



# 2022 PLATFORM

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## 2021-2022 California Democratic Party Platform Committee

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## Preamble

The California Democratic Party will fight to defend and promote the rights, opportunities, and safety of all Californians. We envision a California that leads the world as a model of economic prosperity rooted in economic justice, in both our rural and urban communities.

We support an excellent public education system, from pre-K through college, to empower our youth to reach their full potential; a universal, single-payer health care system; good union jobs; sustainably planned communities; a strong democracy from the workplace to the federal government; and, a secure and peaceful world.

Because climate change presents an existential threat to the future of humanity, we will fight to: protect our air, water, and natural resources through renewable energy; locate affordable housing near public transportation; and, develop innovative technology to reduce our carbon footprint.

We honor, celebrate, and support a diverse California, including immigrant communities, veterans, artists, children and seniors, and will work to ensure they receive all needed resources.

We believe in equality, liberty, and justice for all – the right of a woman to choose her own future; the right to fair treatment in the criminal justice system; the right to death with dignity; the right to equal access for those with disabilities; the right to free speech; and, the right to live without fear of hate crimes or gun violence.

The COVID pandemic has made us better appreciate the resources we took for granted. Our small business sector – the backbone of our economy – has suffered greatly and we have had to assess our country's preparedness for future health or natural disaster crises. With focus on our most vulnerable, we will rebuild with resiliency.

This Platform defends and promotes these values that support all people's hopes and dreams for a vibrant future, founded in an affirmative understanding of the intersectional nature of social and economic equity.

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## Business and Economy

A robust economy and business climate that creates jobs and economic opportunity for all is fundamental to the promise of the American Dream and the spirit of California. Work provides a sense of dignity as we contribute to both our individual and collective growth. We also contribute to the tax base for the programs and policies we champion as Democrats that support economic justice and the redistribution of wealth. We must also continue to encourage the explosive creativity and innovative intellectual property growth that have come to typify all parts of California and draw people from around the country and the world.

*To grow jobs and assure a prosperous future for all Californians, California Democrats will:*

- Continue to encourage the sustainable growth of small businesses, which serve as the backbone of California's economy, with special consideration of the challenges faced by rural small businesses;
- Work to preserve opportunities in public contracting for small businesses including those owned by minorities and women;
- Support increased access to sustainable small business opportunities through expansion of mentorship, after-school care, workforce development, and microloan programs, particularly for women, people of color, and those with limited access to entrepreneurship opportunities and experience;
- Promote and guarantee low-interest small business loans to provide the seed capital to launch and expand job-creating small businesses and provide for the growth of already successful businesses;
- Implement **tax** policies that benefit small and sustainable businesses;
- Preserve regulations that protect the public and small businesses from anti-competitive practices by large corporations;
- Urge the development of programs and regulations to assist small businesses in complying with rules and regulations that protect the public;
- Expect all businesses to provide services fully accessible to all Californians;
- Facilitate banking services that offer community banks, public and municipal banks, and credit unions incentives for implementing new technologies that benefit small businesses and consumers;

- Support the separation of retail and investment banking freeing capital for loans to businesses and individuals and safeguarding Californians with current deposits in such banks from speculative investment activities and to free capital for loans to businesses and individuals;
- Support legislation to convert the California Infrastructure and Development Bank into a depository bank that will allow an increase of both infrastructure loans and loan guarantees for small business and concomitantly provide better returns on municipal and pension fund deposits by avoiding high charges and risks of commercial banks;
- Support the strengthening of agencies that oversee and regulate the financial services industry;
- Promote and expand access to underserved groups of color who do not have access to capital through Community Development Financial Institutions and micro-loan programs;
- Promote guaranteed low-interest small business loans to provide the seed capital to launch and expand job-creating small businesses and provide for the growth of already successful businesses;
- Continue to support the rights of all employees to organize, select a bargaining representative of their choice through card check recognition, work in a safe environment, and be free from intimidation and retaliation;
- Oppose privatization of essential government services and outsourcing of public sector jobs, promote the development and purchase of goods that are made in America, and support the modification of the U.S. tax code so that corporations are incented to hire workers in the U.S. instead of abroad;
- Encourage an investment in California's transportation infrastructure in a way that will support the state's growth through the 21st century and beyond, including maintaining and improving California's rural roads and highways and supporting the efforts to bring high-speed rail to the state, thereby facilitating the movement of Californians around the state and promoting commerce;
- Reward employers that choose to remain in California by giving the California Treasurer/Board of Equalization the mandate to negotiate competitive packages of discounted state-based fees and/or taxes to offset some of the employer's anticipated cost savings from moving the business out of California;
- Oppose tax breaks for companies that move jobs out of California or overseas and support tax incentives for companies that invest locally;
- Support international trade agreements that are mutually fair and encourage U.S. and global businesses to adhere to the United Nations Global Compact's Ten Principles that are derived from the following guidance: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labor Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption;
- Support the implementation of tax policies that provide a higher degree of equity, including a fair self-employment tax rate to support small businesses;
- Continue to support and fund job retraining and vocational rehabilitation programs to meet the needs of California's changing economy;
- Support job-creating businesses and cooperative member/worker-owned small businesses and provide opportunities for growth of already successful businesses;
- Support the regulation of "payday" lenders and encourage the creation of community-based, micro-lenders and municipal lending alternatives to assist people and businesses needing short-term financial assistance to meet critical needs;
- Phase out unwarranted corporate farm subsidies to create a more equitable and local food market system;
- Support uniform criteria for determining a "small business" and eliminate loopholes that allow large corporations to benefit from preferences intended for small businesses;
- Encourage a pro-employment re-industrialization policy that promotes incentives favoring creation of new employment, industries, and small business ownership specifically through support of environmentally sustainable local enterprises, with priority aid to transition depressed communities;
- Address the crisis of long-term unemployment by supporting efforts to extend federal unemployment benefits to those who have exhausted their benefits;
- Advocate for increased public funding to advance science and technology with re-evaluation of intellectual property ownership rights for the greater good;
- Amend the California Constitution to remove the two-thirds vote threshold for the passage of new special taxes and or assessments and replace it with a 55% voter threshold;
- Require that all corporate-owned commercial properties with manufacturing plants and massive rental properties, malls, and retail sales properties be assessed at the current market value to ensure an equitable and fair tax system for the public;
- Work with the state legislature to increase in the minimum tax rate from 1% to a 2% tax rate on all commercial properties;
- Work with the state legislature to find a more equitable tax structure that will provide local governments with the proper funding for the services that are needed;

- Mitigate effects of decades-long corporate tax welfare and develop policies that have corporations share tax burdens with tax incentives that will enhance the middle class such as re-investing and growing corporations resulting in job growth with high salaries rather than using profits to buy back stock or pay dividends;
- Support a more progressive income tax;
- Advocate for transparency in Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) arbitration proceedings;
- Encourage good corporate citizenship by supporting policies that hold irresponsible corporate decision-makers personally liable for corporate criminal conduct under their watch;
- Support efforts to protect small and medium sized businesses from cyber-attacks;
- Support an Equitable Preparedness Strategy and Response for future pandemics or crises;
- Support policies that protect business from organized retail crime and vandalism;
- Support a 58-county strategy as we move forward in rebuilding after the pandemic and in our preparations for the future, including support for rural business, which is a vital component to help ensure equitable resources for all of our citizens;
- Encourage continued innovation while ensuring technology remains responsive to the needs Californians;
- Support employee ownership of businesses through Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) and worker-owned cooperatives by funding outreach, feasibility studies, loan guarantees, and removing other barriers to employee ownership;
- Provide property tax exemptions for all non-profit developments that provide 100% affordable housing for low, very-low and extremely-low income tenants to prevent homelessness and provide for our unhoused community;
- Support full legal recognition of street and home-based businesses and the elimination of obstacles for low-income people who want to start a small business at home or on the street; and,
- Reduce waste and fraud in our tax systems to improve collection of revenue.

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## **Children, Young Adults, and Their Families**

California Democrats believe that we must invest in the well-being of children and young people in order for them to become thriving and productive members of society. To do so, we will work to provide them with a healthy start, a solid education, and a safe community.

*To help children and young adults reach their full potential, California Democrats will:*

- Work to increase the percentage of Black mothers who receive prenatal care and to decrease Black infant and maternal mortality;
- Work to ensure that all children have access to timely quality health care services; work to expand pre-natal, perinatal, and well-baby care; and, work to provide comprehensive immunization services;
- Work to ensure that all infants and toddlers have access to routine developmental and behavioral screenings;
- Advocate that health care providers assess, treat, and coordinate early intervention systems that engage and support parents in their child's treatment, including mental health;
- Support programs that prevent homelessness and lift at-risk families and working-poor families out of poverty so that they can become independent and lead self-sufficient lives;
- Support the passage and implementation of nutritionally-healthy school lunch and breakfast programs that provide for the average caloric intake needs of our children;
- Support agencies that are responsible for the health and well-being of families in need and promote policies to provide mental health services, domestic violence prevention, marriage/domestic partner counseling, gang prevention, anti-bullying programs, substance abuse prevention, parenting skills that include alternatives to physical punishment, and other social services without regard to the gender of the parent;
- Promote policies to prevent child abuse and intervention by Child Protective Services that focus on positive support programs such as voluntary home visits, social and emotional learning, parenting education classes, services to overcome addiction, poverty, or disease, and comprehensive Family Resource Centers that collaborate and coordinate across systems;
- Work to ensure that Child Protective Services and social workers utilize trauma-informed practices and have the resources needed to protect children in familial (domestic) and non-familial (institutional) environments and support foster youth; reunify families when possible; improve the foster care system to ensure that child abuse and neglect court proceedings that protect the welfare of children are accessible, swift, and unbiased; aggressively enforce child-support payment rulings; ensure child support payments are timely paid and urge enforcement in a manner that maintains a payor's ability to pay; and, encourage foster youth to successfully complete high school;

- Support the fathers, mothers, children, and guardians who are involved in the Child Protective Services process and work to ensure that all parties are treated with fairness and equity under the law;
- Enhance education and development with free, community-based enrichment experiences; promote early childhood education by providing hands-on learning opportunities in enriching environments which engage parents, caregivers, and educators as partners in early learning and development, including language, math, social-emotional, and self-regulation skills;
- Work to ensure access to high-quality, affordable childcare, preschool and early development centers, and strong, proven school and community-based afterschool, summer and vacation programs;
- Support the important work of childcare providers by supporting their right to choose a union representative and foster quality improvements that will benefit all of our state's children and their families;
- Work to expand parks, recreation, and mentoring centers for children and young people;
- Support the removal or ban of toxic substances from all toys, equipment, and furniture, and the removal, ban, or remediation of toxic substances from buildings and building materials sold or used in California;
- Work to actively identify and remove toxic chemicals, particularly polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) which have been banned by Congress, from California's schools to protect children and provide them a healthy learning environment;
- Support state and local policies to address the vaping epidemic among youth across the state by banning the sale of all flavored vaping products; and,
- Protect the rights of parents and guardians, including those with disabilities, to be fully involved in rearing children and ensure that a parent's/guardian's disability is not used as a barrier to custody or full and equal involvement in the child's life.

## Civil Justice

California Democrats support a strong and accessible civil justice system to defend public health, safety and the environment, and to vindicate the rights of consumers, injured persons, employees, and all of our citizens equally. The Seventh Amendment right to trial by jury in civil cases was intended by the Framers to put a check on the potential abuse of power by the government and place control in the hands of "the common people."

In recent years, our civil justice system has come under concerted attack by corporations shielding themselves from civil liability for wrongful conduct by using their money and power to deny everyday people fair access to the courts. The attack on Seventh Amendment rights has come under the false and misleading cloak of "tort reform."

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

- Oppose forced arbitration and support passage of the Arbitration Fairness Act that provides that "no predispute arbitration agreement shall be valid or enforceable if it requires arbitration of an employment dispute, consumer dispute, or civil rights dispute;"
- Support of the right of the people to join together in class actions and condemn the U.S. Supreme Court rulings in *AT&T Mobility v. Concepcion* (2011) and *American Express Co. v. Italian Colors Restaurant* (2013) that gave corporations the right to prohibit class actions against them by consumers and employees and force such individuals to arbitrate all claims;
- Trust juries to determine the appropriate level of compensation for a prevailing plaintiff in a lawsuit, oppose any arbitrary limits on damages that a jury may award, and support review of the impact on raising current limits on pain and suffering damages on victims and providers in medical malpractice; and,
- Seek to end the use of confidentiality clauses in settlements involving matters of public health and safety.

In many instances, individuals face multiple simultaneous legal problems. A person who is a victim of unlawful termination or wage theft might soon face eviction or deal with abusive debt collectors. California Democrats believe that reforms to civil justice must recognize the overlap in the law and develop an all-encompassing approach to civil justice which supports individual litigants, whose involvement in one area of the law often spills over into others, and empower such litigants to obtain justice regardless of a lack of economic resources.

*'Justice delayed is justice denied.'* Unfortunately, this is the reality that California's civil justice system will continue to face without budget reforms and state budget reprioritization. Budget cuts to California's Judicial Branch mean extended waits for civil lawsuits and legal issues that touch everyday lives – divorces, child custody hearings,



conservatorships, probate, and small claims – in extreme examples from several months to several years.

California Democrats will fight for culturally competent, multi-lingual, and trauma informed courts and legal assistance for people who represent themselves as well as for family law centers which provide assistance in divorce, child custody, child support, and domestic violence, in order to promote greater access to the courts for people of color, immigrants, women, and the LGBTQ+ community.

California Democrats believe that fair and equal access to justice is a right in a democratic society. The undue delays in the current civil justice system mean that often only the wealthy are able to access the civil justice system and families already in crisis face insurmountable circumstances that are likely to place the most vulnerable family members in continuing volatile living conditions.

*To restore fair and equal access to the civil justice system for all Californians, California Democrats will:*

- Support restoration of full funding for the Courts;
- Support reforms to the Administrative Office of the Courts that will place more resources to helping individuals and reduce managerial operations;
- Support fair and reasonable alternatives to litigation such as alternative dispute resolution so long as such alternatives are fully voluntary and not coerced;
- Support expedited trial tracks; and,
- Support giving higher priority to cases involving individual and small business plaintiffs over cases involving corporate plaintiffs, including family law and probate cases, until full court funding is restored.

California Democrats recognize that fair and equal access to justice is an equity issue and that deficiencies in the civil justice system perpetuate power imbalances between those who can afford attorneys and those who cannot. Existing systemic barriers prevent low- and middle- income people in underserved communities from accessing the courts or prevailing in their cases. This perpetuates a system of injustice that disproportionately affects people of color and communities that may not be receiving basic needs resources

*To support and prioritize fair and equal access to the civil justice system for all Californians, California Democrats will:*

- Support reforms to the attorney admissions process to reduce racial discrimination and inherent bias in the legal profession and to provide access to justice for all Californians;
- Work to expand the availability of free or affordable civil legal services to all Californians who are unable to afford civil legal services;
- Support law school tuition assistance and/or debt forgiveness for attorneys who agree to work in underserved areas or who dedicate thirty percent or more of their practice to providing free or affordable legal services; and,
- Support the appointment, endorsement, and retention of diverse Democratic judicial officers who are culturally competent and representative of the communities where they live.

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## **Criminal Justice**

California Democrats are committed to public safety, while supporting a criminal justice system that provides fair and equitable treatment for all. Crime prevention and rehabilitation must focus on evidence-based programs and investment in alternatives to incarceration.

We are committed to eliminating racial and economic disparities within the criminal justice system and to ending mass incarceration in California prisons and jails.

Criminal justice reform must incorporate every aspect of the criminal justice system, including what we choose to criminalize; the practices and behavior of law enforcement professionals; charging, sentencing, and bail; treatment of those incarcerated; diversion and rehabilitation; and, reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into society.

*To promote a fair and just criminal justice system, California Democrats will:*

## **Fair and Just Laws and Equitable Enforcement**

- Oppose criminalization of persons who commit low-level offenses due to homelessness or mental illness by directing them to public health and housing services, rather than resorting to arrest;
- Oppose homeless encampment sweeps and destruction of tents, shelters, and possessions absent a public health necessity;
- Oppose homeless encampment sweeps and destruction of tents, shelters, and possessions unless adequate health and transitional housing services are available;
- Support equal enforcement of laws and policies that protect both women and men from sexual assault and rape;
- Support the ongoing regulation and taxation of cannabis, while prioritizing health, education, and safety over revenue or profits;
- Support balanced funding for public defender and district attorney agencies so that the promise of a constitutionally adequate defense is realized; and,
- Support reforms to the sex-offender registry that would remove those crimes that pose no public safety risk and remove the names of those convicted of crimes that pose no public safety risk;
- Support statewide reforms to the criminal grand jury selection process to ensure that those empaneled represent the demographics of the county in which they sit so as to reduce race, age, and gender biases, and to promote the equal application and administration of justice.

## **Crime Prevention**

- Support investment in proven strategies to prevent crime, including providing structured preschool and afterschool programs for youth, as well as programs and policies to promote school retention and graduation to effectively end the school-to-prison pipeline; and,
- Support implementing community policing strategies where the officers and the community work together as partners.

## **Law Enforcement Practices and Accountability**

- Support the implementation of de-escalation policies and practices rather than resorting to physical restraint – particularly aggressive restraints such as canine deployment; Tasers; chemical sprays; violence; arrest; or, threat of such actions in the face of anger, disagreement, or resistance;
- Support the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers who are trained to work effectively in cross-cultural situations;
- Support law enforcement officers with excellent pay and benefits and resources to work in a safe environment;
- Support laws that will hold enforcement officers accountable for misconduct, including dismissal where appropriate;
- Encourage local governments to hold peace officers personally liable for damage awards in cases of excessive force and wrongful death where a violation of policy is found;
- Support training programs for law enforcement officers that include de-escalation; implicit, unconscious, and explicit bias; cultural competency; interacting with people with disabilities, including individuals with mental or behavioral health challenges; and, dealing with individuals under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Support the creation of local civilian oversight for all law enforcement agencies and insist on independent investigators in cases of police use of deadly force or in-custody death;
- Declare that the prevalence and impact of inequitable and inappropriate use of force by law enforcement giving rise to deaths, injuries, trauma, and stress that disproportionately affects marginalized populations (i.e., people of color, immigrants, individuals experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, individuals with mental challenges, drug addicts, and sex workers) is a critical public health issue;
- Support the universal use of police body and dashboard cameras and prisoner compartment cameras;
- Support rules requiring police officers to mitigate injuries by calling for medical assistance where requested or where a suspect has been injured during a police encounter;
- Support collection of demographic data (including ethnicity, language, gender identity and age) for all persons detained, fined, arrested, injured or killed during police encounters;
- Support prioritizing funding for labs to complete all rape kits in a timely manner;
- Support the use of DNA testing where appropriate to protect those wrongfully accused and to set free those wrongfully convicted;
- Challenge the use of "stop and frisk," "pretext stops," and other detention policies that are disproportionately applied to persons of color; and,

- Support the development of policing plans (including financial transparency) for unincorporated communities so that these residents may better advocate for their municipal needs.

### **Crime Survivors**

- Support victim-witness advocacy that provides therapeutic assistance, financial compensation, and support for comprehensive services for victims of crime; and,
- Monitor victim-services in district attorney offices to ensure that victims are informed of progress of their cases, arraignments or plea agreements, and when a perpetrator is released from custody.

### **Juvenile Justice**

- Oppose youth being held in adult prisons and jails and the practice of trying juveniles as adults;
- Support youth parole by providing review for all sentences committed before the age of 23, including sentences of Life, Life Without the Possibility of Parole, and determinate sentences;
- Support increased oversight of juvenile justice agencies and implementation of trauma-responsive justice systems grounded in adolescent development to yield better outcomes for youth and reduce racial and socioeconomic inequalities; and,
- Work toward ending the systematic bias that disadvantages and harms students based on stereotypes surrounding disabilities, race, and socioeconomic status.

### **Fairness for the Accused and Rehabilitation of Offenders**

- Support the implementation of restorative justice practices within law enforcement agencies and schools that brings together those who have committed crimes with victims and community members in an effort to recognize and repair the damage caused by criminal activity through accountability and rehabilitation;
- Support effective, quality drug treatment programs that are easily accessible for every person with an alcohol or substance abuse disorder;
- Support the establishment of a non-partisan sentencing commission that is mandated to review sentencing laws;
- Support reducing prison overcrowding by decreasing penalties and decriminalizing certain drug and other non-violent offenses, implementing state law provisions for compassionate release and release for older, long-term prisoners, and support community service as an alternative sentence for low-risk individuals;
- Support reforming the bail system so that persons awaiting trial do not languish in jails solely because of financial circumstance;
- Recognize that reforms to the bail system must comprehensively take into account that bail is a form of insurance and is regulated by the California Department of Insurance under the California Bail Bonds Act of 1937 and that bail schedules are determined by the judicial council but are set by local courts county by county and may vary county by county;
- Support abolishing capital punishment and replacing it with lifetime incarceration without the possibility of parole;
- Oppose using prisons and jails as *de facto* mental health facilities and fight to adequately fund community mental health and substance abuse programs;
- Support requirements that all law enforcement and prison be trained on how to properly interact with those with mental health challenges;
- Defend policies that (1) ensure incarcerated transgender people be housed with dignity and respect and according to their gender identity or their perception of their own health and safety needs, and (2) require that incarcerated people's self-reported gender identity, first name, and gender pronouns be recorded and used by prison staff, corrections officers, and contractors;
- Oppose involuntary servitude or use of prison labor by private companies;
- Support fair wages for use of prison labor by public agencies;
- Advocate that the state adopt concrete measures to eliminate the use of solitary confinement;
- Support ending the practice of housing Californians in out-of-state jails and prisons;
- Support comprehensive rehabilitation programs to reduce recidivism;
- Support elimination of all private prisons, jails, and detention centers;
- Support contact and communication between those who are incarcerated and their families because the strongest predictor of post-incarceration success is family support;
- Support investment in programs that assist families in visitation, communication, and planning for re-entry;
- Support trauma-informed education and programs in correctional facilities that grant high school diplomas and prepare inmates for successful re-entry;

- Support partnerships with local building and construction trades councils to provide career training to incarcerated men and women through apprenticeship programs;
  - Support providing individuals on parole and probation with clear information about their rights and responsibilities in order to reduce parole and probation violations; and,
  - Support removing barriers to accessing public benefits for people with felony convictions, including victim services and removing unreasonable or unrelated barriers to employment based on prior incarceration or convictions.
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## **Culture and the Arts**

California Democrats believe in freedom of expression without compromise, public support of the arts, and the principles promoted by the California Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). We further commit to involve arts and cultural organization workers of all communities in the planning and the implementation of their artistic endeavors:

*In support of the arts, California Democrats will:*

- Celebrate and promote the cultural diversity of our residents, past and present, and encourage improved public knowledge through honest portrayal of our diverse cultures and histories;
  - Support the California Arts Council in its efforts to build the representation and inclusion of California's American Indians;
  - Encourage community-based works in the arts and cultural practices that explore the power to create positive images that reflect a peaceful future;
  - Ensure that all people of color have equal access to tax-funded cultural arts programs and have an opportunity to participate in decision-making of those cultural arts programs;
  - Encourage through policy and financial incentives for Pre-K-12 schools to include arts education and incorporate of creative arts and innovation into core competency;
  - Encourage engagement in all types of public art and performance in all communities;
  - Promote multi-media public broadcasting, including community-based public radio and public access television;
  - Promote greater financial inclusion for all artists in Internet use of their intellectual property;
  - Promote the arts as a major employer and industry by recognizing the importance of creative workers to California's economy and support efforts to sustain California's international status as a center of innovation, including the film and television industry, architecture, design, technology, and the many categories of fine and performing arts; and,
  - Continue to support increases in funding for the California Arts Council as the Council seeks inclusion and representation of all communities in its initiatives.
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## **Disabilities**

California Democrats believe in full equality for people with disabilities and oppose ableism in all forms. People with disabilities have an inalienable right to participate as equals in all aspects of civic and political life. We support empowering people with disabilities to control their own lives and recognize diversity through true equality for people with disabilities strengthens society. California Democrats will work to breakdown systematic, structural and/or physical barriers preventing equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. We will work to ensure the creation of a strong social safety net by providing accessible affordable housing, quality education, job training, increased employment, and other tools for independence.

California Democrats support enforcement and funding of all federal, state, and local civil rights legislation and regulations, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, and the Lanterman Act, and will actively oppose any effort to undermine their strength or impact. California Democrats oppose efforts to restrict the rights of people with disabilities or to seek relief for disparate impact discrimination. All Democrats must promote increases to Supplemental Security Income (SSI), state supplementary programs, and federal Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and reject any cuts. California Democrats believe that people with disabilities must have an active role in formation of any legislation, policy or program impacting their

community, and support their full and equitable participation in this work.

*To ensure equality for people with disabilities, California Democrats will:*

- Register people with disabilities to vote and encourage all people with disabilities to exercise their right to independently cast a private ballot and work to abolish any physical, regulatory, or legislative barriers that inhibit the ability to exercise this right;
- Expect elected officials to have one staff person well-versed in disability civil rights issues and encourage Party-endorsed candidates to actively engage with people and organizations well-versed in disability civil rights issues to inform their policy positions;
- Actively support participation and employment of people with disabilities at all levels of the Party and ensure that all Party functions are fully accessible to all who wish to participate;
- Ensure that all Democratic Central Committees and affiliated organizations have the training, tools, and resources needed to include people with disabilities in their operations and to reach out to voters with disabilities;
- Vigorously support strengthening Democratic organizations dedicated to advocating for full inclusion of people with disabilities;
- Ensure that all Democratic Party and endorsed campaigns and campaign headquarters are fully accessible;
- Encourage balanced participation of people with disabilities on state and local commissions as well as within Party leadership and standing committee positions;
- Support a California master plan for aging and people with disabilities of all age groups;
- Encourage municipalities, local governments, and school districts to establish disability advisory bodies such as commissions on disabilities and district advisory bodies to assist in considering issues, needs, accommodations, and the unique perspectives of people with disabilities;
- Support financial empowerment by increasing employment of people with disabilities at all levels of the workforce; increase opportunities for people with disabilities to save by strengthening and expanding access to the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act and creating incentives for CalABLE account contributors (enabling people with disabilities to save money without the danger of losing essential benefits); promote training people with disabilities to become entrepreneurs; and, work with unions to promote and develop alternative forms of employment for people with disabilities;
- Recognize that people with disabilities are as capable as all others to parent and/or act as legal guardians; work to ensure that disability alone is never a permissible consideration for incapacity to care for a child; and, work to ensure that adequate resources are provided for parents with disabilities in the same manner that they are available for parents without disabilities;
- Work to ensure that SSI benefits provide an income for people with disabilities at least as high as the federal poverty level and support the elimination of the marriage penalties imposed on SSI recipients, including income parameters;
- Work for guaranteed palliative care; support improvements to the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan by amending prohibitive costs; oppose detrimental budget cuts in Medicare/ Medi-Cal; and, support the principle of informed choice;
- Advocate for legislation to improve accessibility to and the quality of respite care and in-home support services, support higher pay and better training programs for home care workers, and increase transparency and responsiveness of IHSS for clients with disabilities;
- Support full enforcement of accessible housing construction requirements under the ADA, Fair Housing Act, Title 24, the Rehabilitation Act, and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations;
- Work to broaden financial assistance for accessible housing, vehicles, and durable medical equipment to give much-needed monetary assistance for individuals to pay for improvements to their equipment beyond the Medicare/Medi-Cal rate;
- Fight to eliminate housing discrimination that penalizes or denies people with disabilities the right to interdependence through shared housing with a spouse or significant other;
- Promote parity of services for mental health and substance-related disorder benefits and medical, hearing, vision, and dental health for people with developmental and other disabilities under all public and private health care delivery plans, with the inclusion of long-term care as basic coverage in all private plans;
- Prioritize the development and maintenance of a robust interconnected public transportation system and ensure public rights-of-way remain open and accessible; and, oppose actions or business practices of any company that could result in creating barriers for people with disabilities;
- Prioritize making California a leader in embracing inclusive educational practices and achieving successful educational outcomes for students with disabilities;

- Ensure that people with disabilities are prepared for disasters and have the right to be rescued with accessible services that are well-maintained and available during an emergency; and, enable people with disabilities to be returned to their homes when it is safe as with people without disabilities;
  - Actively design and implement support services programs targeted toward isolated and rural communities; and,
  - Prioritize individuals with psychiatric disabilities by making substantive revisions to the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act (LPS Act) to improve coordinated care systems and cure the shortcomings of the LPS Act that resulted in homelessness and incarceration for this population.
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## **Education**

We believe in a universally well-educated population. To achieve this, California students must have access to world-class pre-K - 12 public education that will prepare them to live, work, and thrive in a multicultural, multilingual, and highly connected world. We must prepare our students for post-secondary education, career technical education, and active citizenship in the 21st century. We must fully fund public education to correct years of insufficient allocations, increase funding to put California in the top states in per student spending, and equitably distribute funding to school districts most in need.

*To help educate California's young leaders and to prepare them to compete for challenging jobs, California Democrats will:*

### **Pre-K – 12**

- Work to ensure that all four-year-old children in California have access to a high-quality preschool as an integral part of the public education system;
- Encourage stronger coordination between early learning programs and K-12 schools;
- Advocate for supplemental services for children such as high-quality affordable childcare, preschool and early development centers, and community-based afterschool programs;
- Strive for full proficiency in English language arts and mathematics especially for historically low-performing demographic subgroups such as socioeconomically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, foster youth, English language learners, Black or African American, American Indian, and Alaskan Native students, and other historically underperforming groups;
- Provide instruction in social studies, ethnic studies, sciences, literature, art, music, foreign languages, civics, health, physical education, and career technical education;
- Ensure that school children have current textbooks, including history books that are inclusive and historically accurate, representing diverse historical facts beyond dominant culture narratives, and textbooks that reflect scientific consensus on issues such as climate change, evolution, and the Big Bang theory;
- Work to ensure that all graduating high school students are climate literate and know the reasons for the anthropogenic climate crisis and its potential for harm, the difference between climate stabilization and destabilization, climate-stabilizing greenhouse gas (“GHG”) reduction targets, the basis for GHG targets and the measures needed to achieve GHG goals, and the primary categories of emissions, including the harmful effects of cars and light-duty trucks;
- Advocate for school policies that prioritize beneficial instruction time, a variety of student engagement techniques, and minimize chronic absenteeism without perpetuating disproportionate impacts that attendance policies have had on groups of historically marginalized students, and support funding by enrollment rather than attendance;
- Work to close opportunity and achievement gaps by leveraging the flexibility of Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), engaging parents and communities to develop accountability plans benefiting all students, particularly low income, English learners, Black or African American, American Indian, Alaskan Native students, foster children, and students with disabilities;
- Provide foster youth with the targeted support and services they need to succeed in school and prepare for college and career;
- Advocate for federal and state governments to fully fund special education;
- Build a system of school accountability with high expectations for students and educators that ensures that every child graduates from high school ready for college or career and civic life;
- Ensure that all students receive quality instruction by updating programs that prepare future teachers and providing new teachers with meaningful and objective feedback, with an eye toward lifting the state’s most disadvantaged and struggling schools and students and a focus on District-level accountability for fostering environments that lead to successful student outcomes;

- Continue to build and sustain proven afterschool programs and summer extended opportunities to keep children safe, improve educational opportunity, and to close achievement gaps;
- Ensure all students have access to school counselors and nurses and increase the capacity of school-based health centers to provide more children with access to physical exams, including contagious disease testing, mental health, vision, hearing, and dental services;
- Take a comprehensive approach to childhood obesity by providing adequate time for exercise, offering nutrition education in schools, and ensuring that school-based meals are healthy and appealing to students;
- Support the immediate implementation of age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education which is objective and appropriate for use with students of all races, genders, sexual orientations, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds throughout California;
- Ensure educators and classified staff receive wages commensurate with expertise and responsibility with opportunities for professional growth;
- Protect the right for educators and classified staff in all public schools, including public charter schools, to organize and engage in collective bargaining as members of a union of choice;
- Work to increase access to modern jobs by requiring that all school districts offer STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) subjects and encouraging students, particularly those underrepresented in STEAM, to study these subjects with necessary academic support;
- Advocate for the replacement of sworn peace officers in schools with qualified non-police personnel who are trained to work with children and teenagers, who understand that the use of force against students is unacceptable, who recognize and address persistent issues of bias such as institutional racism and ableism in all school systems, and who understand the need for increased empathy over potential atypical reactions from students with disabilities;
- Urge schools to use restorative policies and practices and to engage in regular bias training with regard to student goal setting and disciplinary practices;
- Require schools to provide a safe environment where students are free from bullying and harassment and do not feel threatened;
- Have schools recognize and eliminate policies and practices that feed the unjust school-to-prison pipeline: including institutional racism and ableism, zero tolerance policies, criminalizing childhood behavior, use of law enforcement with students of color and students with disabilities, the use of exclusionary punishment such as detentions, suspensions, expulsions, and the use of any type of student restraint procedures and devices;
- Make California schools a sanctuary for all children regardless of immigration status or documentation;
- Support implementation of the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act in public education and advocate for adequate funding to train teachers and develop curriculum that incorporates the history and contributions of LGBTQ people;
- Support and fully fund ethnic studies as a required public secondary school course with a curriculum that requires students to critically analyze the impact of all forms of discrimination against vulnerable communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color, while also analyzing social movements to challenge racism, sexism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and all other forms of oppression;
- Advocate for civics as a required public and private secondary school course with a recommended curriculum that covers the basic rights and responsibilities of citizenship, how government works at the local, state, and federal levels, critical analysis of the news and political communications, and what an individual can do to participate in democratic policymaking;
- Support state-level curricular reforms to be crafted in collaboration with stakeholders and educators expected to implement such reforms;
- Support public charter schools that are authorized and monitored by public and elected boards, not-for-profit, and transparent in governance; have equitable admissions; adopt fair labor practices and respect labor neutrality; and, supplement public education programs, particularly for students in historically low performing subgroups such as low income, English learners, Black or African American, American Indian, and Alaskan Native students, foster children, and students with disabilities;
- Advocate for all local funds earmarked for local school districts and county boards of education, but were subsequently allocated to other public service operations including, for example, the funding of local court systems, to be recaptured for use by local and county governmental bodies for educational purposes;
- Support all public school options that provide parents and guardians of Black or African American, American Indian, and Alaskan Native students access to high quality educational alternatives to close achievement gaps;
- Oppose K-12 Education Savings Accounts, school vouchers, or any programs that would take away from public school funding;
- Support educational equity to raise students to the same level of education, without lowering standards; and,
- Support at-home computer and internet access for all students to improve educational access and to allow remote learning when public health concerns require.

## **Post-Secondary Education**

- Work to return to tuition-free public college and university systems for all Californians funded through progressive taxation because a college-educated workforce without debt is vital to California's future;
- Prioritize higher education to correct years of underfunding, some \$1 billion each for UC and CSU, to restore top-quality post-secondary education and ensure a place for all qualified in-state students;
- Support learning environments that include robust Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and encourage partnerships between school districts and local building and construction trades councils through use of project labor agreements/community workforce agreements in an effort to create pathways to construction careers;
- Support financial aid programs so that no student pursuing higher education is overburdened by debt and support financial aid for students pursuing an apprenticeship or trade school in a manner that is equitable to students pursuing college or university;
- Advocate expanding the Cal Grant program within the community college system;
- Advocate for increased funding for financial aid programs such as Cal Grant and Pell Grant to help cover non-tuition costs such as housing and transportation, to eliminate student homelessness and food instability, and cover full attendance cost for very low income students;
- Work to expand the CalFresh and other programs that address food insecurity such as food pantries and food bank partnerships;
- Support access to healthy eating in and out of school through nutrition and cooking classes that address the availability of food choices that do not increase the risk of diabetes and obesity;
- Support negotiating contracts with local, affordable food vendors for campus food and dining options;
- Fight on behalf of college and university "adjunct faculty" who do the same work as full-time faculty and meet the same professional standards to receive comparable, livable wages and benefits;
- Encourage community colleges and other colleges and universities to use full-time faculty as practicable to provide office-hour faculty support to ensure student access to all courses and increase on-time graduation rates;
- Support Adult Education and Community College programs for life-long learning;
- Advocate for refinancing student debt and restore bankruptcy protection for student loans;
- Oppose tax bill provisions that would eliminate the exemption of tuition waivers from taxable income or that would repeal the student loan interest deduction or the Lifetime Learning Credit;
- Support state funding for existing community colleges and online class systems and restrict funding for unaccredited completely online community colleges;
- Support the re-establishment and implementation of equitable affirmative action in admissions processes at California's public universities and colleges;
- Provide medical school debt forgiveness for doctors who agree to work in underserved rural areas;
- Support the extension of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protections for students with disabilities through college, trade schools, and any other educational program;
- Advocate for childcare services and family resource centers for our student parents at colleges and universities to help increase success and economic security for two generations: student parents and their children;
- Support the removal of mascots with American Indian or Native Alaskan names to more inclusive mascots; and,
- Support affordable campus housing that is more cost-effective than the surrounding community.

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## **Energy and Environment**

Climate change is an existential threat to humanity. We believe California must lead in forging a robust global solution to the climate crisis. Further, all Californians – urban, suburban, and rural -- hold a shared interest in preserving and protecting the environment that sustains us. California Democrats have led the way toward effective solutions to problems arising from our industrial society – resource extraction, waste disposal, and pollution – and their disparate impact on our forests, family farms, the poor, persons of color, and indigenous people. California Democrats will prioritize energy and environment.

*Climate change and other environmental issues present a clear and imminent threat to our planet and our public health, therefore California Democrats will:*

### **Energy and Climate**

- Advocate for and fund a modernization of California's electric grid to better accommodate increasing distributed energy demand, integrate renewable energy sources, protect rural areas through the creation of micro-grids and



local energy sourcing, and increase California's flexibility in the face of climate change and diversifying energy sources;

- Recognize that schools play an important part in addressing climate change and support efforts for schools to become climate-ready, including through the creation of school and district Climate Action Plans;
- Recognize environmental and climate literacy, as well as climate justice, as a critical outcome of K–12 education for our California students;
- Ensure we prepare students to lead us to a sustainable future in a green economy by supporting teaching and learning about climate change in our classrooms;
- Support a green new deal with action from the federal and state government: A comprehensive energy security and climate protection law that prioritizes calling for full decarbonization of the United States economy running on net-zero emissions by 2030, creating millions of good jobs; investing in green infrastructure and industry; securing clean air and water, climate and community resilience, healthy food; and, access to nature;
- Urge the California Legislature to implement a California green new deal that prioritizes investments in programs such as onshore and offshore wind, solar, and other forms of renewable energy projects to achieve 100 percent clean electricity by 2030, with hiring preferences for formerly incarcerated and socially and/or economically disadvantaged peoples;
- Prioritize transitioning away from both the import of foreign fossil fuels and the domestic extraction and refining of fossil fuels as soon as feasible, coupled with commensurate investments in creating well-paying union jobs in the zero-carbon and alternative domestic energy production sectors;
- Prioritize adopting separation of fossil fuel extractions from residential communities (also known as setbacks), while maintaining skilled production workers within their industry with comparable compensation and benefits over the course of the transition to clean energy;
- Urge Congress and the California legislature to implement plans to upgrade America's buildings for efficiency and safety; adopt low-carbon, plant-based food, and small-scale and organic farming; expand affordable housing close to jobs; involve labor unions in the process of job training and worker deployment; create a network of public banks to finance green infrastructure; respect indigenous rights; ensure that local implementation of the transition from fossil fuels is led from the community level; and, ensure that frontline communities affected by environmental degradation are given priority to mitigate poor planning and zoning and decisions of the past;
- Urge Congress, the California Legislature, the California Public Utilities Commission, and the California Energy Commission to ensure the safety and thoroughly evaluate the full lifecycle costs of nuclear power, phase-out all reactors, decommission and withhold funds for license renewal for Mark I nuclear reactors (which cannot be made safe), ensure the safe storage of nuclear waste, and ensure that operators provide emergency plans and provide adequate liability protection for populations within 50 miles of reactors;
- Urge the California Legislature, the California Public Utilities Commission, and the California Energy Commission to eliminate long-term reliance on gas storage facilities, such as Aliso Canyon and Playa del Rey, by providing opportunities for municipalities individuals, and families to phase out natural gas-powered appliances;
- Support building code revisions requiring new buildings to be built gas-free, providing incentives and opportunities for municipalities, individuals, and families to phase out natural gas-powered appliances, using new technologies and energy sources as they become commercially available and affordable;
- Support weatherization programs designed to retrofit existing homes to increase climate resilience and decrease utility usage;
- Advocate that all utilities -- including broadband -- be safe, reliable, affordable, and worker and community controlled, with the mission to serve the public over profit;
- Recognize the need for diverse renewable energy sources, appropriate for regional geography and the culture of communities in the region;
- Support energy democracy: the growth of distributed rooftop, local, and community solar, battery storage, net metering, and community choice energy as important tools to combat climate change, ensure resiliency, and build a safer, more reliable grid planned in a way that benefits all Californians, including disadvantaged and underserved communities;
- Support appropriately sited commercial-scale solar and wind, and support upgrading and hardening the California energy grid;
- Support energy democracy through community choice aggregation (CCA) energy programs, sourcing clean power and providing local economic benefit;
- Oppose imposing new fees on solar users.
- Oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure projects;
- Call for an immediate end to offshore drilling, including both new leasing and existing permits, and a phaseout of onshore drilling, while decreasing reliance on imported energy;
- Support an immediate moratorium on fracking and other forms of oil/gas well stimulation;
- Support the workers and communities affected by fossil fuel phaseout;

- Support workers displaced by the phaseout of fossil fuels by investing in technologies with strict labor standards that utilize existing craft skills and training; and,
- Provide bridge funding for local governments affected by the decreasing fossil-fuel tax revenues.

### **Environment and Nature**

- Protect California's right, consistent with long-standing federal law, to set California science-based environmental standards that lead the way for the rest of the nation;
- Commit to environmental justice: no community should be subjected to environmental hazards due to race, economic standing, or immigration status, and prioritize legislation that includes environmental justice provisions;
- Protect California's unique coastline and wetlands: preserve and ensure coastal access for all people and support the recovery and preservation of our ocean ecosystems;
- Protect California's majestic forests: safeguard forests through sustained yield best practices forestry, oppose clear-cutting, and encourage planting of trees in appropriate settings;
- Work to promote polices to protect organizations and governments that clean up land with abandoned mine and Superfund sites, with priority in funding based on impact on the environment and natural resources;
- Protect California's public lands for all to appreciate: support access for all while protecting sensitive areas; support dedicated funding for state parks; support full funding of state resource agencies, including State Parks, Fish and Wildlife, and Coastal Commission; and, oppose sale of public forests and parkland;
- Protect California's diverse flora and fauna: support preservation of adequate corridors and resting spaces for wildlife to migrate from important habitats to locations where they breed, feed or winter; and support legislation protecting important keystone species of wildlife and plants;
- Support mandatory funding for Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) to counties that have relinquished taxable land to the state for wildlife conservation;
- Restore the clarity of Lake Tahoe and preserve California's inland lakes and wetlands by preventing the intrusion of new aquatic invasive species and by protecting watersheds and surrounding forest ecosystems from degradation due to inappropriate development and pollution;
- Support comprehensive regional and state-level long term policy and financial solutions for the Salton Sea that will remedy the toxic environmental, health, and quality of life concerns resulting from deterioration;
- Support the goal of conserving 30 percent of the state's land by the year 2030, also known as "30x30," part of an international movement to protect nature across the planet, with the goal of preserving biodiversity and open space necessary to support the adaptation of flora and fauna to climate impacts;
- Protect California's neighborhoods, rivers, beaches, and marine ecosystems from the costly scourge of plastic pollution: eliminate single use plastics and mandate eco-friendly packaging and support extended producer responsibility policies which require manufacturers of non-recyclable or hazardous products to provide for the safe disposal of these products at the end of their useful life; and,
- Promote the rights of California's American Indians to steward their ancestral burial grounds, cultural sites, and sacred sites and encourage government agencies to enter into agreements with Tribes and/or Indigenous Land Trusts regarding the ecological management of ancestral lands and, where possible, the return of public lands to California Indian jurisdiction.

### **Agriculture and Food Safety**

- Support an economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially responsible agriculture and food sector that works for all of California's people;
- Curtail and rapidly phase out glyphosate and other chemicals that pose threats to farm workers, consumers, pollinators, and the environment;
- Promote humane labor conditions for farm workers as a matter of environmental justice, so that workers are not forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment;
- Promote humane conditions for farmed animals;
- Encourage eat-local movements, small-scale farming, organic farming, community gardens, farmers' markets, and other farm-to-table programs as a means of connecting consumers to food production, and driving economic growth;
- Support policy and legislation that encourages and educates on the use of plant-based alternatives to reduce reliance on animal agriculture, a major contributor to climate change; and,
- Develop and support policies encouraging small, diversified farms to thrive, improving the state's services to underrepresented farmers – young, people of color, and/or non-male – to build resilience in local economies and increase regional climate preparedness.

## **Transportation and the Built Environment**

- Defend California's longstanding ability to set science-based standards for internal combustion engines as a part of a comprehensive plan to reduce tailpipe emissions;
- Support housing, transit, and jobs policies that give people jobs that pay a living wage near housing they can afford, so as to discourage super-commuters and urban sprawl/greenfield development;
- Support a ban on sales and registration of new internal combustion engines (ICE) or gasoline-powered cars, light duty trucks, and SUVs by 2030;
- Support a generous cash-for-clunkers program, beginning with the worst polluting cars, so that the working and middle class have effective incentives to trade in their older ICE cars for clean cars;
- Fund efforts by cities and school districts to swap diesel, compressed natural gas, and other dirty buses for electric buses where feasible;
- Encourage the United States Postal Service (USPS) to continue their program to upgrade their fleet with electric vehicles;
- Promote new strategies to reduce driving, such as creating smart growth and "complete streets," teaching bicycling traffic skills, and improving transit, from local systems to high-speed rail;
- Support expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure through changes to building codes, and support policies designed to lower carbon emissions (and electrification where possible) of medium- and heavy- duty vehicles;
- Demand that communities of color and low-income communities – often disproportionately burdened with a high density of toxic industrial facilities and highways – receive community benefits including health care to cover injurious effects of pollution from infrastructure and industry;
- Demand that communities of color and low-income communities are given the right to participate as equal partners at every level of project decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement, and evaluation;
- Demand that Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) include driving-reduction targets, shown by science to support climate stabilization;
- Support policies that empower small business owners to make investments in transportation infrastructure to ensure that freight moves by lower-emission local, short-line freight railroads to mitigate highway congestion and pollution;
- Support the design and implementation of a single, environmentally-sound technology system that will collect and distribute fees for the use of roads, parking, and transit that is both economically fair and convenient and protects user privacy and the interests of low-income users;
- Encourage Net-Zero Energy Emissions in new home and commercial construction by 2030 and encourage the use of fire-resistant, termite-proof, and energy-efficient building materials in all new residential and light commercial construction built by a fairly-compensated, skilled and trained workforce;
- Promote urban policies that lead to revitalization of disadvantaged communities, but without gentrifying communities so as to displace longtime residents;
- Demand a state plan specifying how cars and light-duty trucks can meet climate-stabilizing targets by defining enforceable measures to achieve necessary fleet efficiency and per-capita driving limits; and,
- Work to ensure that freeway expansion projects are subordinate to more sustainable alternatives that will result in more jobs and more economic growth.

## **Water**

- Protect clean, safe drinking water in schools, public buildings, and municipal water systems as a basic human right;
- Recognize the importance of rural watersheds for a sustainable and clean water supply;
- Support the mandate to ensure clean drinking water for all Californians by fully protecting all water sources, funding the treatment systems needed to clean up existing contamination, and assuring that small water systems, heavily concentrated in rural areas, have the resources to deliver reliable, safe drinking water;
- Motivate efficient and sustainable use of water; hold all users accountable to reasonable consumption levels; implement and enforce regulations for groundwater use that includes full usage documentation; and, ensure management of water to sustain the economy, including needs of agriculture, ecosystems, fisheries, recreation, and endangered species;
- Protect the Delta by upgrading the levees, restoring the rivers, increasing floodplain habitat for fish and wildlife and groundwater recharge, mitigating saltwater intrusion and subsidence, and preserving agricultural land;
- Encourage and incentivize water resources planning that builds regional self-reliance and decreases reliance on intra-state water trading and transfers;
- Oppose farming practices that lead to long-term depletion of California's aquifers;

- Support land repurposing that is driven by local needs and embraces revitalization of the local environment and groundwater recharge;
  - Prioritize climate preparedness through water use efficiency, storm water capture/reclamation, groundwater banking, and potable reuse/recycling over desalination and dam-building; and,
  - Work to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted regarding proposals for new or expanded water diversions between watersheds and that the environmental, economic, and social justice impacts of these water diversions are fully addressed.
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## **Equality of Rights and Opportunity**

California Democrats recognize the growing disparity between the top two percent and the rest of Americans. We understand that institutionalized discrimination against protected and vulnerable classes, including racism, classism, casteism, sexism, ageism, and anti-LGBTQ bias contribute to that disparity, and we believe that everyone in this country deserves the opportunity to participate fully in the economic, cultural, political, religious, and social facets of society. Racism is a public health issue that affects the physical and emotional well-being of persons of color. We must recognize and correct adverse outcomes that stem from systemic racism at all levels of government and within our education and health care systems. We take pride in and celebrate our diversity and work to foster the common values and commitments that unite all people, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural heritage, national origin, citizenship status, disability, physical attributes, socio-economic status, gender, race, or personal views on religion. We affirm our commitment to the full equality, inclusion and acceptance of people of all gender identities and gender expressions. And, we support a vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism, and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate.

*To fight for all people to live with dignity and equality, California Democrats will:*

- Support a just and inclusive society by speaking out with a public and unified voice against all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment, hatred, and violence directed at racial and ethnic minorities. Support movements that address targeted discrimination such as Black Lives Matter;
- Support policies that ensure equal opportunities for women, guarantee equal pay for equal work, and oppose all forms of discrimination, harassment, hatred and violence against women at home and in the work place;
- Support policies that ensure equal opportunities for all persons with disabilities, guarantee equal pay for equal work, and oppose all forms of discrimination, harassment, hatred and violence in all settings;
- Encourage, support, and defend voluntary and mandatory affirmative action measures aimed at enhancing equality in employment, education, and business opportunities;
- Support the separation of church and state and affirm that the right to accept or reject any religious belief, to bind oneself to any religious creed, or to hold no religious creed whatsoever, is a private matter and should always remain a matter of individual conscience; and, oppose any government funding to organizations that fail or refuse to respect these rights;
- Protect the constitutional and sovereign rights of Native American Nations and well-established rights and jurisdictions of California Native American tribes; respect a tribe's sovereign powers in protecting Native American land, labor, resources, including sources of drinking water, sacred sites and ancestral burial grounds;
- Denounce the Doctrine of Discovery as a violation of inherent human rights of individuals and peoples and support dismantling legal structures and policies based on that doctrine to allow Indigenous Peoples to self-govern;
- Support efforts to ensure U.S. policies, regulations, and laws affecting Indigenous Peoples comply with international conventions, particularly the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Labour Organization's Convention 169;
- Support eliminating and preventing the use of mascots by public educational institutions that are offensive to the Native American community;
- Support protections against discrimination based on an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, in matters of employment, housing, public spaces and services, state and federally funded programs, credit, education, parental rights, and jury service;
- Affirm the right of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals to be referred to by their correct name, gender, and pronoun;
- Encourage and support more women, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and people of color to run for elected office at the local, state, and federal offices;
- Protect the right of all people to use facilities and participate in all aspects of society consistent with their gender identity, regardless of the gender at birth;

- Support the use of gender-neutral language;
- Support legislation and law enforcement policies that protect LGBTQ people from violence, with added attention to transgender individuals;
- Support wage and economic equality in our communities;
- Support reparations for the lasting harms caused to African Americans by slavery;
- Support review of affirmative action programs and goals that ensures the implementation and results are carefully nuanced and uses disaggregated data, particularly for the large category of Asian American and Pacific Islander (“API”);
- Denounce the racial profiling of Chinese American scientists by the U.S. Department of Justice (some 20 years after the Dr. Wen Ho Lee case) because of ethnicity or national origin and recognize the great losses to our country’s scientific advancement should such targeting continue;
- Support equitable opportunities for entry into the cannabis industry by prioritizing licensing and employment opportunities to persons who have suffered past cannabis convictions; and,
- Work to ensure that government (especially our legal system) works for all citizens, not just the privileged.

## **Gun Violence Prevention**

California Democrats recognize the increasing impact of gun violence on the lives of all Americans, particularly in communities of color. California leads the nation with some of the most stringent gun laws, reducing our state’s firearm mortality by 55% since 1993. Still, more than 3,184 Californians died as the result of gun violence in a single year.

*To advance the cause of ending gun violence, California Democrats will:*

- Support a federal ban on assault weapons and high capacity magazines;
- Support federal expansion of universal criminal background checks to include every gun, ammunition, and “ghost gun” component sale;
- Support legislation that would prohibit those with a history of violence, domestic abuse, or mental health concerns from purchasing or owning a weapon of any kind;
- Require educational programs on safe use and storage of firearms and ammunition before any purchase approval;
- Require all gun owners to pay an annual registration fee and carry liability insurance for each gun owned;
- Promote policies that would restrict access to firearms by children, suicidal persons, and those in emotional crisis;
- Support legislation that would hold gun owners liable for any crimes committed with their firearms for failure to follow safe storage practice;
- Provide necessary resources and funding to implement training and enforcement of California’s existing gun laws, including the Armed Prohibited Persons System Program and the Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO), and means to trace all guns and to investigate all denied firearm purchasers;
- Support the expansion of petitioners of GVROs to include co-workers, teachers, principals, employers, and mental health workers;
- Support efforts to protect California’s gun laws from court challenges;
- Support the repeal of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which protects firearms manufacturers and dealers from liability when crimes have been committed with their products;
- Create tracking software that would trace weapons used in crimes back to the dealer who sold them;
- Oppose any school administration with plans to arm teachers;
- Work to ensure that California schools have adequate counseling resources to address bullying, domestic violence, suicide awareness, and trauma;
- Advocate for adequate funding for community-based organizations dedicated to stopping the cycle of violence;
- Support public outreach and law enforcement training for new and existing law enforcement professionals on the implementation of California’s Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO);
- Support laws and policies that serve to aid in the investigation and prosecution of radicalized domestic terrorists and hate groups;
- Encourage candidates running for office in local, statewide, and federal elections to advocate for common-sense gun laws and to support research, community investment, and public education focused on reducing gun violence;
- Discourage candidates from accepting campaign contributions from the National Rifle Association (NRA) or other gun-rights organizations;
- Urge Congress to take action by passing common-sense gun safety legislation;

- Support the creation, distribution and training of smart gun technology for members of Law Enforcement; and,
  - Support stiffer penalties for those dealers who participate in illegal sales including straw purchases.
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## Health Care

California Democrats believe that health care is a human right not a privilege. The CDP recognizes the health and well-being of Californians cannot continue to be based on arbitrary private and public financial decisions and therefore advocates legislation to create and implement a publicly-funded single-payer, privately delivered, fiscally tractable, affordable, comprehensive, secure, high-quality, efficient, and sustainable health care system that provides universal coverage for all Californians.

The COVID pandemic has revealed long-standing health care inequities based on race and socioeconomic status; exposed inadequate workplace protection and safety measures that can have lethal consequences; shown that employment-based health coverage is not reliable for all; and, demonstrated the need for a more robust public health system. Moreover, many public safety problems can be better treated as public health needs, addressed through expanded mental health and substance abuse services.

*To build a healthy future for all Californians, Democrats will:*

- Protect the gains in health care coverage established under the Obama Administration and support and implement universal comprehensive health care and health coverage for all Californians regardless of income or employment status that includes medical, dental, and vision care, hearing aids, full reproductive health services that respects an individual's right to abortion, preventive services, prescription drugs, mental health and substance abuse counseling and treatment, and long-term care;
- Support holistic healing practices and alternative medicine, particularly those areas licensed by the state such as acupuncture and medical cannabis and utilized to relieve intractable pain without the side effects of conventional controlled drugs;
- Monitor legislation enacted to address adequacy of health care networks that provides for better access to services and addresses cost disparities, particularly in our rural communities;
- Monitor legislation enacted to remedy any uncertainty concerning dispensing of medical cannabis with regard to state law that will provide for rights of medical cannabis patients and specify means and manner of dispensing to qualified patients, even in light of the passage of cannabis for recreational use;
- Lead the nation in providing comprehensive quality health care to all our people by enacting SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program) coverage for all children in California;
- Enact legislation to provide for doctor-directed levels of rehabilitation for brain injuries in all private health care plans and public health care programs, including injuries sustained through repeated trauma as in sports that manifest at a much later date;
- Work to strengthen Medi-Cal and Medicare and oppose efforts to privatize such safety-net programs;
- Advocate for Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements that reflect the average cost of living index of a particular state rather than the current uniform national reimbursement rates;
- Simplify language and plan choices for ease of understanding to individuals making health coverage decisions;
- Support a requirement that all HMOs and health insurers obtain prior approval from the state before rates can be increased and until such time as all Californians are covered by publicly-funded health care;
- Support an independent panel free of health care industry conflict to oversee rate increases, cost-effectiveness, and quality of care;
- Support the state in coordinating with the Federal government in regulating and controlling the cost of prescription drugs;
- Ensure that loss of employment does not cause a loss of health care;
- Fight to eliminate ostensible denial of coverage because excessive rating based on pre-existing conditions;
- Work to expand affordable health care coverage and protections for people living with HIV and AIDS;
- Work to ensure access to necessary health care for historically marginalized LGBTQ seniors;
- Work to ensure that home and community-based care is expanded with stable funding sources, giving special attention to isolated rural communities, so that such care is affordable to all Californians and in particular, allowing seniors and people with disabilities to live at home and in the community without having to spend down assets and live in poverty to qualify for existing programs;

- Expand and strengthen respite care and in-home support services including adequate background checks prior to licensure, and promote an in-home support services system;
- Recognize the physical and financial burdens of family caregivers and support legislation and programs to provide adequate training, assistive interventions, and financial safety nets such as employer savings and tax credits;
- Ensure economic and physical access to multilingual health care services;
- Support addressing health care disparities and promote the goals of the Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health;
- Support the full funding of community clinics and health centers that serve low-income and homeless populations;
- Protect funding for health care services as mandated by voters from being transferred or redirected for any other purpose [e.g., Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63)];
- Advocate for parity in behavioral and mental health services as with physical health services, including timely access, universal coverage and funding, and development of a competent behavioral health workforce to address mental health and substance abuse as an alternative to prison;
- Support re-establishment of State mental health services with an adequate supply of beds for inpatient services and provide for those with extreme mental health problems, even if involuntarily, as an alternative to prison;
- Enforce the Patient's Bill of Rights;
- Affirm that medical decisions must be made with respect for patients' rights to privacy and freedom to have control over their lives with fully informed consent;
- Invest in education, incentives, and other means to prevent disease and promote healthy living; and,
- Lead the fight against diseases by supporting and expanding wellness and disease prevention using stem cell, microbiome, and other groundbreaking research.

### **Death with Dignity**

To ensure death with dignity, California Democrats support the right of any competent adult suffering intractable pain as a consequence of a terminal illness to obtain the assistance of medical doctors in painlessly ending one's own life with current and humane methods available. We support safeguards to ensure that this right of the patient self-determination will not be misused by either family members or health care personnel to precipitate the demise of any person, including any disabled person who desires to continue living.

We advocate that a patient be fully informed of the views of a medical facility and options as to care, medication, and resuscitation to allow for individualized decisions and consent to care.

We support reimbursement to doctors, including Medicare doctors and other healing professionals, who may utilize holistic treatment modalities when administering pain management protocols, including reimbursement when patients request voluntary consultation about end-of-life care.

### **Immigration**

California is the most diverse state in the nation and reflects the foundation of America's strength, emphasizing the fundamental principles of inclusion and national unity that respect rules of law and human dignity. California Democrats believe that the American immigration system should be inclusive, fair, and just. Immigration must be consistent with American values of freedom, opportunity, compassion, and respect for human rights.

*As citizens of a state built upon the successes of immigrants, California Democrats will:*

- Affirm that we can strengthen America's borders while upholding our values by honoring the tradition of providing a safe place for immigrants seeking a life of freedom and opportunity;
- Fight inhumane treatment of undocumented individuals, including separating children from parents and other accompanying family, caging individuals, and withholding adequate food, hygiene supplies, medical care;
- Oppose travel and immigration bans that are based solely on ethnicity, race, religion, or national origin;
- Urge support and respect for international law and adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and U.N. Convention to the Status of Refugees;
- Oppose any changes in immigration law that make it more difficult for LGBTQ individuals escaping violence and persecution from seeking asylum in the United States;
- Oppose detention centers that detain or incarcerate based solely on ethnicity, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression;

- Ensure that the fundamental rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution are applied to every person within U.S. borders or held in U.S. custody;
- Support efforts to safeguard America's security while respecting the principles of the American Dream;
- Oppose construction of an unnecessary border wall between the United States and Mexico;
- Support complete and humane, bipartisan immigration reform that addresses fairness, country of origin, family reunification, and family unity, including giving full faith and credit to families of same sex marriages and same sex couples;
- Support a path to earned legal residency for undocumented immigrants in our communities;
- Encourage increased and expedited processing of applications for family reunification and naturalization while supporting reasonable and fair application fees;
- Support our elected officials in seeking timely information with regard to status of immigration paperwork for constituents, particularly for those constituents who have suffered hardship from backlogs and undue delays;
- Support efforts to improve the naturalization process and make citizenship more accessible and affordable by increasing transparency on application fees, providing uniform administration of the naturalization exam, implementing accommodations for immigrants with disabilities, and assisting immigrants with citizenship requirements;
- Support efforts to provide undocumented immigrants with a transitional path to earned legalized residency and citizenship, including methods to pay back taxes, learn English, register with the federal government for work permits, contribute to the U.S. through education, work, military service, or other community service, complete criminal and security background checks, and acquire driver licenses and insurance coverage. Work to ensure all countries have resources necessary to provide assistance to immigrants;
- Support efforts to provide an expedited path to citizenship for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) individuals and their families;
- Support efforts to provide assistance in learning English and educational opportunities for cultural immersion;
- Support efforts that maximize educational opportunities for all immigrant students, including access to public education and financial assistance as an investment for our common future;
- Support immigrant workers and affirm the policies of the state Department of Industrial Relations and the federal EEOC (Western Region) that immigrant workers, without regard to status or documentation, are protected as to minimum wage, working conditions, and wage theft or other abuses.
- Affirm efforts to provide equal access to housing for all immigrants and condemn conduct that denies equal housing to all, including a landlord's inquiry into the citizenship or immigration status of a tenant or a prospective tenant;
- Support efforts to provide health care and access to insurance for all immigrants to ensure the well-being of our communities;
- Support efforts to promote available government services to immigrant communities;
- Support outreach efforts that promote civic engagement and participation in the political process among naturalized citizens that reflect the diversity of our communities, such as voter registration and voter education, and support effective legal safeguards and protections for access to voting and voting materials in letters, spirit, and practice;
- Oppose scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society;
- Affirm immigration rights based on human rights and support the goals of the Violence Against Women Act, petitioners for U Visas for victims of crimes, and petitioners for T Visas for victims of human trafficking;
- Ensure intervention for abuse, discrimination, and crime among or against immigrants and removing the fear of arrest and deportation for reporting such abuse;
- Encourage cooperation of state and local law enforcement when serving immigrant communities in the interest of public safety for all;
- Oppose law enforcement agencies that unfairly target, threaten, intimidate, or otherwise harass immigrants because of immigration status;
- Oppose local law enforcement agencies acting as federal immigration law enforcement or cooperating with federal law enforcement absent a federal judicial warrant;
- Affirm birthright citizenship as articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court *United States v. Wong Kim Ark (1898)* that children born on U.S. soil are U.S. citizens, without regard to parentage;
- Support the creation of an immediate path to citizenship for individuals who have served in the U.S. Military or were promised U.S. citizenship for aiding U.S. Military in combat;
- Oppose deportation of individuals who have served in the U.S. Military; and,
- Oppose limiting citizenship to children born outside of the United States to U.S. citizens in military service.



## Internet and Free Speech

The fundamental right of free speech requires robust communication technologies and the Internet has proven to be an essential part of preserving that right. Unfettered speech depends upon equal and uncensored access to all forms of wired and wireless communication infrastructure and its many applications, including voice, video, and the Internet. Moreover, accessibility to reliable and factual information requires a free and unrestrained press. Additionally, no collective group of persons in the United States, regardless of their nationality, religion, race or ethnicity should be attacked, vilified or held responsible for the acts of a foreign government. To protect and advance this fundamental right, California Democrats support policies to preserve and encourage continued innovation of open, fast, accessible, and competitive communication and Internet services for all.

*To promote and support free speech, communications, and the Internet, California Democrats will:*

- Support reclassification of ISPs (Internet Service Providers) by the FCC as common carriers and urge the promulgation and enforcement of robust net neutrality regulations to create an Internet without any speed or content access preference;
- Combat the digital divide by advocating for broadband infrastructure in underserved and rural communities statewide;
- Work to establish publicly owned high-speed Internet infrastructure through cities, counties, and special districts and secure state government support for such projects;
- Advocate for greater privacy protection and the protection of personally identifiable information of law-abiding Internet consumers;
- Advocate for build-out of high-speed wired and wireless networks to all homes and businesses, especially in underserved and rural areas, to ensure equal access to and ability to upload and download content at high speeds and full participate in e-commerce, education, and digital medicine;
- Support requiring redundant connections to the Internet throughout all parts of California to mitigate service disruption, especially in the event of natural disasters;
- Protect American creativity and jobs by combating online piracy and enhancing cybersecurity;
- Demand review of all communication operators transmitting over the radio spectrum to ensure that they meet their licensing obligations of serving the public interest;
- Defend freedom of the press and not tolerate any government-sponsored infringement;
- Defend the right to engage in First Amendment protected speech critical of the U.S. or any government by opposing all legislative and other efforts to penalize or criminalize such speech;
- Advocate for the dismantling of communication and media conglomerates that distort balanced information to the public and create an anti-competitive market for Internet services;
- Combat the disinformation that is disseminated in bad faith;
- Ensure that all communications will be protected from warrantless search and seizure as guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution and the California Constitution;
- Support ongoing research and implementation of best practices that use the Internet to foster collaboration and give stronger voice to communities;
- Work to ensure that users of technology are allowed to repair and maintain the equipment or software they've purchased;
- Affirm the fair use and first sale doctrines of copyrighted works in all mediums;
- Support the right of individuals to criticize persons, corporations or government, but not for reasons of racial, religious, ethnic, gender identity, or sexual orientation discrimination;
- Combat efforts to legitimize or justify discrimination or hate speech based on gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or national origin, recognizing that discriminatory, hateful or offensive language or conduct may be perceived as such based on the experience and viewpoints of the targeted persons or groups; and,
- Work to require all commercial websites meet commonly accepted accessibility standards for users with disabilities, whether or not the company has a physical location.

## **Labor, Economic Justice, Poverty Elimination, and Affordable Housing**

California Democrats continue to be close partners with organized labor and strong supporters of workers' rights. The 'glass ceiling' for people of color and women must be shattered and there must be equal pay for equal or comparable work. California's strong workforce is among our nation's most valuable resources.

California's prosperity depends on jobs that provide a minimum standard of living and improve every Californian's quality of life. Food, shelter (including affordable housing), clothing, health care, and education are basic human rights. We are committed to safeguarding these rights through strongly supporting public services designed to eliminate poverty, hunger, and homelessness, and to assist seniors and people with disabilities in order to strengthen all California communities.

All Californians have a right to affordable housing in reasonable proximity to where they work, study, and hold community ties.

*To meet the basic economic needs of all Californians, California Democrats will:*

### **Labor**

- Support a statewide minimum wage of at least \$15 per hour, indexed to inflation and cost of living;
- Support creating and maintaining public and private sector jobs that permanently lift the working poor out of poverty to achieve self-sufficiency and a secure retirement; support employer-provided defined benefit pensions as an essential part of retirement security; and, support the establishment of a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Poverty to carry out a national plan to eliminate poverty in America;
- Encourage employers to "ban the box" and fight to ensure that hiring decisions are made based on an individual's qualifications rather than past convictions and incarceration;
- Fight for meaningful tax reform that eliminates corporate welfare and achieves a more equitable tax system for working families;
- Work to guarantee Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for CalWorks and Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP) recipients in state and federal budgets;
- Support fully funding food stamp programs;
- Promote expansion of emergency food networks and senior and school meal programs to end chronic hunger;
- Encourage the use of firms that employ California workers on publicly-funded public works construction projects;
- Pay prevailing wages on government-funded projects;
- Promote Project Labor Agreements for private and public sector infrastructure projects that provide employment for local hires and returning veterans and that partner with viable state-approved apprenticeship and other training programs for the community;
- Support the 8-hour workday and daily overtime and fight any efforts to repeal the 40-hour workweek; advocate for paid sick days and vacation days for all workers; and, protect California's Paid Family Leave law;
- Work to enhance workers safety programs with adequate and appropriate penalties for unsafe working conditions;
- Work to expand safety regulations to address workplace violence;
- Advocate for full rights for workers employed in subcontracted or temporary work; work to end the misclassification of employees; and, work to ensure that companies that subcontract are held to high standards by holding those companies jointly liable with subcontracting firms when workers' rights are violated;
- Support collective bargaining and the right to organize; support enforceable organizing agreements that include employer neutrality, recognition of card check, and binding arbitration for first-time contract disputes, particularly when industries request governmental approval and/or taxpayer subsidies to expand;
- Support "Fair Share" fees which cover the costs of union representation for bargaining and enforcing workers' contracts with employers;
- Oppose so called "Right to Work" laws;
- Boycott employers who have permanently replaced striking workers;
- Protect the collective bargaining rights of both public and private sector workers and support binding arbitration for police and firefighters and other workers not allowed to strike;
- Fight anti-worker initiatives that undermine the ability of union leaders to carry out the will of their members and to engage in political activities;

- Stand for the right of all workers to earn a living wage and reject wage-based discrimination rooted in an outdated view of disability; and,
- Oppose wages set below the minimum wage for workers with disabilities and support fully funding integrated employment programs designed to transition people with disabilities into workplaces that do not segregate people based on disability.

### **Economic Justice**

- Fight for public assistance programs;
- Support policies that ensure that the working poor have equitable access to services such as health care, food stamps, and rent subsidies;
- Support the continuation of programs and services for people transitioning from unemployment or underemployment to financial stability;
- Support the pursuit of the American Dream and economic security through programs such as government guaranteed-jobs programs and universal basic income/rent/housing, the elimination of poverty, and jobs that lead to strong economic standing;
- Support fully funding California's mutual aid disaster response capabilities so that state and local fire agencies have the necessary resources to effectively mitigate public safety consequences created by climate change;
- Support the use of technology to enhance working conditions and to improve workplace safety and efficiency; oppose efforts to replace workers with technology or any other efforts that cause economic instability for working people;
- Counter "food deserts" by supporting incentives to develop local grocery stores in underrepresented areas; and,
- Support establishing local banks and credit unions and limit check cashing businesses, pawnshops, or other regressive financial operations.

### **Affordable Housing**

- Support programs that care for homeless individuals with dignity and respect through direct shelter, job placement, and necessary mental health services; oppose policies that harass and marginalize individuals in need;
- Support the development of new affordable housing units for low-income individuals and families;
- Support the right of students to have quality, affordable housing and accommodations within reasonable distance to their place of study, free from exploitation;
- Support publicly funded, constructed, and owned housing to mitigate the housing crisis rather than depending solely on private developers to construct new affordable housing including social housing;
- Oppose arbitrary or burdensome conditions placed upon affordable housing construction that is truly affordable for our state's working families and otherwise conforms to state and local zoning and environmental regulations; demand that such affordable housing be considered a by-right use in any zone that permits residential use;
- Urge housing policies that provide for mixed-income communities and that do not further exacerbate segregation by class and ethnicity; support inclusionary housing policies and oppose in-lieu development fees that exacerbate income divides, encourage sprawl, and marginalize poorer residents into less desirable areas that frequently have higher pollution levels and other health risks;
- Support tax and zoning policies that discourage speculation on housing and encourage local residency at affordable prices, including the elimination of the mortgage interest deduction on second homes and reasonable restrictions on short-term rentals;
- Encourage municipalities to provide reasonable accommodations to those forced into mobile residences by the high cost of living;
- Support allowing local communities to create strong tenant and affordability protections without conflict of state law, including requiring affordable housing to be constructed in disadvantaged neighborhoods using neighborhood median income to avoid gentrification, displacement, speculation, undue rent increase, and evictions;
- Support the funding of tenant education "Know Your Rights" programs, legal counsel for tenants, and enforcement of state tenant and housing laws;
- Work to preserve and protect buildings that are under Rent Control or a Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) to stem the loss of affordable housing units due to demolition, condo conversion, or exemption of rent-controlled and rent-stabilized units from jurisdictions that have rent control or an RSO by opposing policies that allow any city, county, or state agency to circumvent maintaining affordable housing stock by purchasing rent-controlled or rent-stabilized buildings and placing those buildings under exemption;
- Protect and promote the construction of affordable housing to alleviate and prevent homelessness, and develop supportive housing with continuum-of-care services to help the unhoused reestablish themselves as self-sufficient contributors to society;

- Support public banking initiatives to help small businesses (including small farmers) and non-profit housing associations such as land trusts and co-operative affordable housing groups obtain low-interest loans and foster reinvestment in infrastructure;
- Protect existing homeowners' property rights by limiting eminent domain to reasonable public uses; oppose the abuse of eminent domain to take homes without the consent of the owner and convey property from one private person to another or to any corporation merely to increase tax revenues;
- Provide a homestead floor with absolute minimum protection for homeowners when they are forced into bankruptcy due to unanticipated health care costs or predatory lending schemes;
- Oppose arbitrary or burdensome conditions placed upon affordable housing construction that is truly affordable for our state's families and otherwise conforms to state and local zoning and environmental regulations; demand that such affordable housing be considered a by-right use in any zone that permits residential use;
- Require all housing construction receiving public benefit adhere to union standards;
- Support the enforcement of laws, such as the duty to affirmatively further fair housing or housing elements, in order to ensure all jurisdictions are doing their part to address the housing needs of their communities;
- Respect the rights of homeowners and renters to have secure, safe and healthy neighborhoods; and,
- Support creation of specially designated encampment areas outside residential neighborhoods, to be used for tiny pre-fab homes and RV's, supported by medical, social and mental health services.

### **Anti-Human Trafficking**

California Democrats believe every person is endowed with inalienable human rights, including the right to individual autonomy and to be free from violence and exploitation. California, as one of the most diverse states in the Union, is a magnet for domestic and global labor and sex trafficking. While predominantly affecting girls and women, human trafficking also includes boys and men.

The CDP is committed to working with state and federal lawmakers to enhance anti-human trafficking efforts that do not criminalize victims and survivors, to provide sex trafficking victims an affirmative defense against solicitation and related charges, and to provide a procedure for survivors to vacate any such prior convictions so that they can pursue a future livelihood with a clean record. We will also urge lawmakers to budget for direct services to aid such victims and survivors. We support decriminalization of sex acts committed by individuals forced into human trafficking.

### **National Security**

California Democrats recognize that providing for the common defense of our nation is a foundational responsibility of the government of the United States, but our defense policy must increase our focus and investment in diplomacy and should not solely rely on might of our armed forces.

Our party is committed to a foreign policy that holds the use of military force as the absolute last resort for national defense used only when available diplomatic and preventative options have been exhausted. We support the work that the Biden Administration has undertaken to rebuild our image on the world stage and to rebuild our strategic alliances with countries that share our values. We must do better to consider unintended consequences and the downstream effects of military engagement and to avoid unnecessary armed conflicts.

To keep America safe and strong we must also look to domestic threats and priorities by eliminating outdated programs and unnecessary defense spending and reinvesting in domestic priorities including rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, reducing the national debt, and addressing head-on the existential threat of the climate crisis.

*To preserve, protect and defend our country and the Constitution of the United States, California Democrats will:*

- Support efforts to combat climate change by pursuing innovative energy solutions and ensuring that our military leads the way in renewable energy use;
- Support efforts to strengthen our defense against cyber-threats to our national security and to election security while protecting individual privacy rights and civil liberties;
- Support efforts to stop endless wars by repealing both the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) and the 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF);
- Fight against extremist ideologies and protect communities targeted by white nationalists and racially motivated domestic terrorists;

- Support enhancement of federal and state law enforcement capabilities to protect the public from domestic terrorism;
- Support strong consumer data privacy legislation and the enhancement of federal and state law enforcement agency cybersecurity capabilities to protect Americans against identity theft;
- Support efforts to audit spending by the U.S. Department of Defense and hold the Pentagon accountable for waste, fraud and abuse identified in independent audits;
- Support efforts to reduce unnecessary Pentagon spending;
- Support efforts to prevent preemptive war and prevent presidential authorized military action without congressional approval;
- Increase foreign non-military aid dedicated to improving anti-terrorism capabilities, law enforcement training, investigation, information exchange, and international cooperation;
- Support a gradual and responsible reduction in the Department of Defense (DOD) budget in line with historic drawdowns after major conflicts;
- Rebalance our national security portfolio to prioritize nonviolent solutions to conflict and nonmilitary tools such as diplomacy, institution-building, and foreign aid;
- Support a foreign policy that promotes democratic reforms abroad, human rights, and the rule of law;
- Secure our ports of entry by improving information and intelligence sharing among federal, state and local law enforcement and by enhancing inspections at all airports, seaports and land crossings while protecting individual privacy rights and civil liberties;
- Increase federal funding to states and communities for equipment, training, and improving the capabilities of first responders;
- Support the establishment of a clear and accountable chain of command for the use of unmanned devices, such as drones, and ensure that the use of drones is consistent with U.S. obligations under international law;
- Support efforts to end the CIA's use of armed drones;
- Protect First Amendment rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of religion, and the historic understanding of the Fourth Amendment that protects the right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure while engaging in domestic surveillance and intelligence gathering;
- Honor obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty framework and set a long-term policy to reduce and eventually eliminate weapons of mass destruction throughout the world;
- Reject funding for new "low-yield" and other warfighting nuclear weapons;
- Redirect budget expenditures for wasteful and dangerous nuclear weapons development programs to domestic needs such as infrastructure, education, health care, and services for military veterans;
- Support investments in infrastructure and technology that promote domestic energy independence through renewable sources;
- Protect American creativity and jobs by combating online piracy of intellectual property;
- Advocate for policies that reduce the demand for illicit drugs and thereby decrease the influence of international narcotics traffickers;
- Denounce the racial profiling of Chinese American scientists by the Department of Justice (some 20 years after the Dr. Wen Ho Lee case) because of ethnicity or national origin and recognize the great losses to our country's scientific advancement and national security should such targeting continue;
- Support efforts to demilitarize local law enforcement by prohibiting the military from transferring certain weapons, vehicles, and gear including grenades, mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles, and armored and weaponized drones to local law enforcement agencies;
- Require the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress what military equipment was transferred to local school districts;
- Condemn practices that violate the First Amendment rights of journalists, lawyers, clergy, and activists critical of government policies under the pretext of providing "border security";
- Support efforts to deny and decrease funding of Customs and Border Patrol for any "technological wall" as it would expand intrusive border surveillance programs of all people, including U.S. Citizens, to violate human rights;
- Oppose all efforts to extend the existing physical barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border;
- Encourage the U.S. and Mexican governments to immediately suspend, investigate, and prosecute state actors implicated in intrusive border surveillance programs in violation of individual civil rights;
- Oppose all travel bans based on religious discrimination; and,
- Encourage Congress to increase funding for programs that support organizations that defend human rights.

## Political Reform

California Democrats believe that a healthy democracy is based on free and fair elections, with all eligible voters able to participate. Freedom to vote without obstruction and to have that vote counted are fundamental to voting rights. We oppose the culture of cronyism and corruption and support public financing of elections. We demand transparency and accountability from both our party and government. We will combat voter suppression and election subversion.

*To promote honest leadership and open government, California Democrats will:*

- Actively work toward a fully educated citizenry, equal opportunity for influence, honest public debate, competitive elections, and robust civic participation in order to enhance the democratic process;
- Actively work with county registrars, college and university administrators, and lawmakers to ensure that every college campus houses precinct polling operations, voter centers, or vote-by-mail (VBM) drop-off locations easily accessible to young voters;
- Support lowering the voting age to 17 years of age and reinstatement of civics classes as a high school graduation requirement;
- Support and encourage the implementation of legislation for full public financing of election campaigns at the local, state, and federal levels;
- Support and encourage the implementation of full disclosure of all funding sources for political advertisements and ballot initiatives;
- Work for increased voter participation by declaring Election Day a holiday;
- Investigate and prosecute any and all forms of voter intimidation and election fraud, including misuse of social media to purposely mislead voters;
- Demand transparency in voting: transparent voting system software (encourage the use of open-source software or at least disclosed-source); national and California standards for electronic voting machine certification; external, non-partisan, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)-level certifying groups that publicly disclose testing results; reliable voter-verifiable systems with a paper ballot as the ballot of record; robust auditing procedures, such as risk-limiting audits of all types of ballots cast, including vote-by-mail ballots and validated provisional ballots; and, updated and thorough chain-of-custody and recount procedures;
- Encourage a ban on any and all forms of Internet or wireless voting, and prohibition of any connection from the Internet to any component of any election, vote-counting, or tabulating system;
- Support continued safeguards necessary to maintain the transparency of our elections by prohibiting voting machine vendors from making political contributions; prohibiting election officials and candidates from becoming employees of voting machine businesses; requiring voting machine businesses to disclose any officers, directors, owners, and parent entities; and, requiring any individual affiliated with the business to pass a criminal background check comparable to standards of the California Contractors State License Board;
- Support the ability of local communities to choose alternative voting systems, such as ranked-choice voting and instant-runoff voting;
- Encourage candidates not to concede until the majority of ballots are counted and the outcome of the election is statistically impossible to overcome;
- End the doctrine of corporate persons and the idea that money is speech by actively working to overturn the decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*;
- Demand transparency and implementation of accountability measures for all levels of the government and the Democratic Party, including federal, state, and local governments;
- Support and defend voter protection under the federal Voting Rights Act and the California Voting Rights Act, including supporting voter outreach and education efforts, especially for young voters and underserved communities, and working to restore Voting Rights Act provisions requiring federal pre-clearance for changes to local and state voting laws and policies until such time as successor legislation such as the proposed 2022 Freedom to Vote Act is enacted;
- Demand abolishing the Electoral College and support its replacement with a national popular vote;
- Encourage the placement of polling sites in tribal communities with large populations on reservations and surrounding areas, including urban American Indian communities;
- Demand the end of “pay-to-play” politics by banning lobbyists from bundling sizable campaign donations, and work to close the “revolving door” of legislator to lobbyist politics;
- Encourage the replacement of at-large election methods with the adoption of by-district and/or alternative voting methods, such as ranked choice voting, cumulative voting, or limited voting for city, school, and special district

- elections to ensure that the votes of diverse communities are not diluted and to ensure that grassroots candidates can compete without needing to raise prohibitively large sums of money;
  - Support transparency measures relating to county budgets and accounting systems so that residents in unincorporated areas may better advocate for their communities' municipal needs; and,
  - Support and expand self-governance for the estimated 6,000,000 Californians who live in unincorporated areas without local municipal decision-making.
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## Rural

California draws strength from our cultural and geographical diversity. Water, timber, food, fiber, and heritage, are among the many invaluable resources coming from rural spaces that are essential to supporting robust agriculture, commercial enterprises, and industry statewide, making California the fifth largest economy in the world. Rural areas are at the heart of the social, economic, and environmental health and well-being of all Californians.

*In recognition of the unique opportunities and challenges in developing policies and programs that work in rural communities, California Democrats will:*

- Encourage elected officials to consider the effect on rural California when proposing new policies or programs by evaluating whether the outcome is fair and feasible in rural communities;
- Support legislation that invests in the natural resources, vibrant culture, historical significance, and the economy of rural communities;
- Improve messaging in rural regions that will heighten awareness of the work, investment, and progress elected Democrats are making in rural communities and counteract disinformation promulgated by Republicans;
- Support policies that consider limited financial capacity in rural areas when implementing state requirements, such as those for recycling, composting, hazardous waste, and storm water control, and adjust compliance timelines and targets as needed, and provide funding to support such programs where the local population cannot;
- Support equitable distribution of state resources, programs, and tax dollars based on need, not solely population, ensuring equitable investment in rural healthcare, community development, and infrastructure, such as water, sewer, power, internet, and transportation;
- Support policies that balance the lawful and responsible ownership of firearms for hunting, sport, and personal protection with the growing need for gun safety laws;
- Sustain a lasting and respectful relationship with Tribal Nations and bolster efforts to support tribal sovereignty, economic development, culture, language, and restoration of ancestral land, such as the conservation efforts of Open Space Districts;
- Respect the value and cultural diversity of immigrants' contributions to California's rural and agricultural economy by demanding stronger protections for agricultural workers, including public benefits, regulation of work hours, worker safety, provisions for adequate housing and health services for migrant workers, and harassment protections;
- Commit to closing the "digital divide" with the equitable and expeditious deployment of state owned and operated, open access, public safety grade broadband "middle mile" infrastructure, and ensure additional funds equitably reach rural California for "last mile" infrastructure to homes, businesses and working agricultural lands;
- Support resources to improve rural election technology and voting procedures and provide funding for vote-by-mail elections in rural counties;
- Effectively implement the state's modern housing regulations in rural communities, including support for increased financing, subsidy options, and tax incentives to promote new affordable housing development in rural counties as well as support for public transit options necessary to ensure residents' access to economic centers;
- Create a rural economic development plan and encourage rural business growth to create and retain jobs;
- Improve rural disaster resilience by increasing vegetation management on both public and private rural roads, providing fire safe clearing on State and Federal land at the Wildlife-Urban Interface ("WUI"), and providing funding for emergency equipment, and public safety grade communications for wildfire evacuation and recovery;
- Provide financial incentives for private homeowners to remove biomass fuels from properties;
- Prevent insurance agencies from cancelling homeowner and fire insurance policies or declining to provide policy coverage in WUI areas; and,
- Establish a unified definition of "rural" that is helpful in securing federal and state grants for rural communities in need.

## Seniors

California Democrats recognize systemic ageism in our society and we are committed to fight it and to recognize the importance and dignity of seniors who enrich our everyday experiences and who connect us with our past. As the fastest growing age group in the nation, people over the age of 65 are a strong driving force in our collective future and are deserving of respect and dignity.

California Democrats affirm and support the California Master Plan for Aging's five goals to *fight ageism and to honor California seniors* and for each goal California Democrats will take specified action:

One – Housing for All Stages and Ages – We will live where we choose as we age in communities that are age-, disability-, and dementia-friendly and are climate- and disaster-ready with a target of millions of new housing options to age well.

- Advocate for stronger oversight of reverse mortgage programs; and,
- Demand greater focus on investigating and prosecuting financial crimes against seniors, and other forms of elder abuse, and that all existing penalties for crimes against seniors be strictly enforced.

Two – Health Reimagined – We will have access to the services we need to live at home in our communities and to optimize our health quality of life with a goal to close the equity gap and increase life expectancy.

- Work toward universal, comprehensive, single-payer health care, and until that is achieved, reform Medicare Part D to make it affordable and easily accessible to people of all income levels, specifically addressing eligibility problems and the private drug plan choices as well as advocating for Medicare to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies; and,
- Continue to support the delivery of HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) services to all counties in California.

Three – Inclusion and Equity, Not Isolation – We will have lifelong opportunities for work, volunteering, engagement and leadership and will be protected from isolation, discrimination, abuse neglect, and exploitation.

- Affirm the right of all who need it to manage their attendant care to live with dignity in one's own home and community;
- Work for additional retraining for those 55 to 65 in order to remain in the workforce, extend unemployment, housing and health care benefits to individuals 55 and older and their immediate families;
- Oppose mandatory retirement; and,
- Work to expand public transportation and other transit services for those on limited incomes, with or without health concerns, to travel freely and enjoy a good quality of life.

Four – Caregiving That Works – We will be prepared for and supported through the rewards and challenges of caring for aging loved ones with a goal of one million high quality caregiving jobs.

- Support increased, stable funding, and expansion of service hours for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and residential care, giving consideration to the special challenges in isolated, rural communities; and,
- Fight to preserve and protect programs serving low-income seniors such as: Adult Protective Services, Senior Community Employment, Multipurpose Senior Service Programs, Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Centers, Home-Delivered Meals, Long Term Care Ombudsman, California Senior Legal Hotline, renter's assistance, homeowner property tax discount assistance, and property tax postponement.

Five – Affording Aging – We will have economic security for as long as we live.

- Support Medicare as a guaranteed right;
- Support legislation to remove the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) income limit so all wage earners contribute to Medicare and Social Security;
- Push to strengthen Social Security and preserve hard-earned pensions as the bedrock of a dignified retirement; and,  
Advocate for maintaining Social Security Field Offices so that beneficiaries can access services in a timely and easy manner.



## Sustainable Communities

California Democrats seek to build healthy, livable, and sustainable communities that conserve natural resources, promote smart growth, are economically prosperous, and are socially equitable. Unsustainable consumption reduces our energy independence, exacerbates the climate crisis and urban/suburban sprawl, and increases our trade deficit. We are committed to environmental justice, a sustainable lifestyle, and a healthy economy. We believe all Californians have a right to affordable housing in reasonable proximity to where they work, study, and hold community ties. The treatment of animals, including wildlife and domestic and farm animals, is a measure of the treatment of humans. Democrats take a stand against animal cruelty.

*To promote sustainable communities, California Democrats will:*

- Support local governments and regions in completing voluntary, sub-regional comprehensive planning processes that stem the tide of urban and suburban sprawl, promote smart growth, and increase the total availability of housing;
- Promote driving reduction targets and safety improvements shown to stabilize the climate, reduce the number and severity of crashes, and work for equitable and environmentally-sound roads and operations to reduce traffic gridlock;
- Promote efficient land use and create greenbelts around our urban areas to reduce traffic gridlock and minimize wildfires and erosion;
- Promote the humane treatment of animals through supporting low kill/no kill animal shelters, the elimination of animal testing, and elimination of fur for fashion;
- Promote adoption, rather than purchase, of animals as pets;
- Support humane and fair treatment of farm animals whether used for food or fiber production;
- Provide green spaces and community gardens for all communities;
- Demand access to good nutrition through supplies of fresh, healthy, and affordable food as a means to countering “food deserts,” particularly for low income communities;
- Promote regional tax revenue sharing in order to decrease local governments’ dependence upon sales tax revenue and minimize sprawl;
- Work to keep communities together by preventing displacement due to lack of affordable housing options;
- Support tenant protection measures and anti-displacement ordinances such as eviction protections and moratoriums, rent control/rent stabilization, and oppose any statewide or local efforts and policies that undermine or weaken such measures that are currently in place;
- Support establishing local government-based loans to improve and sustain rental property belonging to small property owners, particularly those entering or in retirement years, who are asset-rich-but-cash-poor;
- Develop a sustainable rural strategy to stabilize and enhance rural communities affected by economic downturn, land use changes, loss of agricultural land, and reduction in resource extraction;
- Encourage policies and practices that enable communities to be resilient in the event of natural and human-made disasters;
- Encourage incentives to reclaim and redevelop old abandoned buildings and brownfields;
- Support better representation of and decision-making for unincorporated communities, including elected Municipal Advisory Councils, Community Service Districts, and the right to incorporate as cities;
- Reduce sprawl by providing for improvements to local infrastructure and community services, and fostering strong local economies;
- Encourage zoning and housing policies that promote sustainability and affordability, including infill and mixed-use zoning that provide jobs-housing balance, while still protecting the environment;
- Encourage municipalities to work with non-profit developers, build publicly-owned housing, promote co-housing, and create housing trusts and other innovative measures for developing affordable housing;
- Oppose tax breaks that incentivize landlords to maintain extended vacancies in high-traffic commercial zones while holding out for excessive rents that have the detrimental effect of keeping out locally-owned establishments in favor of chain retailers;
- Support the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries, with action by state, county, and local governments to implement street design, vehicle design, traffic regulations, and other policies that prioritize safety for all road users;

- Support transit-friendly zoning and walkable, bike able neighborhoods to encourage sustainability, affordability, and accessibility regardless of age, income, or physical limitations, by providing jurisdictions the tools to reconfigure streets around people; and,
  - Support home ownership opportunities to more Californians, working with community governments to implement the Housing Crisis Act, allowing multi-unit dwellings to be built on land zoned as single family residential while maintaining environment and landscape restrictions.
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## **Veterans and Military Families**

California is home to the largest population of U.S. active military members, veterans and their families who have served our country in times of peace and war. All U.S. veterans are entitled to receive equitable treatment and benefits including education, health care, financial assistance, and an expedient pathway to citizenship. Service members, veterans, and their families should receive adequate support and be treated with dignity and respect. This includes protection from discrimination based on ethnicity, disability, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

*To honor the shared heritage and sacrifice of veterans and their families, California Democrats will:*

### **Service Members and Their Families**

- Demand that our troops be provided with the state-of-the-art protective equipment, technology, weaponry, and full training prior to deployment and demand increased congressional oversight of overseas contingency operations;
- Insist that the military remove the chain of command from investigating and prosecuting claims of hazing, rape, and sexual harassment;
- Demand that activated reservists and National Guard members resume their jobs upon return from deployment and hold employers accountable for the removal of members from employment due to their drill or deployment obligations;
- Demand that the Department of Defense conduct Covid-19 related separations from active duty in a constitutional and judicious manner, and allow for discretion in applying less than honorable discharges;
- Demand that service members and their families who are stationed outside the United States are provided a secure system of electronic balloting to ensure they have a full and timely opportunity to vote and that their votes are counted;
- Demand that the federal government honor its commitment to service members and their families to provide adequate base housing, meet community economic standards, provide schools and child care facilities on military bases, and when necessary, rebuild and repair military buildings in an expeditious manner, especially after damage from natural disasters;
- Insist that those who complete their service as documented or undocumented residents are afforded an immediate pathway to citizenship;
- Oppose the denial of citizenship to the children of military personnel born outside of the U.S. and the denial of citizenship if one parent is not fully documented; and,
- Insist that the same benefits given to the armed forces are provided to all National Guard and reservists activated for federal service.

### **Veterans and Their Families**

- Support a Veterans' Bill of Rights to provide for complete benefits to veterans;
- Insist that veterans and military families have access to medically necessary treatment in an appropriate facility as recommended by the treating physician, including the use of medicinal cannabis, where legal;
- Support the licensing of medical psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications to treat veterans' mental health needs;
- Advocate that veterans in isolated rural areas have ready access to physical and mental health care services in a reasonable proximity;
- Advocate for veterans who received less than an honorable discharge due to mental health issues to be automatically reevaluated for an honorable discharge;
- Demand that the government provide assistance to individuals exposed to Agent Orange and other toxins, including contaminated soils, in the course of their military service or as a dependent residing at a former or current military installation;

- Advocate for veterans who were involuntarily discharged based on their sexual orientation to be automatically upgraded from less-than-honorable discharges to honorable discharges without the requirement that service members request it;
- Support the elimination of homelessness among veterans by increasing funding levels for temporary, transitional, and permanent affordable housing, and therapeutic facilities, using California's state armories year-round, and provide resources to veterans including financial management, a list of available housing, and other support services;
- Insist that all veterans in need of housing services have access to services in the county in which they reside;
- Support tuition and fee waivers at state colleges and universities and state-funded vocational, technical, and trade schools for veterans of recent conflicts and support the implementation of legislation to provide a more comprehensive G.I. Bill for those who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001 with a waiver of any student loans or obligations beyond covered costs;
- Support the establishment and funding for Veterans' Courts accessible to all counties and encourage the establishment of Veterans' justice programs; and,
- Demand quality services and support for veterans transitioning from active duty to appropriate post-service civilian employment.

### **Veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs**

- Insist that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provide timely access to comprehensive, quality and cost-effective wrap-around health care and mental health care and mental health services to all veterans and their families, with particular attention to veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) in order to stem incidents of domestic violence and suicide;
- Oppose privatization of veterans' health care services;
- Insist that the VA fulfill its obligation to veterans by accelerating claims processing and employing veterans to perform claims processing;
- Insist that all leases and use of VA properties, facilities, and land for for-profit and non-profit organizations, or government agencies solely benefit veterans and/or their families by providing quality services including housing, clothing, food, education, and training;
- Demand that the government recognizes equality in the armed forces and veterans' groups by advocating for issues specific to women and the LGBTQ+ community;
- Support the creation of an immediate path to citizenship for individuals who have served in the U.S. Military or were promised U.S. citizenship for aiding the U.S. Military in combat;
- Oppose the deportation of individuals who have served in the U.S. Military; and,
- Oppose any limitations on citizenship for children born outside of the United States to U.S. citizens in military service.

### **Women**

California is the proud home of women who have blazed new trails in business, entrepreneurship, culture, and politics. We proudly and vigorously support a woman's right to choose how to use her mind, her body and her time. California Democrats respect women as full partners in family and society.

*To demonstrate this respect, California Democrats will:*

- Address issues of paramount concern to women and families by encouraging and supporting participation of parents and guardians at CDP conventions and meetings or events affiliated with or sponsored by the CDP through providing logistical support such as family rooms and where appropriate, onsite childcare assistance;
- Support equal access for women of all ages to training, jobs and promotions, and equal pay for equal work, and the right to sue for equal pay, capital, equity, and contracts;
- Support affirmative action, the rights accorded to women in Title IX, the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution;
- Support non-discrimination on the basis of gender in professional, collegiate, and recreational sports, particularly events using public venues, with equity for team competitions in access to facilities, resources, competition time, media coverage, and pay;

- Recognize that violence against sex workers must be addressed through reforming law enforcement practice to protect, not alienate, sex workers and reforming a justice system that penalizes sex workers rather than providing a neutral forum;
- Recognize the decline in the number of Democratic Women serving in elected office, particularly women from ethnic minority, LGBTQ, and disability communities, and promote and emphasize the need for equal representation in public office from local levels to the highest state and federal levels;
- Preserve confidential, unrestricted access to affordable, high quality, culturally sensitive health care services, including the full range of reproductive services, contraception and abortion, without requiring guardian, parental, or spousal consent or notification, or judicial intervention;
- Support the programs of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), including educational and preventive initiatives, especially those that serve women at risk of sexual and domestic violence; and, recognize gun violence in domestic violence as a public health issue requiring mental and physical health treatment and intervention;
- Recognize that freedom and protection from violence or abuse, domestic and otherwise, is a fundamental human right;
- Promote age-appropriate sex education in school curriculum in California;
- Advocate for comprehensive coverage by health plans and insurance of mental health services and treatment for women, including early screening and intervention for postpartum depression;
- Work to increase availability of comprehensive educational and training programs for formerly incarcerated women to enhance parenting and job skills;
- Work to expand workplace rights for women including flextime, compensatory time, and pregnancy and family leave;
- Engage young women in our political process in order to develop a pipeline for new leadership;
- Support women's autonomous decision over reproductive rights by calling for reparations for all women who were sterilized without consent in California jails, prisons, and state institutions;
- Recognize historical instances of human trafficking such as "comfort women" during World War II and Chinese girls in San Francisco used as "mui tsai" / "paper daughters" – indentured servants during the late 1800s to early 1930s – as reminders of the work that must be continued to combat modern day human trafficking from both domestic and foreign sources;
- Support the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-US) and its "Ratify Movement" in efforts to have the U.S. become a signatory to the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the basis for ensuring women's equal access and opportunity in political, personal, and political life; and, to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognizing as a human right that children should be afforded special care and protection;
- Support efforts to address the epidemic of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW), a direct result of colonization, human trafficking, indentured servitude, and commodification, beginning with the California Missions, the Gold Rush, and sanctioned by California laws;
- Recognize that California's American Indian women continue to suffer through institutional racism and stereotypes where violence is inadequately addressed because of jurisdictional issues, lack of data, poor law enforcement response and training, and a dearth of other necessary services'
- Support the Government-to-Government consultation with federally recognized tribes of California; and,
- Support the creation of an American Indian unit within state Department of Justice (DOJ) and an Office on Violence Against Women Department with an American Indian unit.

### **Combatting Sexual Harassment and Creating a Climate of Respect and Equity**

California Democrats strongly support the rights of all individuals to live, study, and work in a safe and professional environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. To create a climate of respect and equity, Democrats demand policies at the state and national level that provide: education about gender equity, starting with early childhood education, where discrimination and bullying begin; help for survivors; training and laws holding perpetrators personally accountable; an end to non-disclosure agreements that force survivors to bear the shame of silence; independent investigations; whistleblower protections; and will work toward public and constituent access of any allegations or findings on said allegations of public officials and their staff. Sexual harassment/sexual assault will not be tolerated as a condition of employment or career advancement in any form of employment.

## **World Peace and International Relations**

The Biden administration has reestablished America's global standing. The Administration has empowered the State Department and its mission of promoting democracy globally. It has renewed the American commitment to humanitarian efforts worldwide. It withdrew from America's longest war in Afghanistan, rejoined the Paris Climate Accord, and provided assurances to the United Nations and other NATO members that the United States values its leadership role and will not turn its back on its allies. Now, the Biden administration, along with the U.N. General Assembly, necessarily addresses the Russian government's unprovoked attack on Ukraine beginning with appropriate sanctions.

California Democrats recognize that all human beings are entitled to freedom, peace, and justice and are committed to a properly staffed and funded foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world.

Many places in the world remain closed to democracy and have leadership repressive of the most basic civil rights. Terrorism is a plague, but wars are not the solution. Even for the most powerful nation on earth, eradicating terrorism solely through a strategy of war, brute force, and attempts at regime change is an impossibility. Foreign intelligence combined with effective foreign aid programs better supports our nation's fight against terrorism and our commitment to democracy and human rights around the world.

We must believe that the American people will support truth over the fear mongering by our political adversaries. We must be truthful with our allies and also with ourselves. We must be firm with those who threaten the American people and our democratic ideals, whether at home or abroad. And, we must take the moral path as we strive to promote world peace.

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

- Support the Biden administration's attempt to reestablish America's position as a world leader, one that recognizes and upholds the rule of law and the role of multilateral treaties;
- Reaffirm the War Powers Act by working to return the authority to declare war to Congress and specifically including a requirement that any first use of nuclear weapons be preceded by a formal declaration of war by Congress and a specific authorization to use nuclear weapons;
- Encourage the Administration's efforts to combat climate change and to overcome Republican opposition to significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions with a net-zero goal to head off global climate catastrophe;
- Condition our policies and our aid to other governments upon respect for basic human rights;
- Affirm the right of all people to live free from persecution, discrimination, dehumanization, and human rights abuses;
- Resist any movement in the world that curtails basic rights and civil liberties or undermines democratic principles and freedom of expression;
  
- Proactively seek durable peace in the Middle East, including ending support for the Saudi-United Arab Emirates aggression in Yemen, opposing Turkish repression and aggression against Kurdish civilians in Northern Syria which has undermined years of cooperative security work to stop ISIS and Syrian from terrorizing innocent citizens and rejoining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015 Iran nuclear agreement) with the ultimate goal of preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon or a mechanism for delivery of nuclear weapons, and discourage the further proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region, encourage democratic forces in Iran, and strive to restore normal U.S.-Iran relations;
- Continue to work toward a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict directly negotiated by the parties that guarantees equality, security and democracy for all; recognizes Israel's future as a secure and democratic Jewish state with recognized borders; and, provides Palestinians with independence, sovereignty, and dignity;
- Support efforts among representatives of Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank to de-escalate tensions through good-faith negotiations that recognize Israel's future as a sovereign, secure, and democratic Jewish state and that can lead to security and independence for Palestinians.

- Recognize that Israelis and Palestinians deserve security, recognition, and a normal life free from terror and incitement and respectively should be free to govern themselves, each in their own viable states in peace and dignity;
- Continue to support an end to the teaching and use of antisemitism and Islamophobia in discourse throughout the Middle East and beyond;
- Oppose the use of military drones for “targeted killings” in countries with which the United States is not at war;
- Combat external threats through increased participation in, support for, and cooperation with the United Nations, other international agencies, and regional organizations;
- Support greater participation in peacekeeping to help prevent mass atrocities and renewed international collaborations to build government structures in states that are failing or emerging from conflict;
- Oppose regime change strategies as a pretext for war and occupation;
- End support for indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Yemen;
- Cooperate with other nations to eliminate terrorism, increase literacy and child survival rates, combat poverty disease and malnutrition, bolster existing and new democracies and developing nations, and reduce the support and demand for narcotics;
- Applaud the Administration’s renewed support for the United Nations as an essential institution for the pursuit of peace and justice employing diplomacy under international law and for the crucial worldwide efforts to end poverty and prevent climate catastrophe;
- Condemn incendiary rhetoric that reinforces North Korea’s fear of a U.S. invasion and nuclear attack and undermines diplomatic efforts with North Korea and support direct talks with North and South Korean leaders toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula;
- Support ratification and adherence to the terms of the key treaties that advance the causes of peace and human rights, including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention, the Landmine Treaty, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Advocate for negotiations toward full implementation of both the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the U.N. Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and support the United Nations Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons;
- Support ratification of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty to which the United States is a signatory;
- Support the advancement of programs around the world that will end the cycle of violence to ultimately promote peace, rule of law, and human rights for increased security and prosperity at home;
- Promote establishing national institutions based on organizing principles of violence prevention and non-violent conflict resolution, using and developing a network of “best practice” peace-building policies and programs among U.N. member states and nonmember nations;
- Urge universal adherence to the Geneva and Hague Conventions. No torture. No extraordinary renditions. No exceptions;
- Seek repeal of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (“AUMF”) that grants the President the authority – without debate or Congressional approval – to use force in retaliation against those determined to have “planned, authorized, committed or aided” the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks against the U.S.;
- Work to enhance the U.N. and regional organizations and commit to the objectives of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, including eradication of extreme hunger and poverty, achievement of universal primary education, and promotion and empowerment of women;
- Work toward achieving global nuclear disarmament by urging the continuation of the Obama Administration’s “interagency discussions and international negotiations regarding the reduction and elimination of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world,” a recommitment to arms control agreements, and opposition to any first use of nuclear weapons and pre-emptive nuclear strikes;
- Support reallocating defense expenditures in a manner commensurate with actual threats;
- Support enhanced efforts to deprive terrorists of weapons of mass destruction by moving multilaterally to diminish weapons stockpiles, moving back the hands of the Doomsday Clock published by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists as it relates to nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war;
- Urge tailoring our foreign policy to eliminate poverty, starting with allocating an additional one percent of our budget to aid and development;
- Work to promote population-planning worldwide through education and support for family planning organizations without restricting a woman’s autonomy over her body as part of responsible family planning;
- Make the United States a global leader in healthy and democratic economic development by designing policies that prioritize worker rights, preserve the environment, fight the climate crisis, and channel the benefit of globalization to ordinary people in all countries;

- Structure fair trade agreements that require countries to adopt and enforce internationally recognized labor standards such as the right to associate and bargain collectively and prohibitions against child labor, forced labor, and discrimination in employment;
- Observe both U.S. and international law and adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and U.N. Convention to the Status of Refugees in granting asylum and support the dignified treatment of refugees everywhere no matter their race, religion, or country of origin;
- Support pursuant to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 13, the right of individuals to leave and return to their own country consistent with negotiated treaties and pursuant to Article 14, the right to seek asylum and be free from persecution;
- Oppose the genocide committed by the Burmese military and support peaceful actions to restore democracy to Burma;
- Encourage dialogue with the People's Republic of China to address issues, including: climate change; a peaceful resolution of issues between China and Taiwan that is consistent with the will of the people of Taiwan; and, the return of democratic freedoms to the people of Hong Kong;
- Unequivocally continue to condemn the genocide of Uyghurs and all other human-rights violations and insist that China release all religious and ethnic minorities from all forms of detention;
- Support de-escalating a nuclear arms competition between the U.S. and China and support and encourage fair trade between the two nations;
- Promote diplomatic actions to restore citizenship equality in India, regardless of religion, race, caste, gender, or employment, or other factors;
- Continue support for the U.S.-led Good Friday Agreement and its course of peace and progress in Ireland, oppose any efforts to undermine the agreement's founding, and insist that any trade negotiations between the U.S. and United Kingdom must leave the Good Friday Agreement in place to prevent the return of a hard border in Ireland;
- Urge that where sanctions are warranted to target their use to limit impacts on local populations;
- Support a Congressional Investigation into the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and,
- Support the creation of a special envoy who will monitor and combat Islamophobia.