities do not face government discrimination because of their views on marriage and family. We applaud the Republican initiatives which have led to an increase in adoptions, an achievement which should be recognized in any restructuring of the federal tax code. While the number of children in foster care has stabilized, teens who age out of that setting often are abruptly left to face the world on their own. We urge states and community groups to help these young adults become independent.

Thirty years ago, President Reagan commissioned a Special Working Group on the Family to study how government at all levels could be more supportive of family life. We urge marriage penalties to be removed from the tax code and public assistance programs. We invite all who care about children to join us in this proposal to ensure that all federal programs, in the words of President Kennedy, "stress the integrity and preservation of the family unit."

### **A Culture of Hope**

We have been fighting the War on Poverty for 50 years and poverty is winning. Our social safety net — about 80 separate means-tested programs costing over \$1 trillion every year — is designed to help people born into or falling into poverty. It rarely lifts them out. Its apologists judge success by the amount of money spent to keep people in the system. That is a cruel measurement. Republicans propose to evaluate a poverty program by whether it actually reduces poverty and increases the personal independence of its participants. The

results are damning: intergenerational poverty has persisted and worsened since 1966.

This year marks another important anniversary; it has been 20 years since the landmark Republican welfare reform of 1996 broke away from the discredited Great Society model. By making welfare a benefit instead of an entitlement, it put millions of recipients on a transition from dependence to independence. Welfare rolls declined by half as recipients and prospective recipients discovered a better way to reach their goals. Best of all, about 3 million children moved out of poverty. Today that progress has been lost. Defying the law as it was plainly written, the current Administration has nullified any meaningful work requirement and made TANF a mockery of the name we gave it: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. This decision ensures that those families will remain needy and cut off from the economic mainstream of American society.

This is the progressive pathology: Keeping people dependent so that government can redistribute income. The result is 45.8 million people on food stamps and 77 million on Medicaid, plus another 5.7 million in the Children's Health Insurance Program. This is the false compassion of the status quo. We propose instead the dynamic compassion of work requirements in a growing economy, where opportunity takes the place of a hand-out, where true self-esteem can grow from the satisfaction of a job well done.

We call for removal of structural impediments which progressives throw in the path of poor people: Over-regulation of start-up enterprises, excessive licensing requirements, needless restrictions on formation of schools and day-care centers serving neighborhood families, and restrictions on providing public services in fields like transport and sanitation that close the opportunity door to all but a favored few. We will continue our fight for school choice until all parents can find good, safe schools for their children. To protect religious liberty we will ensure that faith-based institutions, especially those that are vital parts of underserved neighborhoods, do not face discrimination by government. We propose new partnerships between those who manage federal programs and those who are on the front lines of fighting poverty on the ground. We must

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encourage their efforts to reclaim their communities from the culture of poverty. To advance this process, we urge greater state and local responsibility for, and control over, public assistance programs.

**Education: A Chance for Every Child**

Education is much more than schooling. It is the whole range of activities by which families and communities transmit to a younger generation, not just knowledge and skills, but ethical and behavioral norms and traditions. It is the handing over of a cultural identity. That is why American education has, for the last several decades, been the focus of constant controversy, as centralizing forces from outside the family and community have sought to remake education in order to remake America. They have done immense damage. The federal government should not be a partner in that effort, as the Constitution gives it no role in education. At the heart of the American Experiment lies the greatest political expression of human dignity: The self-evident truth that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

That truth rejects the dark view of the individual as human capital — a possession for the creation of another’s wealth.

Parents are a child’s first and foremost educators, and have primary responsibility for the education of their children. Parents have a right to direct their children’s education, care, and upbringing. We support a constitutional amendment to protect that right from interference by states, the federal government, or international bodies such as the United Nations. We reject a one-size-fits-all approach to education and support a broad range of choices for parents and children at the state and local level. We likewise repeat our long-standing opposition to the imposition of national standards and assessments, encourage the parents

and educators who are implementing alternatives to Common Core, and congratulate the states which have successfully repealed it. Their education reform movement calls for choice-based, parent-driven accountability at every stage of schooling. It affirms higher expectations for all students and rejects the crippling bigotry of low expectations. It recognizes the wisdom of local control of our schools and it wisely sees consumer rights in education — choice — as the most important driving force for renewing education. It rejects excessive testing and “teaching to the test” and supports the need for strong assessments to serve as a tool so teachers can tailor teaching to meet student needs.

We applaud America’s great teachers, who should be protected against frivolous lawsuits and should be able to take reasonable actions to maintain discipline and order in the classroom. Administrators need flexibility to innovate and to hold accountable all those responsible for student performance. A good understanding of the Bible being indispensable for the development of an educated citizenry, we encourage state legislatures to offer the Bible in a literature curriculum as an elective in America’s high

schools. We urge school districts to make use of teaching talent in the business community, STEM fields, and the military, especially among our returning veterans. Rigid tenure systems should be replaced with a merit-based approach in order to attract the best talent to the classroom. All personnel who interact with school children should pass background checks and be held to the highest standards of personal conduct.

**Academic Excellence for All**

Maintaining American preeminence requires a world-class system of education in which all students can reach their potential. Republicans are leading the effort to create it. Since 1965, the federal government, through more than 100 programs in

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Maintaining American preeminence requires a world-class system of education in which all students can reach their potential.

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the Department of Education, has spent \$2 trillion on elementary and secondary education with little substantial improvement in academic achievement or high school graduation rates. The United States spends an average of more than \$12,000 per pupil per year in public schools, for a total of more than \$620 billion. That represents more than 4 percent of GDP devoted to K-12 education in 2011-2012. Of that amount, federal spending amounted to more than \$57 billion. Clearly, if money were the solution, our schools would be problem-free.

More money alone does not necessarily equal better performance. After years of trial and error, we know the policies and methods that have actually made a difference in student advancement: Choice in education; building on the basics; STEM subjects and phonics; career and technical education; ending social promotions; merit pay for good teachers; classroom discipline; parental involvement; and strong leadership by principals, superintendents, and locally elected school boards. Because technology has become an essential tool of learning, it must be a key element in our efforts to provide every child equal access and opportunity. We strongly encourage instruction in American history and civics by using the original documents of our founding fathers.

### **Choice in Education**

We support options for learning, including home-schooling, career and technical education, private or parochial schools, magnet schools, charter schools, online learning, and early-college high schools. We especially support the innovative financing mechanisms that make options available to all children: education savings accounts (ESAs), vouchers, and tuition tax credits. Empowering families to access the learning environments that will best help their children to realize their full potential is one of the greatest civil rights challenges of our time. A young person's ability to succeed in school must be based on his or her God-given talent and motivation, not an address, ZIP code, or economic status. We propose that the bulk of federal money through Title I for low-income children and through IDEA for children with special needs should follow the child to whatever school the family thinks will work best for them.

In sum, on the one hand enormous amounts of money are being spent for K-12 public education with overall results that do not justify that spending level. On the other hand, the common experience of families, teachers, and administrators forms the basis of what does work in education. In Congress and in the states, Republicans are bridging the gap between those two realities. Congressional Republicans are leading the way forward with major reform legislation advancing the concept of block grants and repealing numerous federal regulations which have interfered with state and local control of public schools. Their Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act — modernizing workforce programs, repealing mandates, and advancing employment for persons with disabilities — is now law. Their legislation to require transparency in unfunded mandates imposed upon our schools is advancing. Their D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program should be expanded as a model for the rest of the country. We deplore the efforts of Congressional Democrats and the current President to eliminate this successful program for disadvantaged students in order to placate the leaders of the teachers' unions.

To ensure that all students have access to the mainstream of American life, we support the English First approach and oppose divisive programs that limit students' ability to advance in American society. We renew our call for replacing "family planning" programs for teens with sexual risk avoidance education that sets abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior. That approach — the only one always effective against premarital pregnancy and sexually-transmitted disease — empowers teens to achieve optimal health outcomes. We oppose school-based clinics that provide referral or counseling for abortion and contraception and believe that federal funds should not be used in mandatory or universal mental health, psychiatric, or socio-emotional screening programs. The federal government has pushed states to collect and share vast amounts of personal student and family data, including the collection of social and emotional data. Much of this data is collected without parental consent or notice. This is wholly incompatible with the American Experiment and our inalienable rights.

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### **Title IX**

We emphatically support the original, authentic meaning of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. It affirmed that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” That language opened up for girls and women a world of opportunities that had too often been denied to them. That same provision of law is now being used by bureaucrats — and by the current President of the United States — to impose a social and cultural revolution upon the American people by wrongly redefining sex discrimination to include sexual orientation or other categories. Their agenda has nothing to do with individual rights; it has everything to do with power. They are determined to reshape our schools — and our entire society — to fit the mold of an ideology alien to America’s history and traditions. Their edict to the states concerning restrooms, locker rooms, and other facilities is at once illegal, dangerous, and ignores privacy issues. We salute the several states which have filed suit against it.

Sexual assault is a terrible crime. We commend the good-faith efforts by law enforcement, educational institutions, and their partners to address that crime responsibly. Whenever reported, it must be promptly investigated by civil authorities and prosecuted in a courtroom, not a faculty lounge. Questions of guilt or innocence must be decided by a judge and jury, with guilt determined beyond a reasonable doubt. Those convicted of sexual assault should be punished to the full extent of the law. The Administration’s distortion of Title IX to micromanage the way colleges and universities deal with allegations of abuse contravenes our country’s legal traditions and must be halted before it further muddles this complex issue and prevents the proper authorities from investigating and prosecuting sexual assault effectively with due process.

### **Improving Higher Education**

Our colleges, universities, and trade schools, large and small, public and private, form the world’s greatest assemblage of learning. They drive much of the research that keeps America competitive and,

by admitting large numbers of foreign students, convey our values and culture to the world. Their excellence is undermined by an ideological bias deeply entrenched within the current university system. Whatever the solution may be in private institutions, in state schools the trustees have a responsibility to the taxpayers to ensure that their enormous investment is not abused for political indoctrination. We call on state officials to preserve our public colleges, universities, and trade schools as places of learning and the exchange of ideas, not zones of intellectual intolerance or “safe zones,” as if college students need protection from the free exchange of ideas. A student’s First Amendment rights do not end at the schoolhouse gates. Colleges, universities, and trade schools must not infringe on their freedom of speech and association in the name of political correctness. We condemn the campus-based BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) campaign against Israel. It is anti-Semitism and should be denounced by advocates of academic freedom.

### **College Costs**

The cost of a college education has long been on an unsustainable trajectory, rising year by year far ahead of inflation. Nationwide, student debt now exceeds credit card debt with average debt levels per student totaling roughly \$27,000. Delinquency rates on student loans are now as high as they were on subprime mortgages during the housing crisis. Over half of recent college grads are unemployed or underemployed, working at jobs for which their expensive educations gave them no preparation. We need new systems of learning to compete with traditional four-year schools: Technical institutions, online universities, life-long learning, and work-based learning in the private sector. Public policy should advance their affordability, innovation, and transparency and should recognize that a four-year degree from a brick-and-mortar institution is not the only path toward a prosperous and fulfilling career.

The federal government should not be in the business of originating student loans. In order to bring down college costs and give students access to a multitude of financing options, private sector participation in student financing should be restored. Any regulation that increases college costs

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must be challenged to balance its worth against its negative economic impact on students and their families.

In order to encourage new modes of higher education delivery to enter the market, accreditation should be decoupled from federal financing, and states should be empowered to allow a wide array of accrediting and credentialing bodies to operate. This model would foster innovation, bring private industry into the credentialing market, and give students the ability to customize their college experience.

### **Restoring Patient Control and Preserving Quality in Healthcare**

Any honest agenda for improving healthcare must start with repeal of the dishonestly named Affordable Care Act of 2010: Obamacare. It weighs like the dead hand of the past upon American medicine. It imposed a Euro-style bureaucracy to manage its unworkable, budget-busting, conflicting provisions. It has driven up prices for all consumers. Their insurance premiums have dramatically increased while their deductibles have risen about eight times faster than wages in the last ten years. It drove up drug prices by levying a \$27 billion tax on manufacturers and importers and, through mandated price cuts for drugs under Medicare and Medicaid, forced pharmaceutical companies to raise prices for everyone else. Its "silver plans," the most common option on the government insurance exchanges, limit people's access to their own doctor through narrow networks and restrict drug coverage, forcing many patients to pay for extremely costly medicines for their chronic diseases.

We agree with the four dissenting judges of the Supreme Court: "In our view, the entire Act before us is invalid in its entirety." It must be removed and replaced with an approach based on genuine competition, patient choice, excellent care, wellness, and timely access to treatment. To that end, a Republican president, on the first day in office, will use legitimate waiver authority under the law to halt its advance and then, with the unanimous support of Congressional Republicans, will sign its repeal. The Supreme Court upheld Obamacare based on Congress' power to tax. It is time to repeal

Obamacare and give America a much-needed tax cut.

In its place we must combine what worked best in the past with changes needed for the future. We must recover the traditional patient-physician relationship based on mutual trust, informed consent, and confidentiality. To simplify the system for both patients and providers, we will reduce mandates and enable insurers and providers of care to increase healthcare options and contain costs. Our goal is to ensure that all Americans have improved access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, including those struggling with mental illness.

We will return to the states their historic role of regulating local insurance markets, limit federal requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid, and call on state officials to reconsider the costly medical mandates, imposed under their own laws, that price millions of low-income families out of the insurance market. To guarantee first-rate care for the needy, we propose to block grant Medicaid and other payments and to assist all patients, including those with pre-existing conditions, to obtain coverage in a robust consumer market. Through Obamacare, the current Administration has promoted the notion of abortion as healthcare. We, however, affirm the dignity of women by protecting the sanctity of human life. Numerous studies have shown that abortion endangers the health and well-being of women, and we stand firmly against it.

To ensure vigorous competition in healthcare, and because cost-awareness is the best guard against over-utilization, we will promote price transparency so consumers can know the cost of treatments before they agree to them. We will empower individuals and small businesses to form purchasing pools in order to expand coverage to the uninsured. We believe that individuals with preexisting conditions who maintain continuous coverage should be protected from discrimination. We applaud the advance of technology in electronic medical records while affirming patient privacy and ownership of personal health information.

Consumer choice is the most powerful factor in healthcare reform. Today's highly mobile workforce needs portability of insurance coverage that can go

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with them from job to job. The need to maintain coverage should not dictate where families have to live and work. We propose to end tax discrimination against the individual purchase of insurance and allow consumers to buy insurance across state lines. In light of that, we propose repealing the 1945 McCarran-Ferguson Act which protects insurance companies from anti-trust litigation. We look to the growth of Health Savings Accounts and Health Reimbursement Accounts that empower patients and advance choice in healthcare.

Our aging population must have access to safe and affordable care. Because most seniors desire to age at home, we will make homecare a priority in public policy and will implement programs to protect against elder abuse.

#### **Protecting Individual Conscience in Healthcare**

America's healthcare professionals should not be forced to choose between following their faith and practicing their profession. We respect the rights of conscience of healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and organizations, especially the faith-based groups which provide a major portion of care for the nation and the needy. We support the ability of all organizations to provide, purchase, or enroll in healthcare coverage consistent with their religious, moral, or ethical convictions without discrimination or penalty. We support the right of parents to determine the proper medical treatment and therapy for their minor children. We support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their minor children and urge enactment of legislation that would require parental consent for their daughter to be transported across state lines for abortion. Providers should not be permitted to unilaterally withhold services because a patient's life is deemed not worth living. American taxpayers should not be forced to fund abortion. As Democrats abandon this four decade-old bipartisan consensus, we call for codification of the Hyde Amendment and its application across the government, including Obamacare. We call for a permanent ban on federal funding and subsidies for abortion and healthcare plans that include abortion coverage.

#### **Better Care and Lower Costs: Tort Reform**

Medical malpractice lawsuits have ballooned the cost of healthcare for everyone by forcing physicians to practice defensive medicine through tests and treatments which otherwise might be optional. Rural America is especially affected as obstetricians, surgeons, and other providers move to urban settings or retire in the face of escalating insurance premiums. Many Republican Governors have advanced the legal reforms necessary to reverse that trend. We support state and federal legislation to cap non-economic damages in medical malpractice lawsuits, thereby relieving conscientious providers of burdens that are not rightly theirs and addressing a serious cause of higher medical bills.

#### **Advancing Research and Development in Healthcare**

American medicine is poised to enter a new era of technological advance. Federal and private investment in basic and applied biomedical research holds enormous promise, especially with diseases and disorders like autism, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's. Just as we today take for granted wonders that seemed impossible a few decades ago — MRIs and CAT scans, robotic surgery, and in utero treatment — patients a decade hence will have care and treatment that will make much of today's medicine look primitive. Modern miracles involving genetics, the immune system, cures for deadly diseases, and more are in the research pipeline. This is the consequence of marrying significant investment, both public and private, with the world's best talent, a formula that has for a century given the American people the world's best healthcare. We are determined that it should continue to do so, especially as we confront new dangers like Ebola, Zika, Chikungunya, and antibiotic-resistant pathogens.

To continue our headway against breast and prostate cancer, diabetes, and other killers, research must consider the needs of formerly neglected demographic groups. We call for expanded support for the stem cell research that now offers the greatest hope for many afflictions — through adult stem cells, umbilical cord blood,

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and cells reprogrammed into pluripotent stem cells — without the destruction of embryonic human life. We urge a ban on human cloning for research or reproduction, and a ban on the creation of, or experimentation on, human embryos for research. We applaud Congress' ban on the FDA approval of research involving three-parent embryos. We believe the FDA's approval of Mifeprex, a dangerous abortifacient formerly known as RU-486, threatens women's health, as does the agency's endorsement of over-the-counter sales of powerful contraceptives without a physician's recommendation. We support cutting federal and state funding for entities that endanger women's health by performing abortions in a manner inconsistent with federal or state law.

**Putting Patients First: Reforming the FDA**

The United States has led life sciences and medical innovation for decades, bringing millions of high-paying jobs to our country and helping Americans and people around the world live longer, healthier lives. Unfortunately, the continuously increasing burden of governmental regulation and red tape is taking its toll on our innovative companies, and their pipeline of new life-saving devices and drugs to our nation's patients is slowing and diminishing. The FDA has slowly but relentlessly changed into an agency that more and more puts the public health at risk by delaying, chilling, and killing the development of new devices, drugs and biologics that can promote our lives and our health. The FDA needs leadership that can reform the agency for our century and fix the lack of predictability, consistency, transparency and efficiency at the agency. The FDA needs to return to its traditional emphasis on hard science and approving new breakthrough medicines, rather than divert its attention and consume its resources trying to overregulate electronic health records or vaping. We pledge to restore the FDA to its position as the premier scientific health agency, focused on both promoting and protecting the public health in equal measure, so we can ensure that Americans live longer, healthier lives, that the United States remains the world leader in life sciences and medical innovation, that millions of high-paying, cutting-edge device and drug jobs stay in the United States, that U.S. patients benefit first

and most from new devices and drugs, and that the FDA no longer wastes U.S. taxpayer and innovators' resources through bureaucratic red tape and legal uncertainty. We commend those states that have passed Right to Try legislation, allowing terminally ill patients the right to try investigational medicines not yet approved by the FDA. We urge Congress to pass federal legislation to give all Americans with terminal illnesses the right to try.

**Advancing Americans with Disabilities**

Under the last two Republican presidents, landmark civil rights legislation affirmed the inherent rights of persons with disabilities. Republicans want to support those rights by guaranteeing access to education and the tools necessary to compete in the mainstream of society. This is not just a moral obligation to our fellow Americans with disabilities. It is our duty to our country's future to tap this vast pool of talented individuals who want to work and contribute to the common good. For that reason, Republican leadership led to enactment of the ABLE Act (Achieving a Better Life Experience) and the Steve Gleason Act. The former, for the first time, lets people with disabilities maintain access to services while saving to develop assets. The latter, bearing the name of the former NFL player with ALS, provides access to speech-generating devices. In addition, our Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will make it easier for students with disabilities to pursue competitive employment.

Persons with disabilities are nearly twice as likely to be self-employed as the general population. To encourage their entrepreneurship, it makes sense to include them in the Small Business Administration's 8(a) certification program, which opens up federal contracting for emerging businesses. Any restructuring of the tax code should consider ways in which companies can benefit from the talent and energy of their disabled employees.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has opened up unprecedented opportunities for many students. Congressional Republicans will lead in its reauthorization, as well as renewal of the Higher Education Act, which can offer students with disabilities increased access to the general curriculum. Our TIME Act (Transition to Integrated and Meaningful Employment) will modernize the



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Fair Labor Standards Act to encourage competitive employment for persons with disabilities. We affirm our support for its goal of minimizing the separation of children with disabilities from their peers. We endorse efforts like Employment First that replace dependency with jobs in the mainstream of the American workforce.

We oppose the non-consensual withholding of care or treatment from people with disabilities, including newborns, the elderly, and infirm, just as we oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide, which endanger especially those on the margins of society. We urge the Drug Enforcement Administration to restore its ban on the use of controlled substances for physician-assisted suicide.

**Ensuring Safe Neighborhoods:  
Criminal Justice and Prison Reform**

The men and women of law enforcement — whether patrolling our neighborhoods or our borders, fighting organized crime or guarding against domestic terror — deserve our gratitude and support. Their jobs are never easy, especially in crisis situations, and should not be made more difficult by politicized second-guessing from federal officials. The current Administration's lack of respect for them, from White House intervention in local arrests to the Attorney General's present campaign of harassment against police forces around the country, has been unprecedented. With all Americans, we mourn those whom we have lost to violence and hatred. To honor their sacrifice, we recommit ourselves, as individuals and as a party, to the rule of law and the pursuit of justice.

The conduct of the Department of Justice has included refusal to enforce laws, stonewalling congressional committees, destroying evidence, reckless dealing with firearms that led to several deaths on both sides of our border, and defying a citation for contempt. It has urged leniency for rioters while turning a blind eye to mob attacks on peaceful citizens exercising their political rights. A new administration must ensure the immediate dismissal and, where appropriate, prosecution of any Department officials who have violated their oath of office.

The next president must restore the public's trust in law enforcement and civil order by first

adhering to the rule of law himself. Additionally, the next president must not sow seeds of division and distrust between the police and the people they have sworn to serve and protect. The Republican Party, a party of law and order, must make clear in words and action that every human life matters.

Two grave problems undermine the rule of law on the federal level: Over-criminalization and over-federalization. In the first case, Congress and federal agencies have increased the number of criminal offenses in the U.S. Code from 3,000 in the early 1980s to more than 4,500 today. That does not include an estimated 300,000 regulations containing criminal penalties. No one, including the Department of Justice, can come up with accurate numbers. That recklessness is bad enough when committed by Congress, but when it comes from the unelected bureaucrats of the federal agencies, it is intolerable. The power of career civil servants and political appointees to criminalize behavior is one of the worst violations of constitutional order perpetrated by the administrative state.

To deal with this morass, we urge caution in the creation of new "crimes" and a bipartisan presidential commission to purge the Code and the body of regulations of old "crimes." We call for mens rea elements in the definition of any new crimes to protect Americans who, in violating a law, act unknowingly or without criminal intent. We urge Congress to codify the Common Law's Rule of Lenity, which requires courts to interpret unclear statutes in favor of a defendant.

The over-federalization of criminal justice is one of many ways in which the government in Washington has intruded beyond its proper jurisdiction. The essential role of federal law enforcement personnel in protecting federal property and combating interstate crime should not be compromised by diversion to matters properly handled by state and local authorities.

We applaud the Republican Governors and legislators who have been implementing criminal justice reforms like those proposed by our 2012 platform. Along with diversion of first-time, nonviolent offenders to community sentencing, accountability courts, drug courts, veterans treatment courts, and guidance by faith-based institutions with proven track records of

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rehabilitation, our platform emphasized restorative justice to make the victim whole and put the offender on the right path. As variants of these reforms are undertaken in many states, we urge the Congress to learn from what works. In the past, judicial discretion about sentences led to serious mistakes concerning dangerous criminals. Mandatory minimum sentencing became an important tool for keeping them off the streets. Modifications to it should be targeted toward particular categories, especially nonviolent offenders and persons with drug, alcohol, or mental health issues, and should require disclosure by the courts of any judicial departure from the state's sentencing requirements.

The constitutionality of the death penalty is firmly settled by its explicit mention in the Fifth Amendment. With the murder rate soaring in our great cities, we condemn the Supreme Court's erosion of the right of the people to enact capital punishment in their states. In solidarity with those who protect us, we call for mandatory prison time for all assaults involving serious injury to law enforcement officers.

We call on the Congress to make the federal courts a model for the rest of the country in protecting the rights of victims and their families. They should be told all relevant information about their case, allowed to be present for its trial, assured a voice in sentencing and parole hearings, given access to social and legal services, and benefit from the Crime Victims Fund established under President Reagan for that sole purpose.

Public officials must regain control of their correctional institutions, some of which have become ethnic and racial battlegrounds. Persons jailed for whatever cause should be protected against cruel or degrading treatment by other inmates. Courts should not tie the hands of prison officials in dealing with these problems. We encourage states to offer opportunities for literacy and vocational education to prepare prisoners for release to the community. Breaking the cycle of crime begins with the children of those who are prisoners. Deprived of a parent through no fault of their own, youngsters from these families should be a special concern of our schools, social services, and religious institutions.

The internet must not become a safe haven for predators. Pornography, with its harmful effects, especially on children, has become a public health crisis that is destroying the lives of millions. We encourage states to continue to fight this public menace and pledge our commitment to children's safety and well-being. We applaud the social networking sites that bar sex offenders from participation. We urge energetic prosecution of child pornography, which is closely linked to human trafficking.

### **Combatting Drug Abuse**

The progress made over the last three decades against drug abuse is eroding, whether for cultural reasons or for lack of national leadership. In many jurisdictions, marijuana is virtually legalized despite its illegality under federal law. At the other end of the drug spectrum, heroin use nearly doubled from 2003 to 2013, while deaths from heroin have quadrupled. All this highlights the continuing conflicts and contradictions in public attitudes and public policy toward illegal substances. Congress and a new administration should consider the long-range implications of these trends for public health and safety and prepare to deal with the problematic consequences.

The misuse of prescription painkillers — opioids — is a related problem. Heroin and opioid abuse touches our communities, our homes, and our families in ways that have grave effects on Americans in every community. With a quadrupling of both their sales and their overdose deaths, the opioid crisis is ravaging communities all over the country, often hitting rural areas harder than urban. Because over-prescription of drugs is such a large part of the problem, Republican legislation now allows Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage plans to limit patients to a single pharmacy. Congressional Republicans have also called upon the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ensure that no physician will be penalized for limiting opioid prescriptions. We look for expeditious agreement between the House and Senate on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which addresses the opioid epidemic from both the demand and supply sides of the problem.

# America Resurgent



## A Dangerous World

Alexander Hamilton wrote in Federalist 23 that the first of the “principal” constitutional obligations of the federal government is to provide for the “common defense” of the United States, and President George Washington wisely reminded us that “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.”

After nearly eight years of a Democratic Commander-in-Chief who has frequently placed strategic and ideological limitations and shackles on our military, our enemies have been emboldened and our national security is at great risk. Our country faces a national security crisis, and only by electing a Republican to the White House will we restore law and order to our land and safety to our citizens.

We are the party of peace through strength. We believe that American exceptionalism — the notion that our ideas and principles as a nation give us a unique place of moral leadership in the world — requires the United States to retake its natural position as leader of the free world.

Tyranny and injustice thrive when America is weakened. The oppressed have no greater ally than a confident and determined United States, backed by the strongest military on the planet.

Quite simply, the Republican Party is committed to rebuilding the U.S. military into the strongest on earth, with vast superiority over any other nation or group of nations in the world. We face a dangerous world, and we believe in a resurgent America.

In all of our country’s history, there is no parallel to what President Obama and his former Secretary of State have done to weaken our nation. Our aging

naval capabilities are inadequate for their job. The Air Force fields the smallest and oldest force of combat aircraft in its history. The Marines have only two-thirds the number of battalions they have historically needed to meet day to day operational demands. The Army is at its lowest troop levels since before World War II. Our U.S. Ambassador and American personnel were left without adequate security or backup halfway across the world in Benghazi. In summary, we have returned to the hollow force days of Jimmy Carter.

Also neglected are our strategic forces, especially the development and deployment of ballistic missile defenses. The Ground-Based Midcourse Defense system has been delayed and underfunded. To curry favor with Russia, defense installations in Poland and the Czech Republic have been neutralized and the number of planned interceptors in Alaska has been reduced. A New START agreement (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), so weak in verification

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and definitions that it is virtually impossible to prove a violation, has allowed Russia to build up its nuclear arsenal while reducing ours. Meanwhile Moscow has repeatedly violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (a treaty agreeing to the elimination of land-based mid-range nuclear missiles) with impunity, covertly testing missiles banned under that agreement.

In the international arena, a weak Administration has invited aggression. The results of the Administration’s unilateral approach to disarmament are already clear: An emboldened China in the South China Sea, a resurgent Russia occupying parts of Ukraine and threatening

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neighbors from the Baltic to the Caucasus, and an aggressive Islamist terror network in the Middle East. We support maintaining and, if warranted, increasing sanctions, together with our allies, against Russia unless and until Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully restored. We also support providing appropriate assistance to the armed forces of Ukraine and greater coordination with NATO defense planning. All our adversaries heard the message in the Administration's cutbacks: America is weaker and retreating. Concomitantly, we honor, support, and thank all law enforcement, first responders, and emergency personnel for their service.

### **Confronting the Dangers**

In the face of these threats, the first order of business for a Republican president and Congress will be to restore our nation's military might. Republicans continue to support American military superiority which has been the cornerstone of a strategy that seeks to deter aggression or defeat those who threaten our vital national security interests. We must rebuild troop numbers and readiness and confirm their mission: Protecting the nation, not nation building. The United States should meet the Reagan model of "peace through strength" by a force that is capable of meeting any and all threats to our vital national security. We will no longer tolerate a President whose rules of engagement put our own troops in harm's way or commanders who tell their soldiers that their first duty is to fight climate change.

A Republican administration will begin at once to undo the damage of the last eight years. We must move from a budget-based strategy to one that puts the security of our nation first. This means that our Republican president's strategic vision will include the development of a balanced force to meet the diverse threats facing our nation. Special Operations Forces are simply not intended to deal with the full spectrum of threats. We need a Reagan-era force that can fight and win two-and-one-half wars ranging from counterterrorism to deterring major power aggressors.

We should abandon arms control treaties that benefit our adversaries without improving our national security. We must fund, develop, and

deploy a multi-layered missile defense system. We must modernize nuclear weapons and their delivery platforms, end the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction, and rebuild relationships with our allies, who understand that as long as the U.S. nuclear arsenal is their shield, they do not need to engage in nuclear proliferation.

While immigration is addressed in more detail elsewhere, we cannot ignore the reality that border security is a national security issue, and that our nation's immigration and refugee policies are placing Americans at risk. To keep our people safe, we must secure our borders, enforce our immigration laws, and properly screen refugees and other immigrants entering from any country. In particular we must apply special scrutiny to those foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States from terror-sponsoring countries or from regions associated with Islamic terrorism. This was done successfully after September 11, 2001, under the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, which should be renewed now.

### **Supporting Our Troops: Resources to do Their Job**

We owe it to the American people and to those who fight our wars that we remain the strongest military on earth and be prepared to defeat any adversary under any circumstances on any battlefield, including land, air, sea, or cyber. Successive years of cuts to our defense budget have put an undue strain on our men and women in uniform. This is especially harmful at a time when we are asking our military to do more in an increasingly dangerous world. The U.S. defense budget has suffered a 25 percent cut in real dollars in the five years since sequestration. We support lifting the budget cap for defense and reject the efforts of Democrats to hold the military's budget hostage for their domestic agenda. Congress and the Administration should work together to approve military spending at the level necessary to defend our country. We must not be encumbered by decades-old, legacy procurement processes. America's incredible talent and ingenuity must be unleashed by modernizing the military procurement system and embracing competition among traditional and non-traditional suppliers. Competitive acquisition

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and maintenance of weapon systems, including the sustainment and support of such systems, will benefit the U.S. economy, U.S. taxpayers, and most important, the American warfighter. Increased competition will enable new Department of Defense suppliers, particularly small businesses, to participate in the defense sector. That will promote new demand for skilled-labor jobs, while making the Department's procurement more cost-efficient. The increased agility and effectiveness will ensure that our troops are equipped with the right resources more quickly than our current procurement systems allow.

**Supporting Our Troops:  
Standing by Our Heroes**

With Republican leadership, the Congress recently passed legislation that begins to reverse America's military decline. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2016 begins to correct the shortfalls in our military readiness by reversing troop cuts, increasing investments in training and maintenance, and rebuilding facilities. It gives our troops the full pay raise to which they are entitled under the law and gives the next administration the ability to review operations and funding, make adjustments, and ask for more money if necessary. All this represents a sound start in supporting those who put their lives on the line in defense of our country, while protecting our national security in a dangerous world.

Military families must be assured of the pay, healthcare, housing, education, and overall support they have earned. In recent years, they have been carrying the burden of budgetary restraint more than any other Americans through cuts in their pay, health benefits, and retirement plans. About 75 percent of enlistees come from military families. We cannot expect that level of patriotic commitment to continue among young people who have experienced the way their families have been treated.

We must ensure that the nation keeps its commitments to those who signed on the dotted line of enlistment. The repeated troop deployments during conflicts in the Middle East have been unusually hard on all members of their households, worsening unemployment and underemployment

among spouses. In many cases, they and their children have been at war for 14 years. We must strengthen existing programs that offer families readjustment information and counseling, and we urge states to help by providing job programs, license reciprocity, one-stop service centers, and education.

The burden of our country's extended military involvement in the Middle East has taken a toll on our service personnel. Suicides among our military — active duty troops, reservists, National Guardsmen, and veterans — are at shocking levels, while post-service medical conditions, including addiction and mental illness, require more and more assistance. More than ever, our government must work with the private sector to advance opportunities and provide assistance to those wounded in spirit as well as in body, whether through experimental efforts like the PAWS (Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemen) program for service dogs or through the faith-based institutions that have traditionally been providers of counseling and aid.

We support the rights of conscience of military chaplains of all faiths to practice their faith free from political interference. We reject attempts by the Obama Administration to censure and silence them, particularly Christians and Christian chaplains. We support an increase in the size of the Chaplain Corps. A Republican commander-in-chief will protect the religious freedom of all military members, especially chaplains, and will not tolerate attempts to ban Bibles or religious symbols from military facilities. A Republican commander-in-chief will also encourage education regarding the religious liberties of military personnel under both the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the current National Defense Authorization Act.

Our country's all-volunteer force has been a success. We oppose the reinstatement of the draft, except in dire circumstances like world war, whether directly or through compulsory national service. We support the all-volunteer force and oppose unnecessary policy changes, including compulsory national service and Selective Service registration of women for a possible future draft. We reiterate our support for both the advancement of women in the military and their exemption from direct ground combat units and infantry battalions. We affirm the

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cultural values that encourage selfless service and superiority in battle, and we oppose anything which might divide or weaken team cohesion, including intra-military special interest demonstrations. In particular, we warn against modification or lessening of standards in order to satisfy a non-military agenda imposed by the White House. We call for an objective review of the impact on readiness of the current Administration's ideology-based personnel policies, and will correct problems with appropriate administrative, legal, or legislative action. We reject the use of the military as a platform for social experimentation and will not accept or continue attempts to undermine military priorities and mission readiness. We believe that our nation is most secure when the president and the administration prioritize readiness, recruitment, and retention rather than using the military to advance a social or political agenda. Military readiness should not be sacrificed on the altar of political correctness. We oppose legislative attempts to modify the system of military justice that would undermine its fairness and due process rights for all concerned, both the accuser and the accused.

**Citizen Soldiers:**

**National Guard and Reserves**

Our Reserve and National Guard forces are national assets that must be nurtured in a manner commensurate with their role as America's sentinels. Their historic mission as citizen-soldiers is a proud tradition linking every town and city across America to liberty's cause. Since September 11, 2001, the National Guard has transformed from a strategic reserve to a fully integrated operational fighting force. The Guard has bled on missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and the Sinai. Today, more than fifty percent of our Guardsmen have combat experience. The Guard has demonstrated its value to the nation not only in war but during emergencies

here at home such as Hurricane Katrina and Super Storm Sandy.

To avoid the overextension of our military, we support a larger active force and oppose the current Administration's cuts to the National Guard and Reserves. Those reductions are dangerous and counter-productive because the men and women of the Guard and Reserve tend to be older and more experienced than their active duty counterparts.

Guard and Reserve forces are currently deployed at historically high rates. The Army Reserve alone has soldiers in 30 countries. To its credit, the Republican Congress, by passing the National Defense Authorization Act, has moved to ensure these troops have what they need. That provision has triggered another veto threat from the Commander-in-Chief, even though the bill passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. He would have the members of the

Reserve and Guard train on, and potentially be deployed with, equipment that is no longer used by their active duty comrades. We cannot tolerate this endangerment of both our troops and our national security. Therefore, we recommend a permanent line item for National Guard affairs, one that is not eliminated by the President and reinstated by Congress. The guard is too essential to our national defense to be a secondary decision.

**Honoring and Supporting Our Veterans:  
A Sacred Obligation**

Our nation's veterans have been our nation's strength and remain a national resource. Their service to their country — as community leaders, volunteers, mentors, educators, problem solvers, and public officials — continues long after they leave the military. In the same way, our obligation to the one percent who defend the other ninety-nine percent does not end when they take off the uniform. America has a sacred trust with our veterans, and we are committed to ensuring them

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America has a sacred trust with our veterans, and we are committed to ensuring them and their families' care and dignity.

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and their families' care and dignity. The work of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is essential to meet our commitments to them: Providing health, education, disability, survivor, and home loan benefits, and arranging memorial services upon death. We heed Abraham Lincoln's command "to care for him who bore the battle." To care, as well, for the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, who must be assured of meaningful financial assistance, remains our solemn duty.

As shown by recent controversies at the Department, senior leaders must be held accountable for ensuring that their subordinates are more responsive to veterans' needs. The VA has failed those who have sacrificed the most for our freedom. The VA must move from a sometimes adversarial stance to an advocacy relationship with vets. To that end, we will empower the Secretary to hold all VA employees accountable and will seek fundamental change in the VA's senior leadership structure by placing presidential appointees, rather than careerists, in additional positions of significant responsibility. We cannot allow an unresponsive bureaucracy to blunt our national commitment. The VA must strengthen and improve its efforts through partnerships with private enterprises, veteran service organizations, technology and innovation, and competitive bidding to enable the VA to better provide both quality and timely care along with all earned benefits to our nation's veterans and their families. This will allow the VA to reduce the backlog and save immense resources all at the same time. Therefore, let us look to innovative solutions that allow higher quality VA care, reduce backlogs, and save immense resources all at the same time.

Our wounded warriors, whether still in service or discharged, deserve the best medical care the country can provide. We must make military and veterans' medicine the gold standard for mental health, traumatic brain injury, multiple traumas, loss of limbs, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Those injuries require a new commitment of targeted resources and personnel for treatment and care to advance recovery. That includes allowing veterans to choose to access care in the community and not just in VA facilities, because the best care in the world is not effective if it is not accessible. We

will seek to consolidate the VA's existing community care authorities to make a single program that will be easily understood by both veterans and VA healthcare providers.

Like the rest of American medicine, the VA faces a critical shortage of primary care and mental health physicians. That's why there are long waiting times to see a doctor and why doctors are often frustrated by the limited time they have with their patients. This is especially the case with mental health care, which often amounts to prescribing drugs because there are not enough psychologists and psychiatrists to do anything else. Inadequate treatment of PTSD drives other problems like suicide, homelessness, and unemployment. This situation may not be quickly reversed, but a Republican administration will begin, on day one, to undertake the job.

As a nation, we honor the sacrifice of our fallen service members at the graves where we lay them to rest in national, state, and veterans' cemeteries around the world. In doing so, we make it clear that their ultimate sacrifice and service to our country will never be forgotten. As a party, we seek to honor their sacrifice and comfort their families by ensuring all veterans' cemeteries are adequately equipped and a standard of care established, using Arlington Cemetery as a guide, that is befitting their service.

The level of financial distress and homelessness among vets is a shame to the nation. For a veteran, a job is more than a source of income. It is a new mission, with a new status, and the transition can be difficult. We urge the private sector to make hiring vets a company policy and commend the organizations that have proven programs to accomplish this. We will retain the preference given to veterans when they seek federal employment. We urge closer coordination with the state offices for veterans' affairs, particularly with regard to expediting disability claims, since those closest to an individual can often best diagnose a problem and apply a remedy. We will halt the current Administration's unconstitutional automatic denial of gun ownership to returning members of our Armed Forces who have had representatives appointed to manage their financial affairs. We urge state education officials to promote the hiring

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of qualified veterans as teachers in our public schools. Their proven abilities and life experiences will make them more successful instructors and role models for students than would any teaching certification.

Over-prescription of opioids has become a nationwide problem hindering the treatment of veterans suffering from mental health issues. We therefore support the need to explore new and broader ranges of options, including faith-based programs, that will better serve the veteran and reduce the need to rely on drugs as the sole treatment.

### **America: The Indispensable Nation**

For the last several generations, our country's two major political parties were dedicated to the nation's security and the advance of freedom around the world. Both had learned from mistakes of the past and realized that a weak America invited aggression. Both recognized the need to stand with friends and oppose those who wished us evil. Whatever their disagreements, both the Republican and Democratic parties stood for peace through strength — and strength meant American military superiority.

This bipartisan commitment has tragically changed. The leadership of the Democratic Party, both those in office and those who seek it, no longer see America as a force for good in the world. They do not stand by allies or stand strong against our foes. They pander to world opinion and neglect the national interest. They cannot be trusted to advance either the cause of liberty or our national security in the dangerous years in which we live.

We affirm our party's tradition of world leadership established by President Eisenhower and followed by every Republican president since. It stands for enormous power — and the prudence to use it sparingly, precisely, and only in grave necessity. It stands for involvement, not intervention. It requires consultation, not permission to act. It leads from the front — and ensures all others do their parts as well. It embraces American exceptionalism and rejects the false prophets of decline and diminution. It is, in sum, the way we will lead the world into a new century of greater peace and prosperity — another American Century.

### **Challenges of a Changing Middle East**

The Middle East is more dangerous now than at any time since the Second World War. Whatever their disagreements, presidents of both parties had always prioritized America's national interests, the trust of friendly governments, and the security of Israel. That sound consensus was replaced with impotent grandstanding on the part of the current President and his Secretaries of State. The results have been ruinous for all parties except Islamic terrorists and their Iranian and other sponsors.

We consider the Administration's deal with Iran, to lift international sanctions and make hundreds of billions of dollars available to the Mullahs, a personal agreement between the President and his negotiating partners and non-binding on the next president. Without a two-thirds endorsement by the Senate, it does not have treaty status. Because of it, the defiant and emboldened regime in Tehran continues to sponsor terrorism across the region, develop a nuclear weapon, test-fire ballistic missiles inscribed with "Death to Israel," and abuse the basic human rights of its citizens. A Republican president will not be bound by it. We must retain all options in dealing with a situation that gravely threatens our security, our interests, and the survival of our friends.

Over the last four years we have seen the rise of a murderous fanaticism in the form of ISIS, the so called Islamic State. Its reach now extends far beyond the Middle East to virtually every continent. ISIS has brought ancient butchery into the 21st century. Nations are imploding, erasing long-established borders. The Obama Administration and its Secretary of State so mishandled the Arab Spring that it destabilized the entire region. The hope some saw in the Arab Spring has transformed into disappointment. The dictator of Syria, Bashar Assad, has murdered hundreds of thousands of his own people and created millions of refugees, and an American president has been unable to rally the world against him. Understandably, our allies fear for their future in a region far more dangerous than it was eight years ago.

A Republican administration will restore our nation's credibility. We must stand up for our friends, challenge our foes, and destroy ISIS. Hezbollah, controlling over 100,000 missiles in Lebanon, must be isolated and Lebanon's independence restored.



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We will support the transition to a post-Assad Syrian government that is representative of its people, protects the rights of all minorities and religions, respects the territorial integrity of its neighbors, and contributes to peace and stability in the region. The Iraqi people have been on the front lines in the fight against terror. Hundreds of thousands have been killed, and the attacks against them continue, even in Baghdad. Our partnership with them should continue as long as ISIS and others like it survive in the region. We are deeply concerned that, in the face of genocide against them, Christian communities in cities like Erbil are receiving no financial support from either the U.S. government or the UN to help with displaced persons and urban refugees. Their survival is sustained only by private charities. This must change immediately. Defeating ISIS means more than pushing back its fighters while abandoning its victims. It must mean aiding those who have suffered the most — and doing so before they starve. It means supporting the long-term survival of indigenous religious and ethnic communities, punishing the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and conditioning humanitarian and military assistance to governments on their observable commitment to human rights.

We continue to support the Kurdish people, whose bravery and cooperation with our forces merit our respect and their autonomy. Many countries in the region have given, and continue to give, substantial assistance to the United States because they understand that our struggle against terrorism is not an ethnic or religious fight. They consider violent extremists to be abusers of their faith, not its champions. We applaud their courage and value their counsel. The U.S. government, together with its global partners, should mobilize its political, economic, and military assets to support the creation of a safe haven in northern Iraq to protect those ethnic and religious minorities continuing to face genocide at the hands of ISIS.

### **Our Unequivocal Support for Israel**

Like the United States of America, the modern state of Israel is a country born from the aspiration for freedom and stands out among the nations as a beacon of democracy and humanity. Beyond our mutual strategic interests, Israel is likewise an exceptional country that shares our most essential values. It is the only country in the Middle East where freedom of speech and freedom of religion are found. Therefore, support for Israel is an expression of Americanism, and it is the responsibility of our government to advance policies that reflect Americans' strong desire for a relationship with no daylight between America and Israel. We recognize Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of the Jewish state and call for the American embassy to be moved there in fulfillment of U.S. law.

We reaffirm America's commitment to Israel's security and will ensure that Israel maintains a qualitative military edge over any and all adversaries. We support Israel's right and obligation to defend itself against terror attacks upon its people and against alternative forms of warfare being waged upon it legally, economically, culturally, and otherwise. We reject the false notion that Israel is an occupier and specifically recognize that the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement

(BDS) is anti-Semitic in nature and seeks to destroy Israel. Therefore, we call for effective legislation to thwart actions that are intended to limit commercial relations with Israel, or persons or entities doing business in Israel or in Israeli-controlled territories, in a discriminatory manner.

The United States seeks to assist in the establishment of comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, to be negotiated among those living in the region. We oppose any measures intended to impose an agreement or to dictate borders or other terms, and we call for the immediate termination of all U.S. funding of any entity that attempts to do so. Our party is proud to stand with Israel now and always.

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It is the responsibility of our government to advance policies that reflect Americans' strong desire for a relationship with no daylight between America and Israel.

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**U.S. Leadership in the Asian Pacific**

We are a Pacific nation with economic, military, and cultural ties to all the countries of the oceanic rim and treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand. With them, we look toward the establishment of human rights for the people of North Korea. We urge the government of China to recognize the inevitability of change in the Kim family's slave state and, for everyone's safety against nuclear disaster, to hasten positive change on the Korean peninsula. The United States will continue to demand the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons program with full accounting of its proliferation activities. We also pledge to counter any threats from the North Korean regime.

We salute the people of Taiwan, with whom we share the values of democracy, human rights, a free market economy, and the rule of law. Our relations will continue to be based upon the provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act, and we affirm the Six Assurances given to Taiwan in 1982 by President Reagan. We oppose any unilateral steps by either side to alter the status quo in the Taiwan Straits on the principle that all issues regarding the island's future must be resolved peacefully, through dialogue, and be agreeable to the people of Taiwan. If China were to violate those principles, the United States, in accord with the Taiwan Relations Act, will help Taiwan defend itself. We praise efforts by the new government in Taipei to continue constructive relations across the Taiwan Strait and call on China to reciprocate. As a loyal friend of America, Taiwan has merited our strong support, including free trade agreement status, the timely sale of defensive arms including technology to build diesel submarines, and full participation in the World Health Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, and other multilateral institutions.

China's behavior has negated the optimistic language of our last platform concerning our future relations with China. The liberalizing policies of recent decades have been abruptly reversed, dissent brutally crushed, religious persecution heightened, the internet crippled, a barbaric population control two-child policy of forced abortions and forced sterilizations continued, and the cult of Mao revived.

Critics of the regime have been kidnapped by its agents in foreign countries. To distract the populace from its increasing economic problems and, more importantly, to expand its military might, the government asserts a preposterous claim to the entire South China Sea and continues to dredge ports and create landing fields in contested waters where none have existed before, ever nearer to U.S. territories and our allies, while building a navy far out of proportion to defensive purposes. The complacency of the Obama regime has emboldened the Chinese government and military to issue threats of intimidation throughout the South China Sea, not to mention parading their new missile, "the Guam Killer," down the main streets of Beijing, a direct shot at Guam as America's first line of defense. Meanwhile, cultural genocide continues in Tibet and Xinjiang, the promised autonomy of Hong Kong is eroded, the currency is manipulated, our technology is stolen, and intellectual property and copyrights are mocked in an economy based on piracy. In business terms, this is not competition; it is a hostile takeover. For any American company to abet those offenses, especially governmental censorship and tracking of dissenters, is a disgrace.

The return to Maoism by China's current rulers is not reason to disengage with the Chinese people or their institutions. We welcome students, tourists, and investors, who can see for themselves our vibrant American democracy and how real democracy works. We caution, however, against academic or cultural operations under the control of the Chinese government and call upon American colleges to dissociate themselves from this increasing threat to academic freedom and honest research.

Most of the nations of Southeast Asia have set aside crippling ideologies and sought material progress in free enterprise and democracy. We congratulate the people of Burma on their emergence from authoritarian rule and urge their respect for the rights of their country's minority populations. Our improved relations with Vietnam — including arms sales — must advance efforts to obtain an accounting for, and repatriation of the remains of, Americans who gave their lives in the cause of Vietnamese freedom. We cannot overlook the continued repression of fundamental rights and

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religious freedom, as well as retribution against ethnic minorities and others who assisted U.S. forces during the conflict there.

India is our geopolitical ally and a strategic trading partner. The dynamism of its people and the endurance of their democratic institutions are earning their country a position of leadership not only in Asia but throughout the world. We encourage the Indian government to permit expanded foreign investment and trade, the key to rising living standards for those left out of their country's energetic economy. For all of India's religious communities, we urge protection against violence and discrimination. Republicans note with pride the contributions to our country that are made by our fellow citizens of Indian ancestry.

Conflicts in the Middle East have created special political and military challenges for the people of Pakistan. Our working relationship is a necessary, though sometimes difficult, benefit to both, and we look toward the strengthening of historic ties that have frayed under the weight of international conflict. This process cannot progress as long as any citizen of Pakistan can be punished for helping the War on Terror. Pakistanis, Afghans, and Americans have a common interest in ridding the region of the Taliban and securing Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. That goal has been undermined by the current Administration's feckless treatment of troop commitments and blatant disregard of advice from commanders on the ground, particularly with regard to Afghanistan. A Republican president will work with all regional leaders to restore mutual trust while insisting upon progress against corruption and the narcotic trade that fuels insurgency.

#### **Renewing the European Alliance**

With bipartisan support, President Truman forged the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as an alliance of the western democracies. Its continued effectiveness is vital, especially in light of recent military challenges in Eastern Europe. With the American people spending on defense, per capita, four times the amount spent by Europeans, we demand, as we have in the past, that our fellow members of NATO fulfill their commitments and meet their need for greater investment in their armed forces.

Our historic ties to the peoples of Europe have been based on shared culture and values, common interests and goals. Their endurance cannot be taken for granted, especially in light of the continent's economic problems and demographic changes. We recognize with regret the increasing trend among many of our allies to move away from rights and liberties that Americans hold dear, especially freedom of speech. It would be a tragic irony if the nations of Europe which withstood Soviet repression were to now impose a form of it upon themselves.

We honor our special relationship with the people of the United Kingdom and are grateful for their staunch support in the fight against terrorism. We respect their decision concerning their nation's relationship to the European Union and pledge that, however much other international relationships may change, those who were first to our side in our hour of loss will always rank first in our policies and our esteem.

We thank the several nations of Europe that have contributed to a united effort in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Their support and sacrifice in the fight against Islamic terrorism will not be forgotten. We applaud the ongoing reconciliation in Northern Ireland and hope that its success might be replicated in Cyprus. We urge greater coordination in economic and security affairs between the United States and the republics of Eastern Europe. We urge that Poland be granted visa waiver status and we support placement of NATO troops in Poland.

For the people of Russia, we affirm our respect and our determination to maintain a friendship beyond the reach of those who wish to divide us. We have common imperatives: Ending terrorism, combating nuclear proliferation, promoting trade, and more. We also have a common problem: The continuing erosion of personal liberty and fundamental rights under the current officials in the Kremlin. Repressive at home and reckless abroad, their policies imperil the nations which regained their self-determination upon the collapse of the Soviet Union. We will meet the return of Russian belligerence with the same resolve that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. We will not accept any territorial change in Eastern Europe imposed

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by force, in Ukraine, Georgia, or elsewhere, and will use all appropriate constitutional measures to bring to justice the practitioners of aggression and assassination.

We urge greater attention in U.S. diplomacy, trade, and strategic planning, to the nations of Eurasia, formerly parts of the Soviet Empire. Caught between their two authoritarian neighbors, their path toward democratic institutions has been uncertain. We urge our government and our allies to work toward the integration of the Central Asian republics into the global economy through foreign investment, which can bring with it market and political reforms and a firmer establishment of the rule of law. Those developments will not only improve the living conditions throughout that vast area but are likely to reduce the lure of the radical ideologies that already threaten the region.

#### **Family of the Americas**

Our future is intimately tied to the future of the Americas. Family, language, culture, environment, and trade link us closely with both Canada and Mexico. Our relations with both of these friends will be based upon continuing cooperation and our mutually shared interests. Our attention to trade and environmental issues will contribute to strong economic growth and prosperity throughout the Americas.

We thank our neighbors in Mexico and Canada who have been our partners in the fight against terrorism and the war on drugs. The Mexican people deserve our assistance as they bravely resist the drug cartels that traffic in death on both sides of our border. Their rich cultural and religious heritage, shared by many millions of our fellow citizens, should foster greater understanding and cooperation between our countries.

Our Canadian neighbors can count on our cooperation and respect. To advance North America's energy independence, we intend to reverse the current Administration's blocking of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Apart from its economic value, that project has become a symbol in the contest between the public's desire for economic development and the government's hostility to growth. We stand with the people.

We express our solidarity with all the peoples

of the Western Hemisphere. Their aspirations for economic betterment and political liberty have deserved better from our government than its policies of the last eight years. The current Administration has abandoned America's friends and rewarded its enemies. A Republican president will never embrace a Marxist dictator, in Venezuela or anywhere else. The current chief executive has allowed that country to become a narco-terrorist state, an Iranian outpost threatening Central America, and a safe haven for the agents of Hezbollah. Now, with their country ruined by socialism and on the verge of chaos, the Venezuelan people are fighting to restore their democracy and regain their rights. When they triumph, as they surely will, the United States will stand ready to help them restore their country to the family of the Americas.

We affirm our friendship and admiration for the people of Colombia and call on the Republican Congress to express its solidarity with their decades-long fight against the terrorist FARC. Their sacrifice and suffering must not be betrayed by the accession to power of murderers and drug lords.

We want to welcome the people of Cuba back into our hemispheric family — after their corrupt rulers are forced from power and brought to account for their crimes against humanity. We stand with the Women in White and all the victims of the loathsome regime that clings to power in Havana. We do not say this lightly: They have been betrayed by those who are currently in control of U.S. foreign policy. The current Administration's "opening to Cuba" was a shameful accommodation to the demands of its tyrants. It will only strengthen their military dictatorship. We call on the Congress to uphold current U.S. law which sets conditions for the lifting of sanctions on the island: Legalization of political parties, an independent media, and free and fair internationally-supervised elections. We call for a dedicated platform for the transmission of Radio and TV Martí and for the promotion of internet access and circumvention technology as tools to strength Cuba's pro-democracy movement. We support the work of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba and affirm the principles of the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966, recognizing the rights of Cubans fleeing Communism.

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### **Africa: The Promise and the Challenge**

We recognize Africa's extraordinary potential. Both the United States and our many African allies will become stronger through investment, trade, and promotion of the democratic and free market principles that have brought prosperity around the world. We pledge to be the best partner of all African nations in their pursuit of economic freedom and human rights. The Republican Congress has extended to 2025 the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and President George W. Bush's health initiatives — AIDS relief under PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria — continue to save millions of lives. Peace Corps volunteers and U.S. Seabees teach and build in villages that know firsthand our country's idealism.

We stand in solidarity with those African countries now under assault by the forces of radical Islam: Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and others like them. Their terror falls on both Muslims and Christians, on anyone who will not submit to their savage ideology. We urge governments throughout the continent to recognize this threat to their own people. We support closer cooperation in both military and economic matters with those on the front lines of civilization's battle against the forces of evil.

### **Sovereign American Leadership in International Organizations**

There is no substitute for principled American leadership. Since the end of World War II, the United States, through the founding of the United Nations and NATO, has participated in a number of international organizations which can, but sometimes do not, serve the cause of peace and prosperity. While acting through them our country must always reserve the right to go its own way. We must not be silent about our country's cause. That is why we have long supported our country's international broadcasting to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

Our continued participation in the United Nations should be contingent upon the enactment of long-overdue changes in the way that institution functions. American taxpayers, the chief funders of the U.N., deserve full transparency in the financial

operations of its overpaid bureaucrats. We should no longer tolerate its managerial scandals, its Human Rights Council composed of some of the world's worst tyrants, and its treatment of Israel as a pariah state. The U.N.'s Population Fund has, from its origin, been rooted in no-growth policies that limit economic development in the countries needing it most. Its complicity in China's barbaric program of forced abortion led President Reagan to set a wall of separation — his Mexico City Policy, which prohibits the granting of federal monies to non-governmental organizations that provide or promote abortion. We affirm his position and, in light of plummeting birth rates around the world, suggest a reevaluation of the U.N.'s record on economic progress.

Precisely because we take our country's treaty obligations seriously, we oppose ratification of international agreements whose long-range implications are ominous or unclear. We do not support the U.N. Convention on Women's Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, as well as various declarations from the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development. Because of our concern for American sovereignty, domestic management of our fisheries, and our country's long-term energy needs, we have deep reservations about the regulatory, legal, and tax regimes inherent in the Law of the Sea Treaty. We emphatically reject U.N. Agenda 21 as erosive of U.S. sovereignty, and we oppose any form of Global Tax.

To shield members of our Armed Forces and others in service to America from ideological prosecutions overseas, the Republican Party does not accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. We support statutory protection for U.S. personnel and officials as they act abroad to meet our global security requirements, and we deplore the current inaction of the Administration in that regard. Our service members must be subject only to American law.

### **Defending International Religious Freedom**

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, an initiative of Congressional Republicans, has been neglected by the current

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Administration at a time when its voice more than ever needs to be heard. Religious minorities across the Middle East have been driven from their ancient homelands, and thousands, there and in Africa, have been slaughtered for their faith in what the State Department has, belatedly, labeled genocide. The United States must stand with leaders, like President Sisi of Egypt who has bravely protected the rights of Coptic Christians in Egypt, and call on other leaders across the region to ensure that all religious minorities, whether Yazidi, Bahai, Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant Christians, are free to practice their religion without fear of persecution. At a time when China has renewed its destruction of churches, Christian home-schooling parents are jailed in parts of Europe, and even Canada threatens pastors for their preaching, a Republican administration will return the advocacy of religious liberty to a central place in its diplomacy, will quickly designate the systematic killing of religious and ethnic minorities a genocide, and will work with the leaders of other nations to condemn and combat genocidal acts.

**America's Generosity: International Assistance that Makes a Difference**

Foreign aid must serve America's interests first. In today's world of complex challenges, international assistance is a critical tool for advancing America's security and economic interests by preventing conflict, building stability, opening markets for private investment, and responding to suffering and need with the compassion that is at the heart of our country's values. A strong commitment to international development and diplomacy, alongside defense, was a key component of President Reagan's "peace through strength" strategy. It can sometimes serve as an alternative means of keeping the peace, far less costly both in dollars and in human lives than military engagement. The Millennium Challenge Corporation, spearheaded by the last Republican Administration, has established a new model of foreign assistance that helps ensure taxpayer dollars are spent on projects that are effective, results-driven, transparent, and accountable. We must embrace this model throughout our foreign assistance programs and efforts as a catalyst for private sector investment to combat corruption, strengthen the rule of law, and open new markets

for American goods and services in a competitive global economy. Foreign assistance programs must not only project the best of American values, but must work to create self-sustainability and leverage the resources and capacity of the private sector. Even more important is the overseas assistance — billions of dollars and volunteer hours — provided by America's foundations, educational institutions, faith-based groups, and charitable individuals. Their essential role in international development should be weighed in any revision of the tax code.

The advance of political freedom and entrepreneurial capitalism drives economic growth, catalyzes private sector development, and is the only sustainable solution to poverty. Over the last 50 years, the level of private investment overseas from the United States has eclipsed aid many times over. Our development strategy must build on recent Republican efforts to use foreign assistance to catalyze private sector investment and expertise in addressing global challenges that can build a more stable world and advance America's national security and economic interests.

The integrity of our country's foreign assistance program has been compromised by the current Administration's attempt to impose on foreign recipients, especially the peoples of Africa, its own radical social agenda while excluding faith-based groups — the sector with the best track record in promoting development — because they will not conform to that agenda. We pledge to reverse this course, encouraging more involvement by the most effective aid organizations and trusting developing peoples to build their futures through their own values.

**Advancing Human Rights**

To those who stand in the darkness of tyranny, America has always been a beacon of hope, and so it must remain. Radical Islamic terrorism poses an existential threat to personal freedom and peace around the world. We oppose its brutal assault on all human beings, all of whom have inherent dignity. The Republican Party stands united with all victims of terrorism and will fight at home and abroad to destroy terrorist organizations and protect the lives and fundamental liberties of all people. Republicans have led the way in promoting initiatives that have protected and rescued millions of the world's

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most vulnerable and persecuted. Standing up for repressed religious groups, prisoners of conscience, women trafficked into sexual slavery, and those suffering from disease or starvation is not just consistent with American values. It advances important security and economic interests as well. A Republican administration will never say, as Hillary Clinton did as Secretary of State in 2009, that raising human rights concerns “can’t interfere with the global economic crisis, the global climate change crisis, and the security crisis.”

The United States needs a radical rethinking of our human rights diplomacy. A Republican administration will adopt a “whole of government” approach to protect fundamental freedoms globally, one where pressing human rights and rule of law issues are integrated at every appropriate level of our bilateral relationships and strategic decision-making. Republican policy will reflect the fact that the health of the U.S. economy and environment, the safety of our food and drug supplies, the security of our investments and personal information in cyberspace, and the stability and security of the oceans will increasingly depend on allowing the free flow of news and information and developing an independent judiciary and civil society in countries with repressive governments such as China, Russia, and many nations in the Middle East and Africa.

**Liberty to Captives:  
Combatting Human Trafficking**

As an estimated 21 million people worldwide are trapped in modern day slavery, we are reminded to be vigilant against human trafficking in whatever form it appears. We will use the full force of the law against those who engage in commercial sexual exploitation and forced or bonded labor of men, women, or children; involuntary domestic servitude; trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal; and the illegal recruitment and use of child soldiers. Building on the accomplishments of the last Republican administration in implementing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, we call for increased diplomatic efforts and accountability for foreign governments to prosecute traffickers, including penalties for any public officials who may be complicit in this devastating crime. We will highlight the need to stop slave labor, taking steps

to prevent overseas labor contractors who exploit foreign workers from supporting military bases abroad or exporting goods to the United States. A Republican administration will strategize with partners around the world to prevent the demand for trafficking victims that makes exploitation lucrative and will prosecute sex tourists and domestic buyers to the fullest extent of the law. We will work at home and abroad to ensure that trafficking victims are identified among migrants, refugees, and our own citizens so they receive the rehabilitative care needed to heal and thrive.

America’s continuing participation in the international campaign against human trafficking merits our support. The goal of our domestic anti-trafficking programs should be the rescue and safe return of victims to their homes, not creating a long-term dependency upon public support. We call for greater scrutiny of overseas labor contractors to prevent abuses against temporary foreign workers brought to the United States. The horrific deaths of smuggled workers on our southwestern border at the hands of drug cartels and other gangs highlight the need for total security in that region.

**Facing 21st Century Threats:**

**Cybersecurity in an Insecure World**

Cyber attacks against our businesses, institutions, and the government itself have become almost routine. They will continue until the world understands that an attack will not be tolerated — that we are prepared to respond in kind and in greater magnitude. Despite their promises to the contrary, Russia and China see cyber operations as a part of a warfare strategy during peacetime. Our response should be to cause diplomatic, financial, and legal pain, curtailing visas for guilty parties, freezing their assets, and pursuing criminal actions against them. We should seek to weaken control over the internet by regimes that engage in cyber crimes. We must stop playing defense and go on offense to avoid the cyber-equivalent of Pearl Harbor.

The Republican Congress has passed important legislation to advance information-sharing among entities endangered by cyber attacks. We will explore the possibility of a free market for Cyber-Insurance and make clear that users have a self-

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defense right to deal with hackers as they see fit. It is critical that we protect the cyber supply chain to ensure against contamination of components made all over the world, sometimes in offending countries. Our own cyber workforce should be expanded with the assistance of the military, business, and hacker communities to better protect our country.

### **Protection Against an Electromagnetic Pulse**

A single nuclear weapon detonated at high altitude over this country would collapse our electrical grid and other critical infrastructures and endanger the lives of millions. With North Korea in possession of nuclear missiles and Iran close to having them, an EMP is no longer a theoretical concern — it is a real threat. Moreover, China and Russia include sabotage as part of their warfare planning. Nonetheless, hundreds of electrical utilities in the United States have not acted to protect themselves from EMP, and they cannot be expected to do so voluntarily since homeland security is a government responsibility. The President, the Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the States, the utilities, and the private sector should work together on an urgent basis to enact Republican legislation, pending in both chambers, to

protect the national grid and encourage states to take the initiative to protect their own grids expeditiously.

### **Confronting Internet Tyranny**

Internet firewall circumvention and anti-censorship technology must become a national priority in light of the way authoritarian governments such as China, Cuba, and Iran restrict free press and isolate their people limiting political, cultural, and religious freedom. Leaders of authoritarian governments argue that governments have the same legal right to control internet access as they do to control migrant access. A focus on internet freedom is a cost-effective means of peacefully advancing fundamental freedoms in closed and authoritarian societies. But it is also an important economic interest, as censorship constitutes a trade barrier for U.S. companies operating in societies like China with advanced firewall protection policies.

A Republican administration will champion an open and free internet based on principles of free expression and universal values and will pursue policies to empower citizens and U.S. companies operating in authoritarian countries to circumvent internet firewalls and gain accurate news and information online.



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