

KING COUNTY DEMOCRATS PLATFORM

(adopted April 12, 2014)

OUR VALUES

We are the Democrats, the party of the people. We cherish the American heritage of opportunity and inclusion. We commit ourselves to addressing the critical issues of our time: income and social inequality and climate change. We will restore the American dream with good schools, good jobs, and good medical care for all. We are committed to a government that serves and protects its people, with justice for all. We believe it is our duty to pass a better world to future generations.

We are dedicated to:

- ✓ Equal rights for all
- ✓ Seeking peace through cooperation and diplomacy
- ✓ A sustainable global environment
- ✓ Affordable, accessible health care for all
- ✓ High-quality public education
- ✓ Ending homelessness and hunger
- ✓ Fair opportunity for all Americans to share in **our nation's wealth**
- ✓ Equitable and progressive tax policy
- ✓ Responsibility, integrity, and accountability in government
- ✓ Criminal justice that heals our communities
- ✓ The rule of law, and keeping our judicial system free of politics
- ✓ Religious liberty, upholding the separation of church and state
- ✓ Human rights at home and abroad

SUMMARY OF KING COUNTY DEMOCRATS PLATFORM

Agriculture: Farmers are stewards of the land that sustains us. We must preserve family farms, strengthen rural communities, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of land and water.

Civil Rights and Human Rights: The rights guaranteed by our Constitution and international human rights law are central to our democracy and must not be compromised.

Corporate Power: As artificial entities, corporations are not entitled to Constitutional protections as persons. We oppose the undue influence of corporations on our society, government and political process.

Economic Justice, Jobs, and Tax Fairness: A sustainable economy with strong communities requires living-wage jobs, tax fairness, opportunity, and shared prosperity for all.

Education: The backbone of our democracy is a free, universal public school system that produces informed, reasoning and thoughtful citizens. Our state is responsible for providing a high-quality education for all children, pre-K through grade 12, and affordable access for those who seek higher education. We agree with our state's Supreme Court, that "Education is the #1 Civil Right of the 21st Century."

Environment and Energy: Our well-being and very survival depend on clean air, clean water, safe food, and sustainable ecosystems worldwide. Environmental protections strengthen our economy.

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

Government and Political Reform: The role of government is to accomplish those goals that we as citizens cannot achieve individually. Democracy requires full participation by an informed citizenry; a voting process that is fair, transparent, and open to all; and public officials who are accountable to society.

Health Care: Health care is a basic human right. Government must provide full and equal access to high-quality, affordable care.

Human Services: As a caring community, we must provide a safety net of social services that meets the basic needs of people, especially those on the margins of society, so they can attain their full potential.

Immigration: Immigrants strengthen America. All immigrants should be afforded full human rights, a fair, safe, and timely path to legal status, and an opportunity for full integration into our society.

Labor: A strong economy and nation depend on jobs that provide safe working conditions, fair and living wages, and benefits. All workers must have the right to organize and bargain collectively to determine their pay, benefits, and working conditions. "No one who works full-time should have to live in poverty."
(President Barack Obama)

Law and the Justice System: The rule of law is a prerequisite for democracy. A good government provides for the safety and security of all, with care, even-handedness, and respect for the individual.

Media Reform: An informed citizenry and persistently inquisitive independent media are essential for democracy to flourish.

Military and Veterans Affairs: We honor those who choose to answer our country's call to military service, and we insist on sufficient benefits and quality medical and mental health care for them at all times. We owe it to those who put their lives on the line, to deploy our military judiciously.

Transportation: Better public transportation will promote equal opportunity, enhance public health, reduce environmental impacts, and improve the quality of life for all.

Tribal Relations and Sovereignty: Tribal governments are sovereign nations and part of our national identity and community. They must be recognized as such and their treaty rights respected.

AGRICULTURE

Farmers are stewards of the land that sustains us. We must preserve family farms, strengthen rural communities, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of land and water.

1. Crop diversity, conservation, and environmental efforts that preserve agricultural land and natural resources are critical to the viability of food, fuel, and forest production. Sustainable agriculture and forestry improve our environment, potentially mediate climate change, and provide local jobs.
2. A healthy population depends on organic production that reduces the use of herbicides, pesticides, and other toxic materials and eliminates antibiotics and hormones from animal feed.
3. Clear food labeling is essential for consumers to make informed choices, including disclosure of where and how the food was produced, genetic modification, and components and additives in the soil in which it was grown.
4. Farmers who do not use genetically modified products should be protected from liability and economic losses resulting from the drift of genetically modified materials.
5. Local farmers' markets, which promote the nearby economy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels in the transport of foods, should be supported.
6. School lunch programs should use local foods whenever possible.
7. Renewable energy production on farms should be facilitated. We support sustainable and renewable energy production that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Inspections of both domestic and imported foods and livestock are necessary to ensure the quality of food.
9. Farm subsidies should be available only in times of crop failure or disaster.
10. Distribution of water must be equitable, sustainable and fair, based on sound science, to protect resources for future use.
11. Wild salmon must be protected from the impacts of factory fish farms and watershed pollution.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The rights guaranteed by our Constitution and international human rights law are central to our democracy and must not be compromised.

1. All humans have the right to food, water, shelter, safety, health care, education and jobs.
2. Discrimination is wrong. Laws must ensure that prejudice does not present a barrier to obtaining education, employment, promotion, housing, insurance, or any other social or economic good. Any member of a group impacted by such a barrier must be afforded the legal means and economic opportunity – including affirmative action – to overcome such injustice.
3. Privacy is a basic human right that government and business must recognize and respect. We assert the right of all to be free of unwarranted intrusion by government or other entities.
4. Freedom of religion and its separation from government are fundamental to our country's existence and must be upheld at all levels. Such freedom does not, however, include a right to impose the tenets or practices of one's own faith on others.
5. A woman's right to reproductive choice, regardless of age or ability to pay, must be protected in the United States and abroad.

6. Provisions of the USAPATRIOT Act and Protect America Act that infringe on constitutional rights and freedoms must be repealed and habeas corpus fully restored.
7. The abuse of our civil rights by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies must end.
8. We oppose pervasive and unconstitutional surveillance by the NSA and other government agencies.
9. We support using the criminal justice system to prosecute accused terrorists.
10. The rights of people with disabilities, including equal access to public accommodations, employment, transportation, telecommunications, voting, and government services, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act, must be monitored and enforced.
11. Marriage equality must be federally recognized.
12. Human trafficking is slavery and must be stopped.

CORPORATE POWER

As artificial entities, corporations are not entitled to Constitutional protections as persons. We oppose the undue influence of corporations on our society, government and political process.

1. The U.S. Constitution must be amended to firmly establish that a corporation is not a person and that money is not speech.
2. Organizations that draft and promote laws and claim tax-exempt status, such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), should register instead as lobbying organizations.
3. Effective penalties must be imposed on corporations that violate state or federal laws or regulations, and on the persons in control of those practices.
4. Investment banking must be separated from retail banking, and both subjected to tighter regulation, transparency, and accountability.
5. Government contracts should not be awarded to businesses that establish a corporate presence in another jurisdiction for tax-avoidance purposes.
6. Whistleblower laws must be strengthened and enforced, to provide active protection and restitution for any whistleblowers who lose their livelihoods.
7. Patent and copyright laws that give corporations undue control through unnecessarily long terms and other tactics should be reformed to protect competitive opportunity and encourage creativity by others. We support a strong, robust and vibrant public domain.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE, JOBS, AND TAX FAIRNESS

A sustainable economy with strong communities requires living-wage jobs, tax fairness, opportunity, and shared prosperity for all.

1. Our state must institute a more progressive tax system, implementing a fair and equitable tax structure including a capital gains tax, a high-earners personal income tax, a reduced sales tax on goods and services, and replacement of the Business & Occupation (B&O) tax with a 1% tax on corporate profits.
2. State taxes and other revenues must be set at a level sufficient to meet constitutional requirements and promote the general welfare. “Taxes, after all, are the dues we pay for the privileges of membership in an organized society” (President Franklin Delano Roosevelt).

3. Each business should pay its fair share of taxes. Each tax exemption or preference must produce a net benefit to taxpayers and appear as an expense on the state budget, meet measurable goals reported annually, and automatically expire every five years unless renewed.
4. Any tax preference for a business that moves jobs out of state or offshore should be immediately revoked.
5. A publicly owned State Bank of Washington should be established as the repository for state funds, to foster economic development and jobs by participating in commercial and infrastructure loans and by making direct student and farm loans.
6. Tax cuts for the wealthy should expire, and the federal estate tax should be reinstated with protections for small, family-owned farms and businesses. Capital gains should be taxed as regular income.
7. The Earned Income Tax Credit should be maintained to help the working poor, and the Alternative Minimum Tax indexed to inflation to protect the middle class.
8. The cap on income subject to Social Security tax should be removed.
9. Small businesses create jobs and strengthen the middle class; government policy should foster them and promote new-technology and research industries.
10. A national service program should be created, including but not limited to the building, repairing, and maintenance of the nation's infrastructure.
11. Public services should not be privatized, downsized, outsourced, or moved offshore.
12. Property taxes should be reformed to help low- and middle-income homeowners stay in their homes.
13. Government should protect pensions and the rights of pensioners.
14. Consumer protections should be expanded and strengthened, including:
 - a. Capping payday loan interest at a 36% annual percentage rate, as it is for military families;
 - b. Modifying the principal or interest rates of mortgages that are underwater, to keep distressed homeowners in their homes;
 - c. Assuring that neither the approval nor rates of auto or homeowners insurance is based on education, income or credit score; and
 - d. Enacting legislation to protect homeowners from faulty construction.
15. Student debt is limiting the economic future of our nation; we must reduce the burden of existing and future student loans by:
 - a. A "Pay It Forward" program that eliminates student debt in exchange for a modest percentage of income for 20 years;
 - b. Reducing or eliminating student debt in exchange for critically needed public service;
 - c. Limiting interest on student loans to 0.5% over the rate at which banks borrow from the Federal Reserve; and
 - d. Allowing student loans to be discharged through bankruptcy.

EDUCATION

The backbone of our democracy is a free, universal public school system that produces informed, reasoning and thoughtful citizens. Our state is responsible for providing a high-quality education for all children, pre-K through grade 12, and affordable access for those who seek higher education. We agree with our state's Supreme Court, that "Education is the #1 Civil Right of the 21st Century."

1. We support excellent public education, pre-school through university, with equal access for all.
2. To meet the state's constitutional requirement to amply fund Basic Education for all resident children, our legislature must implement a stable source of funding of public elementary and secondary education, to include:
 - a. Class sizes that enable optimal learning experiences;
 - b. Vital support specialists such as school nurses and counselors;
 - c. English language learning (ELL), special education, and accelerated and remedial programs to meet the needs of all students.
3. The first priority in spending is classroom instruction that includes comprehensive, effective curricula:
 - a. Research-based science taught at all levels;
 - b. Mathematics instruction including both arithmetic fluency and critical thinking skills, with proficiency measured according to international standards;
 - c. Civics, world history and cultures as part of social studies;
 - d. Opportunities to study foreign languages;
 - e. Music and arts as important components of school programs;
 - f. Vocational education in both middle and high school of sufficient rigor to prepare students for viable careers; and
 - g. Well-funded and well-staffed school libraries.
4. Rigorous standards should be in place for all subject areas, with classroom-based assessments used to evaluate student progress.
5. Evaluation of school programs should avoid excessive testing that impinges on instructional time. Although well-designed standardized testing may be used in a limited diagnostic role to assess individual and aggregate student progress, such tests are not valid measures of teacher performance or effectiveness.
6. We oppose private-school voucher programs and "virtual" online charter schools. The state should not expand the existing charter school experiment, and should exercise strong oversight thereof in the meantime, with full public accountability for student progress and fiscal responsibility by all parties. The "trigger" mechanism allowing charter school takeover of a public school building should be abolished.
7. Congress must fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA").
8. High-quality before- and after-school programs;
9. Students should be free from commercial exploitation within the school system.
10. Updating of school infrastructure is essential, including technology and safety.
11. All high school graduates in Washington should have access to higher education, regardless of means. Public education should extend through community college and public vocational/technical schools.

12. Congress should eliminate policies that deny federal tuition aid to college students convicted of drug possession as juveniles.
13. Our state university system is a public asset that deserves ample funding competitive with other institutions of higher education across the nation. The rapid increases in public higher education costs should be borne primarily by public funding rather than by students and their families.
14. To attract and retain outstanding and professional teachers, the state must provide competitive salaries and benefits for all faculty and staff, pre-K through higher education.
 - a. All public education employees, including part-time faculty, should be accorded professional development and professional advancement opportunities, and must have the right to organize, engage in collective bargaining, and strike, without fear of reprisal or replacement;
 - b. Merit pay should be rejected and collaborative processes for teachers and administrators emphasized, in order to improve the learning environment for all students;
 - c. Salary and benefits for part-time college instructors should be based on compensation levels for full-time professional staff, according to percentage of full-time equivalency;
 - d. Public pension systems should be fully funded and the value of the individual benefit maintained with a cost of living adjustment (COLA); and
 - e. “Teach for America” candidates should not displace certificated teachers.
15. Schools must provide a safe environment, free of bullying and harassment, for all students, faculty and staff.

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Our well-being and very survival depend on clean air, clean water, safe food, and sustainable ecosystems worldwide. Environmental protections strengthen our economy.

1. The web of life, of which we are a part, must be protected and preserved. Environmental laws and regulations must be strengthened and vigorously enforced.
2. Global climate change is the foremost threat to survival of the earth as we know it. Government and individuals must take aggressive action now to avert further climate change. We must:
 - a. Require that environmental impact statements consider the full scope of every proposal, avoiding the segmentation of projects to reduce identified impacts;
 - b. Reduce production of greenhouse gases, including stricter emission standards for motor vehicles
 - c. List greenhouse gases, including CO₂, as pollutants under the Clean Air Act;
 - d. Ban shipping coal, oil or other fossil fuels through our communities;
 - e. Refuse to permit the Keystone XL Pipeline; and
 - f. Oppose increasing production of fossil fuels through extreme measures such as tar sands extraction, shale oil extraction and natural gas “fracking.”
3. We must establish clean, sustainable, and renewable energy sources by:
 - a. Supporting (i) increased research, development and use of energy-efficient and renewable sources of power, including wind, solar, and other innovative technologies, and (ii) proposals to develop communities that demonstrate the use of such technologies;
 - b. Opposing new or expanded nuclear or coal-fired power plants;

- c. Promoting intelligent economic incentives for energy conservation and clean energy systems, including imposition of a carbon tax and repeal of tax breaks for oil companies; and
 - d. Replacing technologies that contribute to environmental pollution and toxic overloads.
4. Our economic and environmental well-being requires managing population and growth intelligently, limiting urban sprawl, and preserving farmland, wildlife habitat, and natural resources. The State Environmental Policy Act and Growth Management Act should be maintained and strengthened. Developers should pay impact fees to mitigate the effects of growth.
 5. Neighborhoods must be affordable to people with a wide range of incomes. Among the essential public investments in neighborhoods are transit, open space, playfields, and libraries.
 6. Public lands must be managed as a public trust and preserved for their environmental values as well as scenic beauty and majesty. We oppose resource exploration and development in state and national parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas – places that are a critical part of our national history and heritage.
 7. Responsible waste management requires many strategies, including:
 - a. Reducing, reusing, and recycling all residential and business waste;
 - b. Creating viable markets for reusable and recycled materials;
 - c. Holding manufacturers financially responsible for cleanup and disposal of products at the end of their useful lives;
 - d. Reinstating the Superfund Tax to make polluters pay for despoiling the environment; and
 - e. Applying stringent environmental safeguards on the export of toxic waste.
 8. State laws requiring cleanup of Hanford and protection of the Columbia River must be enforced before any more nuclear waste is stored there. We oppose any federal regulation that would reclassify high-level waste or allow its abandonment.
 9. The toxicity of chemicals must be assessed prior to their manufacture and release.
 10. Pharmaceutical manufacturers should be required to offer safe, no-cost disposal of unused or unsafe prescription drugs.
 11. Segregate the sale of pesticides and herbicides from the sale of food.
 12. It is the sovereign right of the people, and necessary to their well-being, to enact laws that protect their health, safety, and welfare. Government should make no rule, law, treaty, or agreement limiting the application or effect of national, state, or local laws or regulations that protect clean air, clean water, food safety, or worker safety.

FOREIGN POLICY

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

1. Our nation must have an effective, comprehensive plan to ensure our security while protecting our constitutional rights and the human rights of all. We must:
 - a. Demonstrate our commitment to peace, never initiating unprovoked war,
 - b. Work with other nations to eliminate terrorist networks, and
 - c. Resolve international conflicts through diplomacy and international institutions.

2. We must complete a timely withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Afghanistan in such a way as to do the least harm to the peoples of the region and to promote stability.
3. We support rebuilding war-torn countries through international cooperation, using local labor. We have a special duty to assist with rebuilding both Iraq and Afghanistan and to provide humanitarian relief for their people.
4. The United States should support programs that promote human rights, adherence to international law, democratic elections, environmental protection, health and safety, peace, commerce, and cultural understanding. Accordingly, we must:
 - a. Lead international efforts to prevent genocide,
 - b. Sign and ratify the U.N. agreement forming an International Criminal Court,
 - c. Honor the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - d. Provide our fair share of effective foreign aid to reduce world poverty and improve health, education, and access to safe water and food, and
 - e. Restore support of family planning worldwide.
5. The United States must:
 - a. Sign the 1997 treaty banning landmines,
 - b. Ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty,
 - c. Comply with the Geneva Conventions, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, and other international treaties protecting civilian populations, and
 - d. Secure long-term international agreements setting enforceable goals to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.
6. All governments that possess nuclear weapons should reduce or eliminate their nuclear arsenals. Our government must renounce the development of new nuclear weapons and act to accomplish nuclear nonproliferation, arms reduction, and international control of fissile material.
7. Our government should not engage in covert efforts to destabilize other nations' governments.
8. The United States should work to strengthen regulation of financial systems worldwide to prevent economic disruptions and develop ways to better handle sovereign debt to avoid destabilization and increased poverty.
9. Existing international trade agreements should be renegotiated to incorporate, and future trade agreements should incorporate: human rights, labor rights, consumer protections, worker safety, and environmental protections with transparency and democratic procedures at all levels. Secret WTO processes should be public.
10. "Fast Track" ratification should not be available for trade deals unless the agreement has been openly negotiated.
11. The United States should use its full influence, through serious, constructive and persistent engagement, to promote negotiations and other actions that lead to a successful and sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on mutual recognition, that ensures security, economic growth, and quality of life for the peoples of the sovereign state of Israel and a sovereign state of Palestine.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL REFORM

The role of government is to accomplish those goals that we as citizens cannot achieve individually. Democracy requires full participation by an informed citizenry; a voting process that is fair, transparent, and open to all; and public officials who are accountable to society.

1. Government is unique and not a business; it has very different functions and purposes. The need for its services increases during times of war, economic failure or natural disaster. To provide essential services and safety for all, government must levy fair taxes and enforce laws and regulations for the common good.
2. The U. S. Constitution must be amended to establish that corporations shall not be considered as “persons” for purposes of political activity, and to reverse the pernicious notion that money equals speech.
3. We demand a federal legislative process free of filibusters and other dilatory tactics. Federal and state legislative votes should be decided by a simple majority except as constitutionally required otherwise.
4. Campaign finance reform must be re-established, including contribution limits, spending limits and disclosure, as means to curtail the inordinate influence of money on the political process. Disclosure of the sources of campaign funds for or against candidates or ballot measures, by campaign committees or so-called independent political action committees, is imperative, and lobbyists should not be admitted into executive sessions of federal or state committees.
5. Campaigns should be publicly financed through matching fund programs so that any qualified citizen may have a realistic opportunity to run for office regardless of his/her socio-economic status.
6. The integrity of all electoral processes must be preserved. The principal record of all votes should be on human-readable paper ballots, and all machines used to produce, tabulate, or otherwise manage public-record election data must use open-source software. Mandatory auditing according to the protocols recommended by the American Statistical Association should be required for all jurisdictions.
7. We demand repeal of onerous voter identification requirements and deplore all tactics designed to suppress voter participation.
8. We support election of the President of the United States by popular vote, in order to accurately reflect the will of our nation’s voters.
9. The process of selecting Presidential nominees must be shortened, with provision for accessible and meaningful citizen participation.
10. Transparency in government requires public visibility and access to government processes, including increased funding for TVW.
11. The effectiveness of our state Public Records Act must be restored by eliminating hundreds of exemptions.

HEALTH CARE

Health care is a basic human right. Government must provide full and equal access to high-quality, affordable care.

1. A single-payer system should be enacted statewide and nationally, to provide the most affordable comprehensive, coordinated, and effective health care, serving both individual and public health needs at a cost individuals and society can afford .
2. Health care coverage must include a strong essential benefits package ensuring effectiveness, appropriate usage and cost containment for outpatient and inpatient services; acute and long-term care;

home care and hospice; mental health care and substance abuse programs; dental, vision and hearing services; family planning with contraception and access to safe abortions; prescription drugs, medical supplies, durable medical equipment and medical technology; and rehabilitation.

3. Patients are entitled to freedom of choice in their health care, including selecting a personal provider and a “medical home,” a team that provides coordinated care with continuity. Medical decisions must be patient-centered, and neither the government nor insurance companies should overrule a medical decision made between patient and health care provider.
4. We support government education grants and student debt forgiveness for primary care providers in exchange for service to underserved populations.
5. We support a strengthened public health system that promotes conditions leading to better health for the entire population.
6. Our public health policy should be based on sound scientific principles and follow recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
7. We support reducing health care costs in innovative ways that improve quality of care but do not cut effective benefits or limit enrollment. We adamantly oppose attempts to privatize or ration Medicare, or to raise the age of Medicare eligibility.
8. We must expand funding of basic science and clinical research under the National Institutes of Health. Support should be based on scientific merit, not a political agenda.
9. High medical costs in the U. S. must be brought under control. The Affordable Care Act exemptions from competition for durable medical equipment and pharmaceuticals must be repealed.
10. We oppose over-prescription of drugs and the routine use of antibiotics in animal feed.

HUMAN SERVICES

As a caring community, we must provide a safety net of social services that meets the basic needs of people, especially those on the margins of society, so they can attain their full potential.

1. With poverty having doubled due to the recession, ensuring compassionate human services must be among the highest priorities of federal, state, and local government.
2. We support programs that reduce poverty, not just reduce the welfare rolls.
3. We must ensure that all people have access to safe, affordable housing. We support:
 - a. Low-income housing for those who cannot work.
 - b. Targeting affordable housing programs toward those who need them most.
 - c. Workforce housing programs, especially those targeting workers earning less than a living wage (60% of area median income).
 - d. Shelters as a transition to permanent housing.
4. We oppose subsidizing market-rate housing for those who earn 80% or more of area median income.
5. Farm workers and their families must have safe and adequate housing, sanitary facilities, and access to medical care and education.
6. Each person being released from a state institution should be assisted in preparing a plan for transitional housing upon release.
7. We support restoring the Disability Lifeline stipend (state public assistance for people with disabilities) to safeguard the dignity and well-being of the vulnerable poor.

8. Quality affordable childcare, education, workforce training, and substance abuse treatment must be provided to help working parents leave welfare and poor people escape poverty.
9. Taxpayer-funded social services must not be conditioned on faith-based requirements.
10. Preventing child abuse and neglect must be a priority for our state. The foster care system must be restructured to protect the child, and adequately funded and administered.
11. Adult Family Homes should be adequately regulated and funded.
12. Washington State must provide a long-term care program that provides in-home care alternatives to nursing homes and Medicaid, including respite for family care providers.
13. Services for people with developmental disabilities and their families should be strengthened and programs made more flexible. We should fund promised services, ending the waiting list.
14. The State should fund the Family and Medical Leave Act.

IMMIGRATION

Immigrants strengthen America. All immigrants should be afforded full human rights, a fair, safe, and timely path to legal status, and an opportunity for full integration into our society.

1. We support comprehensive immigration reform, providing for greater legal immigration and options for undocumented immigrants to normalize their status. Immigration policy must recognize the basic human rights of immigrants and accord them due process in all proceedings. The U. S. must provide for fair and humane treatment of immigrants, reuniting families and crafting a fair path to legal status and eventual citizenship for those already living here.
2. We support policies to integrate immigrants more fully into a community of greater shared prosperity, opportunity, and higher living standards for all. We oppose use of the term “illegal” to refer to any human being.
3. We support continuing effective border control measures, consistent with individual liberties, while encouraging lawful immigration by eliminating ethnic bias in quotas and speeding timely processing of applications for entry, asylum, temporary work permits, and lawful permanent residence ("green cards").
4. We must create a more efficient, just, and compassionate system for granting asylum.
5. Undocumented immigrant students who arrived in the United States as children, graduated from U.S. high schools and have no criminal record, and have been in this country continuously for at least five years, should be given an opportunity to earn permanent residency and access to higher education.
6. We oppose using local law enforcement as agents of immigration enforcement. Local police agencies should not report or hold undocumented detainees for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). We oppose federal contracts that commit to filling beds at ICE detention centers.
7. We support provisions to improve wages and working conditions of immigrant workers, to protect them from exploitation, and to protect American workers from being undercut by an undocumented and exploited workforce.
8. We must allow access to health care and human services without discrimination based on immigration status.
9. We must work with other nations to improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions that stimulate uncontrolled immigration.
10. Cultural diversity makes our country stronger; we oppose efforts to legislate English as our official language.

11. We oppose the use of H(1)(b) visas by high-tech companies to hire immigrants with advanced degrees instead of comparably skilled U.S. citizens.

LABOR

A strong economy and nation depend on jobs that provide safe working conditions, fair and living wages, and benefits. All workers must have the right to organize and bargain collectively to determine their pay, benefits, and working conditions. "No one who works full-time should have to live in poverty."
(President Barack Obama)

1. We support a Workers' Bill of Rights that includes:
 - a. A safe and healthy workplace;
 - b. Rights of association, assembly, and free speech;
 - c. Benefits including health care, retirement, and paid family leave for wage earners and their families;
 - d. Equal pay for comparable work for all workers;
 - e. Overtime pay for work in excess of 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week, and prohibition of involuntary overtime;
 - f. Due process, including protection for whistleblowers and collective bargaining activities;
 - g. A ban on mandatory meetings about unionizing, politics, or religion;
 - h. A work environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment;
 - i. Prohibition of firing without cause;
 - j. Prohibition of reprisal against or permanent replacement of workers locked out or on strike;
 - k. Enforcement against employers who retaliate against workers who exercise their collective bargaining rights; and
 - l. Job training, education, and related services to employees whose jobs are outsourced, downgraded, or eliminated.
2. Jobs must pay at least a living wage. Toward that end, the Seattle minimum wage must be raised incrementally to \$15 an hour, our state's minimum wage to \$12 an hour, and the federal minimum wage to above \$10 an hour, all with no exception for tips. Minimum wages should be automatically adjusted annually for inflation.
3. The union-restricting Taft-Hartley Act and so-called "Right to Work" laws should be repealed, as should any law that seeks to interfere with freely negotiated agreements between employers and unions to collect fees for providing collectively bargained benefits to union members.
4. Employers who force workers to work off-the-clock should be prosecuted.
5. Locked-out workers should receive full unemployment benefits.
6. Government funding should be available for retraining workers who are displaced, unemployed, or underemployed.
7. Official unemployment statistics should include persons who are underemployed or have given up looking for work, or whose benefits have been exhausted.
8. We oppose hiring policies that discriminate against unemployed applicants.

9. The National Labor Relations Board must be reformed to streamline the appeals process and institute meaningful penalties for employers found to have engaged in unfair labor practices, including obstruction of union elections.
10. Unions should be automatically recognized when they demonstrate majority status in a work group desiring collective bargaining rights.

LAW AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The rule of law is a prerequisite for democracy. A good government provides for the safety and security of all, with care, even-handedness, and respect for the individual.

1. Criminal justice should emphasize prevention, restorative justice and rehabilitation over incarceration alone. Prisons should provide inmates with education, training, therapy, and meaningful work.
2. Our nation must invest in children and work actively to abolish poverty in order to eliminate a major cause of crime. We must break the school-to-prison pipeline.
3. We must end the war on drugs; drug addiction is a public health problem not cured by incarceration.
 - a. We support widespread drug education, treatment, and community-based aftercare for every offender who needs it.
 - b. Asset seizures should be based on court conviction rather than mere arrest or presumption of guilt.
 - c. The sale or possession of marijuana should be decriminalized nationwide, and banks authorized immediately to handle proceeds from marijuana sales in states where it has been legalized.
 - d. Convictions for possession of marijuana should be expunged.
4. The death penalty should be abolished.
5. We support humane treatment of all prisoners, including strong restrictions on solitary confinement.
6. Both mandatory and indeterminate sentencing should be ended; and, until then, nonviolent crime should be removed from the “Three Strikes” list.
7. Operation of prisons should not be privatized or outsourced out of state.
8. Institutional racism in the criminal justice system must be eliminated.
9. We call for civilian review of police practices by municipal boards empowered to order corrective action to prevent abuses of police power, including racial profiling and violent treatment of suspects. We oppose militarization of the police and demand restraint in their dealing with peaceful protests.
10. FBI funding to investigate white-collar crime should be restored, and those convicted should be sentenced commensurate with their damage to society.
11. Gun-sale background checks and waiting periods must be made sufficiently effective, and applicable to gun shows and other transactions, to keep guns out of the hands of felons, mentally unstable persons, and others likely to misuse or allow the misuse of such weapons. We support mandatory registration and licensing, together with safety training (including safety locks and secure storage) for hunters and other gun owners, and a total ban on automatic weapons.

MEDIA REFORM

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

1. The Federal Communications Commission should:
 - a. Reduce concentration of media ownership, restore local programming, and encourage multicultural and minority-owned media;
 - b. Reinststate the Fairness Doctrine for broadcast media during election campaigns and make it applicable to cable networks, to promote greater balance in coverage;
 - c. Allocate low-power broadcast frequencies to educational and non-profit institutions; and
 - d. Guarantee Internet neutrality—in which all users and content providers have equal access to Internet service, without discrimination or prioritization on the basis of source, destination, or technology.
2. Public radio and public television should be accorded adequate, stable funding free of political pressure.
3. To equip the general public with the basic information it needs,
 - a. Time limits for responding to Freedom of Information Act requests must be enforced and the Act funded;
 - b. Reporting from theaters of military action should be free of censorship, except as necessary to avoid revealing tactical information or endangering our troops;
 - c. Claims of “national security” and other questionable classifications must be subjected to prompt adjudication;
 - d. Journalists should be protected from unwarranted pressure to reveal their sources to outsiders; and
 - e. TVW should be made available statewide.
4. Companies should fairly compensate local governments for their use of the public rights-of-way.

MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

We honor those who choose to answer our country’s call to military service, and we insist on sufficient benefits and quality medical and mental health care for them at all times. We owe it to those who put their lives on the line, to deploy our military judiciously.

1. Our armed forces must remain under civilian control and be used only in accordance with the War Powers Act. Absent a declaration of war, National Guard personnel must not be activated for service outside the United States except for disaster relief.
2. Military service on our behalf should be performed only by men and women accountable to the public, the law, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice, not by contractors arguably exempt from some of those restrictions.
3. All military personnel must be instructed in their rights and responsibilities under the Geneva Conventions and be subject to vigorous prosecution for violations thereof or for other criminal conduct, including sexual assault or harassment based on gender or sexual orientation. Independent military prosecutors, not commanding officers, should control the investigation and prosecution of alleged sexual misconduct of any type.
4. The right of conscientious objection must be guaranteed, without fear of reprisal.

5. Breaks between overseas tours should be mandatory, as should strict time limits on each tour of duty in a combat zone, and on the total number of such tours.
6. Our military personnel and veterans must be accorded the very best in medical care. Mental health treatment, mental and physical rehabilitation, and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries must be fully funded. All partial-disability ratings assigned since the start of the Iraq war should be eligible for review and correction.
7. U.S. employers need to recognize veterans' job skills including, but not limited to, mission-oriented determination and leadership, and they should make extra effort to find job opportunities for them.
8. Restraints must be placed on aggressive military recruiting in public schools, and opposing views must be afforded equal access.

TRANSPORTATION

Better public transportation will promote equal opportunity, enhance public health, reduce environmental impacts, and improve the quality of life for all.

1. Climate change, health effects, and environmental impacts including water and air pollution must be considered in all transportation planning decisions.
2. The priority for funding and implementation of transportation facilities and services must be movement of people and freight, not cars. Building more highway capacity will not solve congestion. We must:
 - a. Amend the 18th Amendment to the State Constitution to allow gasoline-tax proceeds to fund all modes of transportation, not just "highways";
 - b. Provide for public transportation choices that reduce dependence on the automobile, including funding of essential infrastructure projects and services;
 - c. Coordinate planning and implementation of transportation facilities and services across agency and jurisdictional boundaries, to most efficiently and cost-effectively meet the region's transportation needs; and
 - d. Develop and implement a high-speed rail system linking major West Coast cities.
3. The ferry system is a critical part of the overall transportation system and must be adequately staffed and maintained.
4. Government must institute measures to reduce pollution and dependence on oil, including increased fuel efficiency standards; revised zoning and building codes and housing policies; expanded transit service and more HOV lanes; and improved facilities for pedestrians, people in wheelchairs, and bicyclists.
5. Congestion pricing, including tolling and managed lanes, must be accompanied by provision of sufficient transportation infrastructure and services to allow reasonable alternatives to single vehicle use. Transit, vanpools and carpools, however, should operate toll-free, and we must avoid disproportionate adverse effects on low-income and other disadvantaged populations.
6. We urge development and funding of a system of grade-separated truck, rail, and transit facilities to enhance our region's economic competitiveness.
7. The capacity of current park and ride facilities in suburban King County should be expanded.
8. We support concentrating high-density housing within walking distance of transit stations, park and ride facilities, and other urban centers.

9. The state must fund completion of the SR 520 bridge and the SR 99 tunnel. Private contractors should be held responsible for their screw-ups.

TRIBAL RELATIONS AND SOVEREIGNTY

Tribal governments are sovereign nations and part of our national identity and community. They must be recognized as such and their treaty rights respected.

1. Local, state, and federal governments must respect the decisions of Native American nations and tribal governments, affirm their rights derived from treaties and state compacts, and oppose attempts to diminish their sovereignty and cultures.
2. The federal government must, in accordance with its treaty obligations, act to improve the social, economic, and health status of Native Americans.
3. Salmon runs and shellfish resources that are critical to Native American needs should be maintained and restored.
4. Sites of historic, cultural, and religious significance to Native Americans must be preserved and protected.
5. Federal recognition of the Duwamish tribe must be restored without delay.