

PREAMBLE

We are the 43rd Legislative District Democrats, the party of the people, the party of good government. This platform is a declaration of human rights, justice and equality for all.

We believe in the values of community, dignity, equality, opportunity, fairness, tolerance, respect, and the common good of the world we share. These values provide the basis for our ideals, supported by our Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

It is the sovereign right of the people and necessary to their well-being to enact laws that protect their health, safety, and welfare.

We adopt this platform so that the public and candidates for office understand our Democratic ideals.

1. AGRICULTURE

We recognize farmers as stewards of the land and support programs that strengthen communities, preserve family farms, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of the land.

We support:

1. Phasing out farm subsidies that artificially prop up prices or keep lands fallow, and all subsidies to agribusiness
2. Sustainable agriculture, including conservation, crop diversity and environmental efforts that preserve agricultural land and other natural resources
3. Strict standards for organic farming and organic products supported by accurate and accessible labeling which identify Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's), country of origin, and content of fertilizers and mulches.
4. Local farmers' markets
5. Encouraging school districts to use local foods in their lunch programs, and teaching students about locally available foods
6. Zoning and other assistance for renewable energy production on farms, including solar and wind
7. Increased reliability and effectiveness of food and livestock inspections to ensure food quality and animal welfare, and to enhance safety and marketability
8. Promoting equitable, sustainable and fair distribution of water to protect resources for future use
9. Increased efforts to preserve soil and establish conservation of trees and habitat
10. Funding for biofuel research and development which offers great promise for agricultural development and domestic energy sustainability.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

The rights guaranteed by our Constitution and international human rights law should not be compromised for any reason.

We support:

1. Repealing provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act and Protect America Act that violate the U.S. Constitution, and ending warrantless governmental eavesdropping

2. Strong antidiscrimination laws and policies applicable to employment, promotion, education, and housing
3. Every adult couple's right to marry and regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity
4. Every woman's right of reproductive choice, including the right to choose family planning and abortion, regardless of age or ability to pay, in the United States or abroad.
5. Enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act
6. Reinstating federal recognition of the Duwamish tribe
7. The right of foreign nationals to have access to consular officials if accused of a crime
8. The separation of religion and state
9. Applying all non-discrimination requirements to faith-based organizations that accept public funding
10. The right to privacy.

We oppose:

1. The use of military tribunals to try nonmilitary defendants and indeterminate detention of "enemy combatants"
2. FBI abuse of the USA PATRIOT Act for investigation of second and third parties who are not authorized targets of an investigation
3. Organized prayer in public schools
4. Granting of public money to religious charities or schools which require a profession of faith or act of worship as a condition of participation.
5. Any immigration policy that denies civil or human rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children, regardless of their immigration status.

3. CORPORATE POWER

We believe that corporations are important to our economy and standard of living, but are nevertheless artificial entities which must be regulated and which are not entitled to Constitutional protections.

We support:

1. A constitutional amendment to reverse the illegitimate notion that money equals speech and that corporations have power equal to individuals to influence the outcome of elections through financial intervention
2. Separating investment banking from retail banking and subjecting both to tighter regulation, transparency and accountability
3. Strengthening and enforcing laws against corporate crime, with penalties to include incarceration of executives and revocation of corporate charters.
4. Continuing the United States Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to regulate financial products, consumer banking, and credit cards
5. Transparency in corporate accounting
6. Limiting the duration of intellectual copyrights to no more than ten (10) years.

We oppose:

1. Corporations exerting undue influence on our government
2. Corporate concentration of media ownership

4. ECONOMIC JUSTICE

We are committed to strong communities based on equal access to job opportunities, tax fairness, and shared prosperity.

We support:

1. Fair and equitable taxation to provide revenue sufficient to meet constitutional requirements and promote the general welfare
2. Federal and state efforts to create sustainable, living-wage jobs
3. Repealing tax breaks and incentives for companies that move jobs out of state
4. Tax reform, including a state income tax, to make state and local taxes fairer and less regressive
5. Rolling back the Bush tax cuts for the very wealthy
6. Restoring the Federal estate tax for estates of \$5 million or more, keyed to inflation
7. Removing the \$106,800 cap on income subject to Social Security tax
8. Expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to help the working poor, and applying an inflation index to the Alternative Minimum Tax to protect the middle class
9. Protecting pensions from employer bankruptcy and pension fund manipulation
10. Property tax circuit-breaker legislation to assist low-income homeowners and renters
11. Preventing unnecessary foreclosures by requiring mortgage lenders to negotiate in good faith, in a timely manner, with distressed homeowners
12. Expanding and strengthening consumer protections, including protection of homeowners from faulty construction
13. Government efforts to nurture new businesses, using such techniques as credit expansion, micro-lending, and new-business incubators
14. Requiring genuine efforts by banks to adjust mortgages to keep distressed homeowners in their homes
15. Encouraging use of local banks and credit unions for savings, and providing community investment opportunities through lower-denomination municipal bond offerings
16. Investing in clean energy and conservation jobs by retrofitting homes, businesses and government buildings

We oppose:

1. Corporate welfare, including tax breaks that don't provide significant public benefit
2. U.S. businesses incorporating offshore to evade taxes
3. Privatizing of public services
4. Supply-side economics as inhumane, ineffective at providing for the common good, and obstacle to a functional democracy.
5. Payday loans as they permit financial institutions to prey on the economically disadvantaged

5. EDUCATION

Education is essential to a democracy and to a strong economy. It is the responsibility of our state and its citizens to provide a high-quality education for all children and access for those who seek higher education.

We support:

1. Full funding for public schools as mandated by our State Constitution to provide:
 - a. Upgrading of school facilities, libraries, computer systems and other resources; counselors and nurses in every school; and a decrease of class size to below the national average
 - b. After-school programs and strong environmental education, and inclusion of fine arts education in the Basic Education Act
 - c. Strong programs for students needing extra help and for gifted students, and job training, vocational education, and apprenticeship programs
 - d. Competitive pay and benefits for all public educators, including continuing education and compensatory adjustments for high-cost areas
2. Sustainable use of public lands that produce revenue for Washington schools
3. State-funded universal pre-school and kindergarten, including such early-learning and pre-kindergarten services as Head Start
4. Repeal of the No Child Left Behind Act
5. Honoring of the federal government's promise of adequate funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
6. Increased capacity to accommodate all who wish to pursue higher education
7. Assured access to higher education for all high school graduates regardless of means.
8. Doubling the size of Pell grants, with annual adjustments for inflation
9. College loan forgiveness for graduates who choose public service careers including teaching
10. Increased funding for public libraries

We oppose:

1. Charter schools and private school vouchers,
2. Commercial marketing to students in public schools
3. Aggressive military recruiting in public schools
4. Evaluating teachers on the basis of student progress and standardized test results.

6. ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Our prosperity and survival depend on worldwide clean air, clean water, safe food and sustainable ecosystems. Steps to protect them will create significant opportunities for American enterprise.

We support:

1. Aggressive action led by the United States, including a carbon tax, to minimize global climate change, ocean acidification, and loss of the ozone layer
2. Increasing global conservation of energy and resources.
3. Replacement of polluting energy generation by renewable, non-polluting, non-nuclear sources such as wind, solar, hydrogen, ocean, micro-hydro, geothermal and biomass
4. Investing in research to develop sustainable energy production and conservation, to help us become energy self-sufficient and end our dependence on carbon fuel sources such as oil and coal
5. Tax incentives for installing energy-saving systems
6. Ending the tax exemption for coal purchases by the state's largest polluter, the coal-fired TransAlta power plant in Centralia

7. Requiring that Environmental Impact Statements include climate change impacts
8. Expanding efforts to reduce residential and business waste and promote the reuse and recycling of materials
9. Treatment and disposal of radioactive and other hazardous wastes near their origin
10. Making Hanford cleanup a top priority
11. Reducing use of herbicides, pesticides and other toxic materials, to decrease environmental contamination and protect our food supply and health
12. Assessing the toxicity and potential effects on the ecology of chemicals and GMOs prior to their manufacture and release into the environment
13. Reinstating the Superfund Tax to make polluters pay for cleanup
14. Incentives for businesses to conserve energy and clean up their toxic waste
15. Continuing development of recycled-material markets that meet strict environmental and worker-health standards
16. A national program requiring electronic equipment manufacturers to recycle and safely dispose of computers, televisions and other e-waste
17. Preserving our precious natural environment by all available means, including:
 - a. Adequate funding for maintenance of our national parks and wilderness areas as pristine national treasures
 - b. Protection of wetlands (including restoration of those in the Mississippi delta), the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve and other wild or environmentally sensitive areas, including a permanent ban on road-building, logging, motorized recreation and any other type of development in threatened roadless areas
 - c. Maintaining the viability and diversity of plants and animals within watersheds and other ecosystems, including protection of the Northwest forests and adequate river flows that provide habitat for wild salmon and steelhead
18. Enforcing and strengthening our state's Growth Management Act to protect against further urban sprawl that consumes farmland, forests, wildlife habitat and natural resources

We oppose:

1. Shipping more waste to Hanford until the site is brought into compliance with existing regulations and the impact of past waste disposal has been fully remedied
2. Government funding of research into "clean coal" technology
3. Exporting banned chemicals or toxic waste to other countries
4. Drilling for oil or natural gas in U.S. waters, and fracking, mining, drilling, mountain top removal or any other activity likely to violate the Clean Air or Clean Water Act on public or private lands
5. Drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

7. FOREIGN POLICY

To strengthen our security and promote peace throughout the world, America must work within the international community, using the tools of development, diplomacy and defense, in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

We support:

1. Increased emphasis on resolving international conflicts through diplomacy
2. Reforming and expanding sustainable development aid, thus addressing the instability that is a root cause of terrorism

3. Diplomatic engagement with multiple parties in the Afghanistan and Pakistan region, aiming at a peaceful resolution of the conflict
4. Strengthening the United Nations
5. Use of the full influence of the United States through serious, constructive and persistent engagement, to promote negotiations and other actions that lead to a successful and sustainable resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on mutual recognition, that ensures security, economic growth, and quality of life for the peoples of the sovereign state of Israel and a sovereign state of Palestine.
6. Reducing the world's nuclear stockpiles and strengthening and complying with international disarmament treaties, including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, and Space Preservation Treaty against space-based weapons
7. Ratifying and complying with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, International Land Mines treaties, International Criminal Court, Genocide Convention, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Convention on the Rights of the Child
8. Restoring and reaffirming our historic adherence to the Geneva Conventions, and affording those rights to any person detained in a combat zone by the US Military
9. Complying with the provisions of all international human rights treaties to which we are a party
10. Amending trade treaties to include agreements that incorporate human rights, labor rights, public health, and consumer and environmental protection
11. International aid for family planning
12. Revision of the War Powers Act to assure that Congress can declare and end to a war
13. The Cuban people's right to political and economic self-determination, and an end to the U.S.-imposed embargo and travel ban

We oppose:

1. Using the "global war on terror" to justify military action, against Iran or any other country, without a Congressional vote
2. Preemptive war and unilateral military or covert action to effect regime change
3. International Monetary Fund policies that compel privatization of vital government services, such as water, as a condition of refinancing national debt

8. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL REFORM

A democracy ensures that its voting process is fair, transparent and open to all citizens.

We support:

1. Vigorous enforcement of the right to vote for all citizens
2. A Constitutional amendment providing for direct election of the U.S. President and abolition of the Electoral College that unduly magnifies the role of small states and narrow pluralities in larger states
3. Restoring the functionality of the U.S. Senate by abolishing the filibuster and "holds" on appointments
4. Permanent voter registration and same-day voter registration for new voters
5. Counting felons, for census and voting purposes, as residents of their last home address rather than their place of imprisonment
6. Use of electronic voting machines only if accompanied by a verifiable paper record of each

- vote cast, and increased security for ballots and vote-counting machines
7. Public campaign financing for all elections
 8. State funding of public debates for statewide offices and ballot measures
 9. Limits on use of corporate and special-interest funds to influence legislative votes and executive decisions
 10. Full disclosure of the source of campaign funds, including separately controlled campaigns and issue advertising
 11. Extending elective-office contribution limits to include contributions made to any PAC or other organization supporting or opposing a candidate or ballot issue
 12. Congress and the judiciary being pro-active in preventing unconstitutional expansions of executive power
 13. Requiring that government decisions involving scientific issues be based on sound science and that all materials affecting those decisions be disclosed to the public
 14. Fair and transparent procedures in government contracting and procurement
 15. Requiring local governments to post meeting notices, agendas, minutes, documents and databases on the Internet in a timely and user-friendly manner, and to partner with new media to inform citizens about issues
 16. Disclosing tax exemptions as expenditures in the state budget
 17. Legislative approval of state budgets and revenues by simple majority vote
 18. Automatic sunseting of non-performing state tax exemptions after 10 years

We oppose:

1. Use of voting machines with proprietary software that cannot be verified or audited
2. Improperly removing or challenging registered voters from the voting rolls
3. Depriving felons of their right to vote
4. Arbitrary state spending limits imposed by initiative
5. Congressional "earmarks" for pork-barrel projects
6. Executive branch secrecy
7. Presidential "signing statements" being used to countermand the will of Congress

9. HEALTH CARE

Health care is a basic human right. It is the responsibility of government to ensure the health and safety of its citizens.

We support:

1. Establishment of a nationwide, publicly funded, nonprofit, single-payer universal health care plan, including affordable coverage of prescription drugs and family planning including safe abortion
2. A primary-care physician for everyone, to assure regular preventive care
3. Grants to encourage medical students to specialize in primary care
4. Education and access to birth control to minimize the need for abortion
5. Timely dispensing of all legally prescribed medicines by every pharmacy
6. Public funding of quality long-term care with options for in-home care
7. Establishing programs to combat obesity
8. Regulating nicotine as a drug

9. A strong federal Patient's Bill of Rights including elimination of restrictions on coverage for pre-existing conditions

10. HUMAN SERVICES

A functional community provides a safety net of social services to meet the basic needs of its people, especially those on the margins of society, so that each may attain his or her full potential.

We support:

1. Among the highest priorities of government, ensuring adequate human services, especially for those on the margins of society, including children, the elderly, and people who are impoverished, homeless, mentally ill, disabled or living with addictions
2. Reform of public assistance to reduce poverty and not just the welfare rolls, making available education, training, treatment for addiction, and quality affordable childcare, to help recipients become self-supporting
3. Ending homelessness in our communities, with governmental action to ensure that all people have safe and affordable housing and with affordable housing subsidies targeted at those who make 50% or less of the Area Median Income.
4. Public assistance, a restored Disability Lifeline and Medicaid to safeguard the vulnerable poor and people with disabilities who cannot reasonably provide for themselves.
5. Family planning and science-based sex education re effective tools that must be made available to give individuals and families control over their reproductive choices

11. IMMIGRATION

All immigrants should be afforded full human rights and a fair, safe, and timely path to legal status.

We support:

1. Comprehensive immigration reform, providing for greater legal immigration and options for undocumented immigrants to normalize their status, while protecting the integrity of our borders and recognizing the basic human rights of immigrants, protecting them with due process in all proceedings
2. Policies to more fully integrate immigrants into our community with shared prosperity, greater opportunities and higher living standards for all
3. Discouraging illegal immigration and encouraging lawful immigration by adjusting quotas and speeding processing of applications for legal entry, asylum, temporary work permits, permanent residence ("green cards"), and citizenship where that status is sought
4. Fair and humane treatment of all who enter the United States, including nondiscriminatory access to education and human services, and family reunification where appropriate
5. Provisions to prevent discrimination in wages and working conditions for immigrant workers, including access to safe and adequate housing, medical care and educational opportunities, to protect them from exploitation and to protect American workers from being undercut by employers taking advantage of an illegal and exploited workforce

6. Using diplomacy and sustainable development to improve the social, economic and environmental conditions in other nations that contribute to illegal immigration into the U.S.

12. LABOR

We believe in the dignity of work and demand fair wages and benefits in return. We insist on the right of all workers to join labor unions, to bargain collectively and to take part in setting their working conditions.

We support:

1. The right of all workers to organize, to engage in collective bargaining, with the rights of association, assembly, free speech and due process in the workplace, and to strike without fear of reprisal or replacement
2. A workplace free from discrimination based upon gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity, union activity or political preference.
3. Equal pay for equal work.
4. A livable minimum wage that increases with inflation.
5. A reasonable proportion between the pay for the highest paid person and the lowest paid in any organization.
6. Extended unemployment benefits and retraining opportunities for locked-out workers
7. A safe, hazard-free workplace for all workers.
8. Washington State's ensuring the protection of workers who report safety hazards or other violations of law or regulations in the workplace.
9. Contractor responsibility to the community through responsible bidder language in all public contracts, including fair wages, health insurance, retirement & training.
10. Safe and adequate housing, medical care education and sanitary facilities for migrant workers
11. Prevailing wage provisions, with 15% of workers at apprentice level, for all government contracts
12. Accuracy in employment statistics, counting as unemployed those persons whose benefits have expired

We oppose:

1. Mandatory overtime
2. Mandatory indoctrination meetings
3. Use of independent contractors to replace regular state employees
4. Manipulation of employment rules to deny independent contractors employee benefits

13. LAW AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Government must provide for the safety and security of the general public with care, even-handedness and respect for the individual.

We support:

1. Reasonable security measures to protect the public without sacrifice of civil liberties
2. Using the existing criminal justice system to prosecute accused terrorists

3. Greater emphasis on preventive and rehabilitative measures in prison, and alternative sentencing that emphasizes rehabilitation
4. Providing special mental health courts for mentally ill people caught up in the criminal justice system, to assist in their medical treatment and rehabilitation
5. Comprehensive reform of the "Three Strikes" law
6. DNA testing to convict the guilty and exonerate the innocent
7. Accountability in law enforcement, with effective civilian review
8. Legalization of marijuana
9. Universal gun registration,licensing and safety training; a comprehensive background check before each gun sale (including at gun shows), sufficient to keep guns out of the hands of felons and mentally unstable people; required safe gun storage in the home; and prohibition of automatic weapons
10. Restoring FBI funding to investigate white collar crime
11. A Sentencing Reform Act for misdemeanors similar to the felony act which would prevent wildly variant outcomes on misdemeanor sentences from jurisdiction to jurisdiction

We oppose:

1. Capital punishment
2. Profiling
3. Privatizing prisons
4. Warrantless searches, including tracking of cell phone and internet use without a warrant

14. MEDIA REFORM

An informed citizenry and independent media are essential for democracy to flourish.

We support:

1. A constitutional amendment to reverse the illegitimate notion that money equals speech and that corporations have power equal to individuals to influence the outcome of elections through financial intervention
2. Public access to the internet
3. Internet neutrality, in which all users and content providers have equal access to Internet service without discrimination or prioritization based on the content transmitted
4. Multicultural media and minority ownership
5. Increased funding of public radio and public television
6. Free radio and TV time for major-party candidates and ballot issues before each election
7. Reinstating the media Fairness Doctrine in election campaigns and extending it to cable networks, to promote more balanced political coverage
8. Allocating low-power broadcast frequencies for educational and non-profit institutions
9. A shield law to protect journalists from being pressured to reveal their sources
10. Providing grants to nonprofit media to support reporting on local governments and issues

We oppose:

1. Corporate concentration of media ownership
2. Political pressure directed at public radio and television
3. Government-funded propaganda disguised as news

4. Government intimidation of the news media
5. False claims of "national security" to suppress investigative journalism

15. MILITARY

We are proud to honor the service of those who choose to serve in our country's armed forces.

We support:

1. Increased benefits and quality medical and mental health care for our troops, veterans, and their families
2. Full funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs
3. Protecting our troops and veterans from sexual harassment and assault and from discrimination based on sexual orientation.
4. The expeditious and orderly withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan on a time-table
5. Maintaining a well-trained and well-equipped military, sufficient for our defense against external enemies
6. Using our military to protect the American people, our vital interests and our treaty partners pledged to protect us whenever we are attacked or imminently threatened, and only when all other means of protection are exhausted
7. Congress asserting its constitutional powers to regulate and govern the military

We oppose:

11. The undue influence of the military-industrial complex over national policy
12. Sending National Guard personnel overseas except for humanitarian relief operations
13. Using contractors not subject to the rule of law in military or paramilitary operations
14. U.S. training of foreign military or police forces that suppress human rights in their own countries

16. TRANSPORTATION

Better public transportation will promote equal opportunity and will improve the quality of life for all.

We Support:

1. Establishing public transit as a priority over road construction, so as to better serve the public and reduce auto use and emissions
2. High-density development and economical rapid transit in urban areas
3. Incorporating vital local concerns into transportation planning
4. Repeal of the 18th Amendment to the Washington Constitution, so that state gasoline taxes may be used to fund transit as well as highways
5. Keeping roads, bridges and ferries in good repair, with replacement of the Alaskan Way viaduct and SR 520 bridge our highest-priority ongoing infrastructure improvements
6. Further investments in Sound Transit

17. TRIBAL RELATIONS AND SOVEREIGNTY

Local, state and federal governments must respect Native American nations on a sovereign government-to-government basis and must respect the decisions of such nations, affirm their rights derived from treaties and compacts, and oppose attempts to diminish their sovereignty and cultures.

We Support.:

1. Government recognition of the inherent sovereignty and treaty rights of Native American nations as self-determining and self-governing;
2. Restoration of federal recognition of formerly recognized tribes;
3. Continued efforts to maintain and restore salmon runs and protect shellfish resources that are critical to Native American cultures and economies
4. The preservation, protection, and restoration of sites of historic, cultural and religious significance
5. Governmental steps to help improve the social, economic and health status of all Native American people
6. The promotion, restoration, and protection of the rights of Native American people, with full respect for their cultural values, languages, and traditions, whether or not they are recognized by the United States government
7. Recognition of the Duwamish tribe