

MINNESOTA



DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR PARTY

**2008-2010 Party Platform
Ongoing Platform
Action Agenda
Legislative Priorities**

Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party Ongoing Platform

Thank you for your interest in the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party Platform. This document is part of the platform, known as the Ongoing Platform. These statements embody the beliefs and principles of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, and consist of statements of support or opposition with regard to particular policies. Each of these items has received at least a 60% affirmative vote at a State Convention of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. The categories are arranged alphabetically, and the ordering of the points does not reflect rank or priority.

AGRICULTURE

The family farm is the keystone of our society and must be preserved.

We Support:

- Preservation and protection of farmland through soil conservation and sound sustainable ecological practices.
- The economic well-being of rural communities through the preservation of small business and family farms and fair prices for agricultural products.
- Access to farm credit at reasonable terms and interest rates, including temporary relief during economic emergencies.
- Educational research and development programs, including sustainable agriculture.
- Cooperative and marketing systems structured for the financial security of producers and improvement of products.
- Use of agricultural surpluses to alleviate hunger in the United States and all other nations.

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

We believe American business, properly encouraged and regulated, can bring economic prosperity to all, but if it does not, we believe government should take appropriate actions to bring about that prosperity.

We Support:

- Reasonable regulations that encourage fair competition, ensure safety, environmental and labor standards, and prevent price discrimination.
- Community reinvestment to promote local business and home ownership.
- Small business development, especially ownership by members of economically disadvantaged groups.
- Regulation of interstate businesses, especially banks, to prevent adverse effects on locally owned businesses and banks.
- Economic investment in troubled regions or industries.
- Responsible use of economic development funds.
- Businesses that build, employ, and invest in the United States.
- Affordable housing for all Minnesotans, including assistance to local governments that promote mixed-income housing opportunities.

CIVIL, HUMAN, AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

We recognize that when the rights of any citizen are threatened, the rights of all are endangered. We therefore pledge to preserve our constitutional and civil rights.

We Support:

- Separation of church and state and the right to privacy.
- Only voluntary enlistment in the armed services.

We Oppose:

- Discrimination against any person on the basis of race, creed, religion, immigration status, sex, sexual or affectional orientation, HIV status, marital or homemaker status, disability or age.
- Government interference in all matters related to the control of one's own body, including protection of the rights of women to bear children, practice birth control and obtain safe and legal abortions, and the rights of patients and their families, guardians, and physicians to honor a decision not to extend life by artificial means.
- Barriers to participation in society.

CONSUMER ISSUES

We believe consumers have a right to safe and reasonably priced products, fair treatment in the marketplace, and complete and accurate information about products and services.

We Support:

- Fully funded consumer education and public enforcement to protect consumers from fraudulent practices.
- Equally available and affordable goods and services that meet consumer needs such as public utilities, transportation, consumer credit, insurance, telecommunications access and housing.
- Food quality and labeling standards that protect the public from unsafe food products and deceptive labeling.
- Licensing of health care professionals and counselors and establishment of health care data collection systems to inform the public about costs and quality of health care.
- Requiring housing inspection when government-backed mortgage loans are involved, with liability for failure to notice defects.

EDUCATION

We believe a vigorous and universally available system of public education is basic to a productive, democratic society.

We Support:

- A strong system of public education at all levels, with stable funding and equal educational opportunities.
- Academic freedom, student and faculty rights, and church-state separation in public school curriculum and educational funding.
- Moderate class sizes and a safe, suitable environment for both students and teachers.
- A broad curriculum of liberal arts, technology, and social issues.
- High standards for teachers and compensation that reflects the responsibilities society places on them.
- Effective services in the areas of health, counseling, careers, and nutrition.
- Publicly accessible, high quality libraries and information systems.
- High quality, well-funded post-secondary education, affordable for everyone.
- Continuing education and adult literacy programs.

ENERGY

We believe in safe, sustainable and secure energy sources that offer coming generations access to fuels and power.

We Support:

- Increased use of renewable energy sources.
- Aggressive energy conservation in transportation, commercial, industrial, residential and governmental sectors.
- Decreasing dependence on nuclear power.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC

We pledge to ensure the political rights of all citizens through fair elections and responsible government.

We Support:

- Campaign finance reform, including:
 - a. Fair public financing of presidential and congressional elections.
 - b. A ban on gifts from lobbyists to elected officials.
 - c. Disclosure of financial political campaign support.
- Enforcement of standards of ethical conduct and accountability for elected officials.
- Ensuring public availability of government information.
- Policies that enforce honest conduct by government officials and contractors who provide services to government agencies.
- Adequate government funding for research and development in areas of humanitarian and scientific significance.
- Government agency actions that ensure citizen safety and fair treatment.

- Providing veterans and military personnel with the appreciation, respect, and benefits deserved because of honorable service to our country.
- Efforts to locate and bring home service personnel who are prisoners of war or missing in action.
- Native American tribes' rights to self-government and the generation of revenue to serve their people.

We Oppose:

- Unnecessary government regulations.
- Using government agencies for political purposes.
- Laws and policies that restrict government employees' right to participate in the political process.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

We believe that all people should have the opportunity to be self-sufficient, secure and healthy. Cost-effective and adequately funded programs can help ensure these basic needs.

We Support:

- Nationally funded, community-based comprehensive and affordable health care for all.
- Services to children to ensure their healthy start in life.
- Adequate provision for the needs of physically, mentally or emotionally challenged persons, including in-home and institutional care services.
- Institutional and outpatient mental health programs and services that provide equal access, continuity of care, and protection of patient rights.
- Private and public funding for health care programs that include pregnancy care, family planning and abortions, regardless of age or income.
- Expedited funding for AIDS and HIV research, and care for the afflicted.
- Programs to assist displaced persons, including refugees, displaced homemakers, and the homeless.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

We promote the American labor movement and the rights of all workers.

We Support:

- The right of workers to organize and bargain collectively.
- Comparable wage standards and pay equity.
- A minimum wage that keeps pace with inflation and provides full time workers with an income above the poverty level.
- Adequate compensation for injured workers.
- Programs to promote full employment.
- Hiring Minnesotans for jobs created when state/local tax incentives are involved in development projects.

We Oppose:

- The permanent replacement of striking workers.
- Sexual harassment in the workplace.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

We recognize the intertwined relationship between national security and international policy. We believe in a foreign policy that strives for international cooperation, supports human rights, and respects international justice. Such a policy will have the effect of restoring American leadership in world affairs and thereby greatly enhancing the security of our borders as well as the safety of our citizens at home and abroad

We Support:

- Free elections and democracy.
- Foreign aid that helps people achieve economic self-sufficiency.
- Fair trade policies based on mutual understanding of each country's problems and culture.
- The protection and promotion of women's rights, including comprehensive, adequately funded international family planning programs. Countries receiving foreign aid must be required to protect and promote women's rights.
- United Nations mediation of international conflicts and global reduction in armed forces and nuclear and conventional weapons.

- Israel's right to exist within secure borders, Palestinian rights to self-determination, and continued peace efforts in the Middle East.
- Marine life conservation and prohibition of drift netting.
- International cooperation to protect the global environment in areas such as preventing acid rain, preserving the rainforests, preserving the ozone layer, and preventing global warming.

We Oppose:

- Terrorism, and dictatorial and exploitative international policies.
- All forms of United States exploitation in foreign countries, and any attempts to dictate their political systems.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

We believe in leaving the world in better condition than we found it.

We Support:

- Preservation of biodiversity and wilderness.
- Strong environmental programs with provisions for strong enforcement that provide for healthy surroundings for all citizens and for sustainable, long term use of natural resources and a strong role for government in environmental protection.
- Living and working conditions free from significant exposure to poisons and radioactivity in air, water and soil.
- Responsibility of individuals, businesses and government to notify others of possible environmental hazards, to clean up those they have created, and to compensate others for any resulting damages.
- Industry incentives, public education and collection programs to reduce consumption of resources and production of hazardous waste.

We Oppose:

- Disposal of hazardous wastes below ground.
- Nuclear power, as it is not a viable energy source.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

We advocate strong law enforcement policies combined with vigorous crime prevention programs that emphasize education, treatment and rehabilitation.

We Support:

- Protection of victims of crime through the mandatory arrest of domestic abusers and mandatory sentences for convicted rapists, as well as government-funded programs to house, treat, counsel and educate victims of abuse, rape or other violence.
- Protection of children exposed to abuse or violence, with stiff penalties for child abusers.
- Reasonable firearm policies that promote public safety and crime prevention without infringing on the rights of hunters and other sports enthusiasts.
- Enforcement of traffic safety laws, particularly against chemically impaired drivers.
- Mandatory sentencing of drug dealers.
- Abolition of capital punishment, and freedom from unreasonable searches, seizures and surveillance contrary to our constitutional rights.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

We believe all Americans have a right to a secure retirement.

We Support:

- The independent status of Social Security, with funds invested and used solely for payment of benefits.
- Full funding of Medicare and Medicaid.
- Full funding and protection of retirement programs.

TAX AND BUDGET POLICY

We believe government budgets must be based on sound fiscal policies and fair taxation aimed at achieving economic growth, conservation of resources and full employment.

We Support:

- Balancing the federal budget and reducing the National debt.
- A progressive tax structure with minimal reliance on sales and excise taxes.

- Taxing all income producing property owned by tax-exempt organizations, at the same rate as other income producing property.
- Establishing a lower tax base for industry in rural areas of Minnesota as an aid to the economic well-being of those areas.
- Taxing agricultural lands on the basis of production value rather than market value.
- Providing tax incentives for equity investment in small businesses.
- Reducing the military budget and using the savings to fund social, scientific and environmental programs and research and development.
- Exempting senior citizens from paying property taxes if their income does not exceed 125% of the poverty level and they live in single-family homes.
- Denying tax exemptions for schools that practice or advocate racial segregation.

TRANSPORTATION

We believe that in order to prosper, all residents and businesses must have access to efficient and affordable transportation.

We Support:

- Multi-modal, environmentally sensitive solutions that use natural resources efficiently.
- Well-designed and maintained roads and bridges throughout the state.
- Increased investment in Minnesota's transportation and infrastructure, on a regional and statewide basis, including public transportation,

mass transit, commuter rail corridor, light rail, buses, pedestrians and bicycles.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

We honor and respect the men and women who have served and are serving our country. We must advocate for their physical and emotional well-being, both abroad and at home, as well as their economic security. We must ensure that our military is the best-trained, equipped, and supported force in the world and that the men and women of our military are ready to meet the new threats of the 21st century. Their sacrifices and those of their families must never be forgotten.

We Support:

- Providing veteran' benefits to members of the state militia (National Guard and Air National Guard) and military reserves deployed in active federal service equal to those provided to members of the active military as defined by Article 10.
- Providing timely and sufficient funding to appropriate government agencies to honor all our obligations to active duty military and military veterans.
- Providing veterans and military personnel with appreciation, respect, and benefits merited through honorable service to our country.
- Efforts to locate and bring home service personnel who are prisoners of war or missing in action.
- Only voluntary enlistment in the armed service.

Minnesota DFL 2008-2010 Action Agenda

The DFL Action Agenda contains the specific positions adopted by each State Convention on important state and national public policy issues that the party supports in order to enact the principles in the ongoing platform. The DFL Action Agenda is effective until the next State Convention convenes, subject to any modifications or additions adopted by the State Central Committee between state conventions pursuant to the party's bylaws.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

- Promote local foods, sustainable agricultural practices on small family farms, and implement environmental safeguards to protect Minnesota's water resources.
- Require government agencies, including the EPA, FDA, FEMA, and the USDA, to fill vacated positions with qualified personnel, including scientists.
- Maintain the right of counties, cities and townships to set stricter standards than those required by the state for land use and local development, including feedlots, and to enact zoning ordinances to protect the health and well-being of their community.

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Support green industries and the jobs they produce by creating incentives for manufacturing and installing solar energy systems, state loans for schools and local governments who install renewable energy technology, encouraging green construction standards, the creation of green industry manufacturing parks, investment in public transit, and public education and research which support green industries.

CIVIL, HUMAN, AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

- Oppose the practice of "racial profiling" by law enforcement and airport security agencies.
- Allow same-gender couples to marry and to share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities and commitment of civil marriage.
- In the absence of marriage equality, fully recognize civil unions for same-sex domestic partners and make available to them all the rights, privileges, and protections available to married couples.
- Oppose any amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that prohibits or limits marriage, civil unions, and/or legal protections to same-sex couples.
- Repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy of the U.S. military and open service of gay and lesbians in the armed forces.
- Support domestic partner benefits for all public employees in Minnesota.
- Reform immigration policy to include a path to citizenship, support family reunification; legalize future migration flows, protect due process and human rights, and protect U.S. workers and employers.
- Provide full wheelchair accessibility in all public buildings.
- Pass the Constitutional Amendment For Equality

CONSUMER ISSUES

- Require pharmacists to distribute medication prescribed by a physician without moral judgment or discrimination.
- Crack down on predatory lending and other mortgage fraud, provide remedies for borrowers to prevent foreclosures, and protect the rights of tenants living in foreclosed properties.

EDUCATION

- Reaffirm our commitment to Minnesota's education system, a commitment that includes strong support for uniform and equal educational opportunities for all students, professional salaries and benefits for education employees, and adequate state funding for all education programs in early childhood, K-12, special education and higher education.
- Repeal the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Reduce class sizes in Minnesota schools.
- Equitably fund all public schools, regardless of their geographical location
- Make public higher education affordable to all citizens by providing state and federal financial aid grants, loans, and tax credits based on family income.

- Adequately fund the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) by requiring the state to meet its legally stipulated 67% share of college instructional costs.
- Fully fund all special education mandates by the Federal and State government.
- Fund Head Start at levels that permit all eligible families that want to participate to do so.
- Invest in public schools and fund the per pupil formula to make up for the past under-funding as well as keep pace with future inflation.
- Support state and federal funding for family planning services and age-appropriate, medically accurate comprehensive sex education programs in schools.
- Allow any graduate of a Minnesota high school to qualify for resident college or university tuition regardless of their parent's immigration status.

ENERGY

- Increase corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) standards to 50 miles per gallon by 2015 and promote mass transportation in an effort to further reduce green house gas emissions.
- Reduce dependence on foreign oil through renewable energy, by encouraging research and use of wind and solar, bio-diesel and biomass conversion.
- Roll back tax credits to big oil, gas, and coal companies and redirect the funds to alternative energy resources.
- Provide tax credits for alternative energy sources, such as wind, solar, bio-mass, fuel cell, etc. Also provide education and resources in the form of grants and low interest loans and provide energy tax credits for small wind producers.
- Fund public research and development of alternative energy resources.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC

- Launch a full inquiry into the conduct of the Iraq War, including the abuse of Executive Privilege, and pursue criminal charges where warranted. Pursue war profiteers and enforce existing laws on competitive bidding, including adhering to transparent open public bidding, and eliminate single sourcing and enormous contracts.
- Adopt Instant Runoff Voting for state and local elections.
- Conduct all elections with verifiable paper ballots and require that all data cards and electronic voting equipment be tested by an organization independent of the voting equipment manufacturers.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- Expand access to Minnesota Care to the general public, including small businesses and farmers.
- Increase funding for the continuum of services needed for Minnesota's homeless children and youth, including changes in child welfare, foster care, corrections and mental health systems that ensure that all Minnesota's children and youth have safe, stable homes and the opportunity to thrive in the community.
- Enact the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Insurance Parity Act, make mental health treatment accessible to residents of small towns and rural areas, and fund affordable, supportive housing for people suffering from mental illness.
- Require federal negotiations with pharmaceutical companies to obtain lower drug prices for federally funded insurance programs including, but not limited to, Medicare and Medicaid.
- Enact a Universal Single Payer Health Care Plan on a federal level and the Minnesota Health Act at the state level.
- Establish universal, comprehensive, affordable, high quality health care for all including prescription medications.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

- Pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) to ensure workers have the freedom to form and join a union without fear of retaliation. Oppose all efforts to make it harder for workers to organize and work to eliminate or abolish the "Right to Work" laws currently in effect in many states.
- Increase the Minnesota minimum wage to \$7.80 per hour to reduce poverty, enhance the rewards of work, and restore inflationary losses to the wage floor. Institute automatic annual increases tied to inflation.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

- Formulate and implement a strategic plan to withdraw from Iraq in a respectful and thoughtful manner.
- Oppose all forms of torture as defined by the Geneva conventions and establish the Army Field Manual for Interrogations (FM 2-22.3) as the minimum standard of treatment for all detainees, and end the extraordinary rendition of prisoners to countries that use torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.
- Repeal the Patriot Act.
- Take every possible action, consistent with non-unilateral, diplomatic, economic and other non-violent strategies, to safeguard the security of innocent non-combatant men, women, and children in Darfur, where the United States has declared a genocide to be occurring.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Sign the Kyoto protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to slow the effects of global warming.
- Shift to a sustainable economy based on energy efficiency and expanded use of clean renewable energy production, such as wind and solar power because global warming is real and climate change is a major threat.
- Oppose attempts by the oil industry and other special interest groups to open the Alaskan Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and other fragile natural environments to destructive oil and gas exploration.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Extend the statutes of limitation for civil claims to protect the victims of childhood sexual abuse based upon the concept of delayed discovery.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

- Oppose privatizing Social Security.
- Take measures to ensure Social Security is sustained for younger generations.

TAX AND BUDGET POLICY

- Close tax loopholes that reward corporations for relocating jobs overseas.
- Repeal the Bush administration tax cuts that are fiscally unsound and only benefit the top 1% of income earners.

TRANSPORTATION

- Develop mass transit options in the State of Minnesota including light rail, commuter rail and high-speed rail. These systems should be interconnecting, with stations linking to busses, sidewalks, and trails.
- Create long-term funding and revenue solutions to construct, operate maintain, repair and rebuild as necessary America's transportation and infrastructure systems, including highways, bridges, transit systems, dams, water, and sewage systems.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

- Remove barriers that prevent or hamper military members and veterans from seeking and receiving diagnosis and treatment for mental health issues, including combat stress and posttraumatic stress disorder, while guaranteeing direct and immediate face-to-face access to qualified mental health professionals.
- Provide veterans education benefits at the same level as the World War II GI bill to cover costs of tuition, books, and monthly stipend for housing.
- Enact a Veteran's Reemployment Act to prohibit any employer from terminating without cause any National Guard or Reserve veteran returning to the position the veteran held when ordered to active duty.
- Expand the availability of housing for veterans who need emergency homeless shelter, transitional housing, or permanent homes.
- Improve services for veterans needing home healthcare and adaptive modality for living with a service connected disability.
- Provide adequate funds for county and tribal veteran service officers to assist veterans and their families, including mental health counseling and reintegration programs.
- Provide lifetime health care and other veterans' benefits to members of the reserves and National Guard deployed in active federal service equal to those provided to members of the active military.

Minnesota DFL 2008-2010 Legislative Priorities

These priorities are drawn from the party's platform resolutions by the Platform Commission and approved by the State Executive Committee. We work with DFL elected officials to enact meaningful legislation that achieves these goals. The categories are arranged alphabetically, and the ordering of the points does not reflect rank or priority. Please Remember: All Legislative Priorities are Action Agenda Item. The Action Agenda items listed below have been elevated to the Legislative Priority list.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

- Promote local foods, sustainable agricultural practices on small family farms, and implement environmental safeguards to protect Minnesota's water resources.

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Support green industries and the jobs they produce by creating incentives for manufacturing and installing solar energy systems, state loans for schools and local governments who install renewable energy technology, encouraging green construction standards, the creation of green industry manufacturing parks, investment in public transit, and public education and research which support green industries.

CIVIL, HUMAN, AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

- Oppose the practice of "racial profiling" by law enforcement and airport security agencies.
- Allow same-gender couples to marry and to share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities and commitment of civil marriage.
- Reform immigration policy to include a path to citizenship, support family reunification; legalize future migration flows, protect due process and human rights, and protect U.S. workers and employers.
- Provide full wheelchair accessibility in all public buildings.

CONSUMER ISSUES

- Require pharmacists to distribute medication prescribed by a physician without moral judgment or discrimination.
- Crack down on predatory lending and other mortgage fraud, provide remedies for borrowers to prevent foreclosures, and protect the rights of tenants living in foreclosed properties.

EDUCATION

- Reaffirm our commitment to Minnesota's education system, a commitment that includes strong support for uniform and equal educational opportunities for all students, professional salaries and benefits for education employees, and adequate state funding for all education programs in early childhood, K-12, special education and higher education.
- Repeal the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Equitably fund all public schools, regardless of their geographical location
- Make public higher education affordable to all citizens by providing state and federal financial aid grants, loans, and tax credits based on family income.
- Adequately fund the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) by requiring the state to meet its legally stipulated 67% share of college instructional costs.
- Fully fund all special education mandates by the Federal and State government.

ENERGY

- Provide tax credits for alternative energy sources, such as wind, solar, bio-mass, fuel cell, etc. Also provide education and resources in the form of grants and low interest loans and provide energy tax credits for small wind producers.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC

- Launch a full inquiry into the conduct of the Iraq War, including the abuse of Executive Privilege, and pursue criminal charges where warranted. Pursue war profiteers and enforce existing laws on competitive bidding, including adhering to transparent open public bidding, and eliminate single sourcing and enormous contracts.
- Adopt Instant Runoff Voting for state and local elections.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- Expand access to Minnesota Care to the general public, including small businesses and farmers.
- Increase funding for the continuum of services needed for Minnesota's homeless children and youth, including changes in child welfare, foster care, corrections and mental health systems that ensure that all Minnesota's children and youth have safe, stable homes and the opportunity to thrive in the community.
- Require federal negotiations with pharmaceutical companies to obtain lower drug prices for federally funded insurance programs including, but not limited to, Medicare and Medicaid.
- Enact a Universal Single Payer Health Care Plan on a federal level and the Minnesota Health Act at the state level.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

- Pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) to ensure workers have the freedom to form and join a union without fear of retaliation. Oppose all efforts to make it harder for workers to organize and work to eliminate or abolish the "Right to Work" laws currently in effect in many states.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

- Oppose all forms of torture as defined by the Geneva conventions and establish the Army Field Manual for Interrogations (FM 2-22.3) as the minimum standard of treatment for all detainees, and end the extraordinary rendition of prisoners to countries that use torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.
- Repeal the Patriot Act.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Sign the Kyoto protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to slow the effects of global warming.
- Shift to a sustainable economy based on energy efficiency and expanded use of clean renewable energy production, such as wind and solar power because global warming is real and climate change is a major threat.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

RETIREMENT SECURITY

- Oppose privatizing Social Security.

TAX AND BUDGET POLICY

- Close tax loopholes that reward corporations for relocating jobs overseas.
- Repeal the Bush administration tax cuts that are fiscally unsound and only benefit the top 1% of income earners.

TRANSPORTATION

- Develop mass transit options in the State of Minnesota including light rail, commuter rail and high-speed rail. These systems should be inter-connecting, with stations linking to busses, sidewalks, and trails.
- Create long-term funding and revenue solutions to construct, operate maintain, repair and rebuild as necessary America's transportation and infrastructure systems, including highways, bridges, transit systems, dams, water, and sewage systems.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

- Remove barriers that prevent or hamper military members and veterans from seeking and receiving diagnosis and treatment for mental health issues, including combat stress and posttraumatic stress disorder, while guaranteeing direct and immediate face-to-face access to qualified mental health professionals.
- Provide veterans education benefits at the same level as the World War II GI bill to cover costs of tuition, books, and monthly stipend for housing.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY CREDO

We Democrats are the oldest political party in America and the youngest in spirit. We will remain so, because we enjoy the challenge of government. Time and again, for almost two centuries, the Democratic Party has made government work – to build and defend a nation, to encourage commerce, to educate our children, to promote equal opportunity, to advance science and industry, to support the arts and humanities, to restore the land, to develop and conserve our human and natural resources, to preserve and enhance our built environment, to relieve poverty, to explore space. We have reached difficult and vital goals.

We recognize that the capacity of government is limited but we regard democratic government as a force for good and a source of hope.

At the heart of our party lies a fundamental conviction, that Americans must not only be free, but they must live in a fair society.

We believe it is the responsibility of government to help us achieve this fair society.

- A society where the elderly and the disabled can lead lives of dignity and where Social Security remains an unshakable commitment
- A society where all people can find jobs in a growing full-employment economy
- A society where all workers are guaranteed without question the legal right to join unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively for decent wages and conditions of employment
- A society where taxes are clearly based on ability to pay
- A society where the equal rights of women are guaranteed in the Constitution
- A society where the civil rights of minorities are fully secured and where no one is denied the opportunity for a better life
- A society where both public and private discrimination based upon race, sex, age, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, economic status, philosophical persuasion, or physical disability are condemned and where our government moves aggressively to end such discrimination through lawful means.
- A society where we recognize that the strengthening of the family and the protection of children are essential to the health of the nation
- A society where sound education, proper nutrition, quality medical care, affordable housing, safe streets and a healthy environment are possible for every citizen
- A society where the livelihoods of our family farmers are as stable as the values they instill in the American character
- A society where a strong national defense is a common effort, where promoting human rights is a basic value of our foreign policy, and where we ensure that future by ending the nuclear arms race.

This is our purpose and our promise.



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