

**\*\*\*DRAFT – DELIBERATIVE AND PREDECISIONAL\*\*\***

# 2016 Democratic Party Platform

## DRAFT

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## **2016 DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM DRAFT**

### **Preamble**

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

Under President Obama's leadership, and thanks to the hard work and determination of the American people, we have come a long way from the Great Recession and the Republican policies that triggered it. We have seen 75 straight months of private-sector job growth and added 14.5 million new jobs. Twenty million people have gained health insurance coverage. The American auto industry just had its best year ever. We are getting more of our energy from the sun and wind, and importing less oil from overseas.

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

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

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

Democrats believe we are stronger when we have an economy that works for everyone—an economy that grows incomes for working people, creates good-paying jobs, and puts a middle-class life within reach for more Americans. We need an economy that prioritizes long-term investment over short-term profit-seeking, rewards the common interest over self-interest, and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship.

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

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

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

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

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

Democrats believe we are stronger when we protect citizens' right to vote, not corporations' and billionaires' right to buy elections. We will bring an end to the broken campaign finance system, overturn the disastrous *Citizens United* decision, restore the full power of the Voting Rights Act, and return our elections to the American people.

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

Democrats believe we are stronger and safer when America brings the world together, and leads with principle and purpose, and when we strengthen our alliances, not weaken them. We believe in the power of development and diplomacy. We believe our military should be the best-trained, best-equipped fighting force in the world, and that we must do everything we can to honor and support our veterans. And we know that only the United States can mobilize common action on a truly global scale, to take on the challenges that have no borders, from international terrorism to climate change to health pandemics.

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

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

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

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

The stakes have been high in previous elections. But in 2016, the stakes can be measured in human lives—in the number of immigrants who would be torn from their homes; in the number

of faithful and peaceful Muslims who would be barred from even visiting our shores; in the number of allies alienated and dictators courted; in the number of Americans who would lose access to health care and see their rights ripped away.

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

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

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

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

Democrats believe we must restore the basic bargain that built America's mighty middle class: If you work hard and play by the rules, you can get ahead and stay ahead, provided we break down certain barriers. The system isn't working when we have a rigged economy in which ordinary Americans work longer hours for lower wages, while most new income and wealth goes to the top one percent. In contrast, Donald Trump has shown time and again that he cannot be trusted to secure the basic economic dignity of Americans.

#### *Minimum Wage*

Democrats believe that the current minimum wage is a starvation wage and must be increased to a living wage. No one who works full time should have to raise a family in poverty. We believe that Americans should earn at least \$15 an hour and have the right to form or join a union. We applaud the approaches taken by states like New York and California. We should raise and index the minimum wage, give all Americans the ability to join a union regardless of where they work, and create new ways for workers to have power in the economy. We also support creating one fair wage for all workers by ending the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers and people with disabilities.

Democrats support a model employer executive order or some other vehicle to leverage federal dollars to support employers who provide their workers with a living wage, good benefits, and the opportunity to form a union. The \$1 trillion spent annually by the government on contracts, loans, and grants should be used to support good jobs that rebuild the middle class.

#### *Labor*

The Democratic Party believes that when workers are strong, America is strong. Democrats will make it easier for workers, public and private, to exercise their right to organize, and join unions.

We will fight to pass laws that direct the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union if a simple majority of eligible workers sign valid authorization cards, and that brings companies to the negotiating table. We support binding arbitration to help workers that have voted to join a union reach a first contract.

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

Democrats believe so-called “right to work” laws are wrong for workers and wrong for America. We will continue to vigorously oppose those laws and other efforts that would eliminate dues check-off procedures, attack prevailing wage standards, abolish fair share requirements, restrict the use of voluntary membership payments for political purposes, and require annual recertification efforts.

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

#### *Equal Pay, Paid Leave, and Caregiving*

We will fight to secure equal pay for women and—after 240 years—finally enshrine the rights of women in the constitution by passing the Equal Rights Amendment. While Donald Trump thinks it is “dangerous” for women to leave the home and paid family leave hurts our economy, Democrats will make sure that the United States finally enacts national paid family and medical leave by passing a family and medical leave act that would provide at least 12 weeks of paid leave to care for a new child or address a personal or family member’s serious health issue, and we will fight to allow workers the right to earn at least seven days of paid sick leave. We will also encourage employers to provide paid vacation.

Our work and family policies must also ease the burden on family caregivers, in part by creating a strong, stable workforce to help meet families’ needs. We will take steps to expand and strengthen the homecare workforce. We will increase childcare investments to make quality childcare more affordable, boost wages for childcare workers, and support the millions of people paying for, coordinating, or providing care for aging relatives or those with disabilities.

#### *Housing*

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



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

We will reinvigorate federal housing production programs, increase resources to repair public housing, and increase funding for the housing choice voucher program. And we will fight for sufficient funding to end chronic homelessness.

We must make sure that everyone has a fair shot at homeownership. We will lift up more families and keep the housing market robust and inclusive by defending and strengthening the Fair Housing Act. We will also support first time homebuyers, implement credit score reform to make the credit industry work for borrowers and not just lenders, and prevent predatory lending by defending the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). And we will help underwater homeowners by expanding foreclosure mitigation counseling.

#### *Social Security*

Democrats are proud to be the party that created Social Security, the most successful government program in our nation's history. We will fight every effort to cut, privatize, or weaken Social Security, including attempts to raise the retirement age or to diminish benefits by cutting cost-of-living adjustments. Democrats will expand Social Security so that every American can retire with dignity and respect, including women who are shortchanged by the current system because they are widowed or took time out of the workforce to care for their children, aging parents, or ailing family members. And we will make sure Social Security's guaranteed benefits continue for generations to come by asking those at the top to pay more, and will achieve this goal by taxing some of the income of people above \$250,000. The Democratic Party is also committed to providing all necessary financial support for the Social Security Administration to provide timely benefits and high-quality service for those it serves. Our plan contrasts starkly with Donald Trump. He has referred to Social Security as a "Ponzi scheme" and has called for privatizing it as well as increasing the retirement age.

#### *Retirement Security*

Democrats believe it should be easier for Americans to save for retirement and prepare for unforeseen risks and expenses. We will defend the right of workers to collect their defined benefit pensions and make sure workers get priority and protection when pension plans are in distress. Democrats will also fight to protect the earned pension benefits of Americans in multiemployer pension plans. And we will fight against any attempt by Republicans in Congress or on Wall Street to roll back the Conflict of Interest Rule, which requires that retirement advisors put the best interests of their clients above their own financial gain.

### *Postal Service*

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

### **Create Good-Paying Jobs**

Democrats know nothing is more important than creating good-paying jobs that can support a middle-class life and provide workers with dignity and a sense of purpose — from nurses, firefighters, and teachers, to construction workers, factory workers, and small business owners.

### *Infrastructure*

If we are serious about reversing the decline of the middle class, we need a major federal jobs program that puts millions of Americans back to work in decent paying jobs in both the public and private sectors. We will make the most ambitious investment in American infrastructure since President Eisenhower created the interstate highway system. We will put Americans to work updating and expanding our roads, bridges, public transit, airports, and passenger and freight rail lines. We will build 21st century energy and water systems, modernize our schools, and continue to support the expansion of high-speed broadband networks. We will protect communities from the impact of climate change by investing in green and resilient infrastructure. These investments will create secure, good-paying middle-class jobs today and will substantially increase demand for American-made steel and other products manufactured in the United States. And by boosting economic growth in a fair and equitable way, and strengthening our long-term competitiveness, these investments will create many more jobs in the years to come.

Democrats will also create an independent, national infrastructure bank that will support critical infrastructure improvements. The bank will provide loans and other financial assistance for investments in energy, water, broadband, transportation, and multi-modal infrastructure projects.

### *Manufacturing*

Democrats believe one of the best ways to innovate, prosper, and create good-paying jobs is to make more in America, which is why we firmly support American manufacturing with a “Make it in America” plan. We must revitalize hard-hit manufacturing communities, create thriving hubs of manufacturing and innovation throughout the country, and claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, using the proceeds to reinvest in communities and workers at home instead. Donald Trump may talk tough, but he has consistently outsourced his own products. American workers deserve better.

### *Clean Energy Jobs*

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

### *Research, Science, and Technology*

Democrats support ambitious public and private investments in science, technology, and research. We will nurture the next generation of scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs, especially women and people of color, to make sure America continues to out-compete and out-innovate the rest of the world with a bold innovation agenda. Democrats also believe we must harness the promise of technological innovation to promote community participation and enhance opportunities to achieve greater economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. And we will encourage technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and small business creation throughout the country and in all types of innovation sectors.

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

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

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

### *Small Business*

While Donald Trump has often stifled small businesses—nearly bankrupting some—with his deceptive and reckless corporate practices, the Democratic Party will make it easier to start and grow a small business in America. We will open up access to credit because we know that small businesses are some of the best job creators in our country. By supporting small businesses, we can grow jobs faster in America. Democrats also realize the critical importance of small business to women, people of color, tribes, and rural America and will work to nurture entrepreneurship.

### *Youth Jobs*

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

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

Democrats believe that today's extreme levels of income and wealth inequality are bad for Americans and bad for our economy. Our economy depends on a thriving middle class to drive economic growth, yet Americans in the top one-tenth of one percent of income levels now own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent of Americans combined. And the 20 wealthiest people in this country now own more wealth than the bottom half of the American people.

### *Fixing our Financial System*

To restore economic fairness, Democrats will fight against the greed and recklessness of Wall Street. We must make Wall Street work for the job-creating, productive economy—including by making loans more affordable for small- and medium-sized businesses. Wall Street cannot be an island unto itself, gambling trillions in risky financial instruments and making huge profits, all the while thinking that taxpayers will be there to bail them out again. We must tackle dangerous risks in big banks and elsewhere in the financial system. We need to prohibit Wall Street from picking and choosing which credit agency will rate their products and from imposing excessive fees on consumers. And we must hold both individuals and corporations accountable when they break the law. Democrats believe that no bank can be too big to fail and no executive too powerful to jail. “Equal Justice Under Law” will not just be words engraved on the entrance of the Supreme Court. It will be the standard that applies to Wall Street and all Americans.

We will also vigorously implement, enforce, and build on the landmark Dodd-Frank financial reform law, and we will stop dead in its tracks every Republican effort to weaken it. We will continue to protect consumers and defend the CFPB from Republican attacks. Our goal must be to create a financial system and an economy that works for all Americans, not just a handful of billionaires. We support a financial transactions tax on Wall Street to curb excessive speculation and high-frequency trading, which has threatened financial markets. We acknowledge that there is room within our party for a diversity of views on a broader financial transactions tax.

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

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

We will reform the Federal Reserve so that it is more representative of America as a whole, and we will fight to make sure that executives at financial institutions are not allowed to serve on the boards of regional Federal Reserve banks or select its members.

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

#### *Stopping Corporate Concentration*

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

#### *Taxes*

At a time of massive income and wealth inequality, we believe the wealthiest Americans and largest corporations must pay their fair share in taxes. Democrats will claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, eliminate tax breaks for big oil and gas companies, and crack down on inversions and other methods companies use to dodge their tax responsibilities. We will make sure that our tax code rewards businesses that make investments and provide good-paying jobs here in the United States, not businesses that walk out on America. We will end deferrals so that American corporations pay U.S. taxes immediately on foreign profits and can no longer escape paying their fair share of United States taxes by stashing profits abroad. We will then use the revenue raised from fixing the corporate tax code to reinvest in rebuilding America and ensuring economic growth that will lead to millions of good-paying jobs.

We will ask those at the top to contribute to our country's future by establishing a multimillionaire surtax to ensure millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share. In addition, we will shut down the "private tax system" for those at the top, immediately close egregious loopholes like those enjoyed by hedge fund managers, restore fair taxation on multimillion dollar estates, and ensure millionaires can no longer pay a lower rate than their secretaries. At a time when we have seen near-record corporate profits, slow wage growth, and rising costs, we need to offer tax relief to middle-class families—not those at the top. We will offer tax relief to hard working, middle-class families for the cost squeeze that they have faced for years from rising health care, childcare, education, and other expenses. Donald Trump and the Republican Party would do the opposite and provide trillions in tax cuts for millionaires, billionaires, and corporations at the expense of working families, seniors, and the health of our economy.

#### *Trade*

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

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

Democrats will fight to significantly strengthen enforcement of existing trade rules and the tools we have, including by holding countries accountable on currency manipulation and significantly expanding enforcement resources. China and other countries are using unfair trade practices to tilt the playing field against American workers and businesses. When they dump cheap products into our markets, subsidize state-owned enterprises, devalue currencies, and discriminate against American companies, our middle class pays the price. That has to stop. Democrats will use all our trade enforcement tools to hold China and other trading partners accountable—because no country should be able to manipulate their currencies to gain a competitive advantage.

While we believe that openness to the world economy is an important source of American leadership and dynamism, we will only approve new trade agreements if they support American jobs, raise wages, and improve our national security. We believe any new trade agreements must include strong and enforceable labor and environmental standards in their core text. Trade agreements should crack down on the unfair and illegal subsidies other countries grant their businesses at the expense of ours. It should promote innovation and access to lifesaving medicines. And it should protect a free and open internet. We should never enter into a trade agreement that prevents our government, or other governments, from putting in place rules that protect the environment, food safety, or the health of American citizens or others around the world.

These are the standards Democrats believe must be applied to any future trade agreements. On the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), there are a diversity of views in the party. Many Democrats are on record stating that the agreement does not meet the standards set out in this platform; other Democrats have expressed support for the agreement. But all Democrats believe that any trade agreement must protect workers and the environment and not undermine access to critically-needed prescription drugs.

### **Bring Americans Together and Remove Barriers to Create Ladders of Opportunity**

Democrats believe that everyone in America deserves the chance to live up to their God-given potential. We will work to break down barriers standing in the way of Americans and replace them with ladders of opportunity.

#### *Racial Justice*

Democrats will fight to end institutional and systemic racism in our society. We will challenge and dismantle the structures that define lasting racial, economic, political, and social inequity.

Democrats will promote racial justice through fair, just, and equitable governing of all institutions serving the public and in the formation of public policy. We will push for a societal transformation to make it clear that black lives matter and there is no place for racism in our country.

#### *Racial Wealth Gap*

America's economic inequality problem is even more pronounced when it comes to racial and ethnic disparities in wealth and income. It is unacceptable that the median wealth for white Americans is roughly ten times that of African Americans and Latino Americans.

These disparities are just as stark for American Indians and certain Asian American subgroups. The racial and ethnic gap in wealth and income has been created by historical and contemporary policies and practices that discriminate against people of color and constrained their ability to earn income and build assets to the same extent as other Americans.

This economic disadvantage has accumulated over time and is made worse by ongoing discrimination. For example, as a result of the housing crisis and the great recession, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans lost more than half of their net worth. And these losses were compounded by the fact that during the subprime mortgage crisis lenders targeted communities of color for faulty mortgages.

Democrats believe it is long past time to close this racial wealth gap by eliminating systemic barriers to wealth accumulation for different racial groups and improving opportunities for people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds to build wealth.

#### *Criminal Justice*

Democrats are committed to reforming our criminal justice system and ending mass incarceration. Something is profoundly wrong when a quarter of the world's prison population is in the United States, even though we have less than five percent of the world's people. We will reform mandatory minimum sentences and close private prisons and detention centers. We will rebuild the bonds of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Across the country, there are many police officers who inspire trust and confidence, deploying creative and effective strategies, and demonstrating that it is possible to reduce crime without relying on unnecessary force. We should learn from those examples and build on what works.

We will invest in training for officers on issues such as de-escalation and the appropriate use of force, and encourage better police-community relations and the use of smart strategies like police body cameras. We will end racial profiling that targets individuals, based solely on race, religion, ethnicity, and national origin, which is un-American and counterproductive. We support states and localities that choose to make the investigations and prosecutions of police-involved shootings more independent and transparent, including through reforming the grand jury process. And we will explore reforms of the civil asset forfeiture system. Instead of investing in more jails and incarceration, we need to provide greater investment in jobs and education, and end to the school-to-prison pipeline. We will remove barriers to help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully re-enter society by banning the box, expanding reentry programs, and restoring voting rights. We will prioritize treatment over incarceration in tackling addiction and substance use disorder. This means significantly expanding treatment in this country for people struggling with addiction and mental health issues.

We believe that the states should be laboratories of democracy on the issue of marijuana, and those states that want to decriminalize marijuana should be able to do so. We support policies that will allow more research on marijuana, as well as reforming our laws to allow legal marijuana businesses to exist without uncertainty. And we recognize our current marijuana laws have had an unacceptable disparate impact, with arrest rates for marijuana possession among African Americans far outstripping arrest rates among whites, despite similar usage rates.

We will abolish the death penalty, which has proven to be a cruel and unusual form of punishment. It has no place in the United States of America.

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

### *Immigration*

People should come to the United States with visas and not through smugglers. That is why the Democratic Party supports legal immigration, within reasonable limits, that meets the needs of families, communities, and the economy as well as maintains the United States' role as a beacon of hope for people seeking safety, freedom, and security. Immigration is not a problem to be solved, it is a defining aspect of the American character and history. We must defend against those who would exclude or eliminate legal immigration avenues and denigrate immigrants. Those immigrants already living in the United States, who are assets to their communities and contribute so much to our country, should be incorporated completely into our society through legal processes that give meaning to our national motto: *E Pluribus Unum*.

Democrats believe we need to urgently fix our broken immigration system—which tears families apart and keeps workers in the shadows—and create a path to citizenship for law-abiding families who are here, making a better life for their families and contributing to their communities and our country.

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

We believe immigration enforcement must be humane and consistent with our values. We should prioritize those who pose a threat to the safety of our communities, not hardworking families who are contributing to their communities. We will end raids and roundups of children and families, which unnecessarily sow fear in immigrant communities. We should ensure due process for those fleeing violence in Central America and work with our regional partners to address the root causes of violence. We must take particular care with children, which is why we should guarantee government-funded counsel for unaccompanied children in immigration courts.



We will work with Congress to end the lengthy, forced, and prolonged expulsion from the country that many immigrants endure when trying to adjust their status by rescinding the three-year, ten-year and permanent bars. We will fight to end federal, state, and municipal contracts with for-profit private prisons and private detention centers. In order to end family detention, we will ensure humane alternatives for those who pose no public threat. We should consider all available means of protecting these individuals from the threats to their lives and safety—including strengthening in-country and third-country processing, expanding the use of humanitarian parole, and granting Temporary Protected Status.

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

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

#### *Civil Rights*

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

#### *LGBT Rights*

Democrats applaud last year's decision by the Supreme Court that recognized LGBT people—like every other American—have the right to marry the person they love. But there is still much work to be done. LGBT kids continue to be bullied at school, a restaurant can refuse to serve a transgender person, and a same-sex couple is at risk of being evicted from their home. That is unacceptable and must change. Democrats will fight for comprehensive federal non-discrimination protections for all LGBT Americans and push back against state efforts to discriminate against LGBT individuals. We will combat LGBT youth homelessness and improve school climates, and we will protect transgender individuals from violence. We will promote LGBT human rights and ensure America's foreign policy is inclusive of LGBT people around the world.

#### *Disability Rights*

No one should face discrimination based on disability status. Democrats are committed to realizing the full promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will improve access to meaningful and gainful employment for people with disabilities. We will provide tax relief to help the millions of families caring for aging relatives or family members with chronic illnesses

or disabilities. And we will continue to fight for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

#### *Faith and Service*

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

We believe in the power of national service, with people of all backgrounds coming together in common purpose to serve their communities and country.

#### *Agricultural Communities*

We will work to build a stronger rural and agricultural economy. Democrats will spur investment to power the rural economy and increase funding to support the next generation of farmers and ranchers. We will expand local food markets and regional food systems and provide a focused safety net to assist family operations that need support during challenging times. And we will promote clean energy leadership and collaborative stewardship of our natural resources, while expanding opportunities in rural communities across America.

#### *Poverty/ Communities Left Behind*

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

Democrats will also protect and expand proven programs, including robust support for nutrition assistance to stop people from going hungry as well as programs that help people grow their skills and provide training opportunities. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program should be expanded for low-wage workers not raising children, including extending the credit to young workers starting at age 21. The Child Tax Credit (CTC) should be indexed to inflation to stem the erosion of the credit.

Democrats will also do more to invest in our most distressed communities—from our cities to coal country to the Rust Belt. We will create good-paying jobs and enhance opportunities by investing in small business, youth employment, and reentry programs for formerly incarcerated people. We will improve safety by repairing crumbling infrastructure in communities that need it most as well as on tribal lands. And we will make investments in housing near good jobs and good schools.

#### *Honoring Indigenous Tribal Nations*

We have a profound moral and legal responsibility to the Indian tribes—throughout our history we have failed to live up to that trust. That is why the Democratic Party will uphold, honor, and

strengthen to the highest extent possible the United States' fundamental trust and responsibility, grounded in the Constitution and treaties, to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

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

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

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

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

We will strengthen tribal sovereignty and tribal jurisdiction by enacting laws and policies that enhance the ability of Indian nations to govern their territories, keep their communities safe, and prosecute crimes committed on tribal lands. And we will back these efforts through robust investments in effective tribal law enforcement and tribal courts.

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

We acknowledge the past injustices and the misguided, harmful federal and state policies and actions based on outdated and discredited values and beliefs that resulted in the destruction of the Indian nations' economies, social, and religious systems, the taking of their lands, and the

creation of intergenerational trauma that exists to this day. We believe that we have a moral and profound duty to honor, respect, and uphold our sacred obligation to the Indian nations and Indian peoples.

We will protect tribal sacred sites and empower tribes to maintain and pass on traditional religious beliefs, languages and social practices without fear of discrimination or suppression. We also believe that Native children are the future of tribal nations and that the Indian Child Welfare Act is critical to the survival of Indian culture, government, and communities and must be enforced with the original intent of the law.

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

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

Democrats also support efforts for self-determination and sovereignty of Native Hawaiians.

#### *People of the Territories*

We support full self-government and self-determination for the people of the territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and their right to decide their future status.

#### *Puerto Rico*

And we are committed to addressing the extraordinary challenges faced by our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico. Many stem from the fundamental question of Puerto Rico's political status. Democrats believe that the people of Puerto Rico should determine their ultimate political status from permanent options that do not conflict with the Constitution, laws, and policies of the United States. Democrats are committed to promoting economic opportunity and good-paying jobs for the hardworking people of Puerto Rico. We also believe that Puerto Ricans must be treated equally by Medicare, Medicaid, and by other benefits programs for families. All American citizens, no matter where they reside, should have the right to vote for the President of the United States. Finally, we believe that Washington must respect Puerto Rico's local self-government as Congress and the Executive Branch work to provide the necessary tools and aid that Puerto Rico needs to restructure its debt so that it can get on a path towards stability and prosperity, while maintaining its autonomy.

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

### *Voting Rights*

The Democratic Party was founded on the promise of an expanded democracy. The right to vote is at the heart of our national vision. It is a core principle of the Democratic Party to maximize voter participation for all Americans. Our democracy suffers when nearly two thirds of our citizens do not or cannot participate, as in the last midterm elections. Democrats believe we must make it easier to vote not harder. We must restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. We will bring our democracy into the 21st century by expanding early voting and vote-by-mail, implementing universal automatic voter registration, same day voting, ending partisan and racial gerrymandering, and making Election Day a national holiday. We will restore voting rights for those who have served their sentences. And we will continue to fight against discriminatory voter identification laws, which disproportionately burden young voters, diverse communities, people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities, the elderly, and women.

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

### *Campaign Finance*

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

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

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

### *Judges*

We will appoint judges who defend the constitutional principles of liberty and equality for all, protect a woman's right to safe and legal abortion, curb billionaires' influence over elections

because they understand that *Citizens United* has fundamentally damaged our democracy, and see the Constitution as a blueprint for progress.

#### *D.C. Statehood*

Restoring our democracy also means finally passing statehood for Washington, D.C., so that its citizens have full and equal congressional rights as well as the right to have the laws and budget of their local government respected without Congressional interference.

#### *Management of Federal Government*

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

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

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

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

Democrats share a deep commitment to tackling the climate challenge; creating millions of good-paying middle class jobs; reducing greenhouse gas emissions more than 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050; and meeting the pledge President Obama put forward in the landmark Paris Agreement, which aims to keep global temperature increases to "well below" two degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius. We believe America must be running entirely on clean energy by mid-century. We will take bold steps to slash carbon pollution and protect clean air at home, lead the fight against climate

change around the world, ensure no Americans are left out or left behind as we accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy, and be responsible stewards of our natural resources and our public lands and waters. Democrats reject the notion that we have to choose between protecting our planet and creating good-paying jobs. We can and we will do both.

#### *Clean Energy Economy*

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

Democrats are committed to defending, implementing, and extending smart pollution and efficiency standards, including the Clean Power Plan, fuel economy standards for automobiles and heavy-duty vehicles, building codes and appliance standards, and the reduction of methane emissions from oil and gas production. We will work to expand access to cost-saving renewable energy by low-income households, create good-paying jobs in communities that have struggled with energy poverty, and oppose efforts by utilities to limit consumer choice or slow clean energy deployment. We support President Obama's decision to reject the Keystone XL pipeline. And we believe that the federal government should lead by example, which is why we will take steps to power the government with 100 percent clean electricity.

#### *Environmental and Climate Justice*

Democrats believe clean air and clean water are basic rights of all Americans. Yet as we saw in Flint, Michigan, low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately home to environmental justice "hot spots," where air pollution, water pollution, and toxic hazards like lead increase health and economic hardship. The impacts of climate change will also disproportionately affect low-income and minority communities, tribal nations, and Alaska Native villages—all of which suffer the worst losses during extreme weather and have the fewest resources to prepare. Simply put, this is environmental racism. The fight against climate change must not leave any community out or behind—including the coal communities who kept America's lights on for generations. Democrats will fight to make sure these workers and their families get the benefits they have earned and the respect they deserve, and we will make new investments in energy producing communities to help create jobs and build a brighter and more resilient economic future.

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

part of fossil fuel companies accused of misleading shareholders and the public on the scientific reality of climate change.

#### *Public Lands and Waters*

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

We oppose drilling in the Arctic and off the Atlantic coast, and believe we need to reform fossil fuel leasing on public lands. We can phase down extraction of fossil fuels from our public lands, starting with the most polluting sources, while making our public lands and waters engines of the clean energy economy and creating jobs across the country.

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

#### *Higher Education*

Democrats believe that if you are an American who wants to get an education, you should always be able to get one: money should never stand in the way. Cost should not be a barrier to getting a degree or credential, and debt should not hold you back after you graduate. Bold new investments by the federal government, coupled with states reinvesting in higher education and colleges holding the line on costs, will ensure that Americans of all backgrounds will be prepared for the jobs and economy of the future. We will make community college free, while ensuring the strength of our historically minority-serving institutions. Achieving these goals depends on state and federal investment in both students and their teachers. Whether full-time or adjunct, faculty must be supported to make transformative educational experiences possible. As we make college affordable for future students, we will not forget about the millions of borrowers who need help with their debt right now.

#### *Student Debt*

Democrats will allow those who currently have student debt to refinance their loans at the lowest rates possible. We will simplify and expand access to income-based repayment so that no student loan borrowers ever have to pay more than they can afford. And we will significantly cut interest rates for future undergraduates, thereby preventing the federal government from making billions of dollars in profit from student loans. Democrats will also fight for a Student Borrower Bill of Rights to ensure borrowers get adequate information about options to avoid or get out of delinquency or default. We will hold lenders and loan servicers to high standards to help borrowers in default rehabilitate and repay their debts. Finally, Democrats will restore the prior standard in bankruptcy law to allow borrowers with student loans discharge their debts in bankruptcy as a measure of last resort.



*Minority-Serving Institutions*

We will strengthen our nation’s public and private Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, and other minority-serving institutions by providing a dedicated fund of tens of billions of dollars to keep costs down, provide a quality education, and provide dedicated support to improve student outcomes and completion rates. These schools play an important role in building opportunity and creating a diverse workforce.

*For-Profit Schools*

Donald Trump ran a fake university—the now bankrupt Trump “University”—that scammed many out of their hard-earned savings and led to no degree and no obvious benefit to their education or economic prosperity. Democrats will not tolerate this type of fraud. We will also continue to crack down on for-profit schools that take millions in federal financial aid—often as their principal source of revenue—and then exploit students and burden them with debt rather than educating them. That is why we will strengthen the gainful employment rule to ensure that for-profit schools enable students to complete their degrees and prepare them for work. We will go after for-profits that engage in deceptive marketing, fraud, and other illegal practices. It is not right that for-profit schools with low graduation rates keep encouraging their students to take out federal loans they will have trouble paying back.

*Early Childhood, Pre-K, and K-12*

Democrats believe we must have the best-educated population and workforce in the world. That means making early childhood education a priority, especially in light of new research showing how much early learning can impact life-long success. Democrats will invest in early childhood programs like Early Head Start and provide every family in America with access to high-quality childcare and high-quality pre-K programs.

We will ensure there are great Pre-K-12 schools in every zip code. Democrats are committed to the federal government continuing to play a critical role in working towards an America where a world-class education is available to every child. Democrats believe that a strong public education system is an anchor of our democracy, a propeller of the economy, and the vehicle through which we help all children achieve their dreams. Public education must engage students to be critical thinkers and civic participants while addressing the wellbeing of the whole child.

Democrats believe that all students should be taught to high academic standards. Schools should receive adequate resources and support. We will hold schools, districts, communities, and states accountable for raising achievement levels for all students—particularly low-income students, students of color, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities. We are also deeply committed to ensuring that we strike a better balance on testing so that it informs, but does not drive, instruction.

To close the opportunity gap, we also must find ways to encourage mentoring programs that support students in reaching their full potential. Mentoring is a strategy to ensure that children living in poverty have the encouragement and support to aim high and enter the middle class. We

will focus on group mentoring, which is a low-cost, high-yield investment that offers the benefit of building a supportive network of peers who push one another towards success.

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

We will invest in high-quality STEM classes, community schools, computer science education, arts education, and expand linked learning models and career pathways. We will end the school-to-prison pipeline. And we will work to improve school culture and combat bullying of all kinds.

Democrats are also committed to providing parents with high-quality public school options and expanding these options for low-income youth. We support great neighborhood public schools and high-quality public charter schools, and we will help them disseminate best practices to other school leaders and educators. Democrats oppose for-profit charter schools focused on making a profit off of public resources. We instead support increased transparency and accountability for all charter schools.

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

#### *Universal Health Care*

We believe as Democrats that health care is a right, not a privilege, and our health care system should put people before profits. Thanks to the hard work of President Obama and Democrats in Congress we took a critically important step towards the goal of universal health care by passing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which has offered coverage to 20 million more Americans and ensured millions more will never be denied coverage on account of a pre-existing condition. Democrats will never falter in our generations-long fight to guarantee health coverage as a fundamental right for every American. As part of that guarantee, Americans should be able to access public coverage through Medicare or a public option. By contrast, Donald Trump wants to repeal the ACA, leaving tens of millions of Americans without coverage.

For too many of us, health care costs are still too high, even for those with insurance. And medical debt is a problem for a growing number of working families, with one-quarter of Americans reporting that they or someone in their household had problems or an inability to pay medical bills in the past year. We will keep costs down by making premiums more affordable, reducing out-of-pocket expenses, and capping prescription drug costs. Democrats will also work to end surprise billing and other practices associated with out-of-control medical debt that lead to unconscionable economic strain on American households. We will offer relief so Americans do not face high costs, and we will fight back against insurers trying to impose excessive premium increases.

Furthermore, as Democrats, we will keep fighting until the ACA's Medicaid expansion has been adopted in every state. Twenty states have not yet adopted expanded Medicaid, which not only means that millions of low-income Americans still lack health insurance and are not getting the care they need, but health care providers, clinics, hospitals, and taxpayers are footing a higher bill when people without insurance visit expensive emergency rooms.

Democrats believe that it is not right that your zip code or census tract is a predictor of your health, which is why we will make health equity a central part of our commitment to revitalizing communities left behind. Democrats believe that all health care services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate. And we should disaggregate data collection for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders because data disaggregation is a necessary step in fully understanding the needs of the AAPI community for all government services.

#### *Community Health Centers*

We must renew and expand our commitment to Community Health Centers, as well as community mental health centers and family planning centers. These health clinics, which offer comprehensive primary care, mental health, and family planning services to underserved populations, are critical to the successful implementation of the ACA. These health centers are a critical bulwark, allowing for better care prevention, education, and treatment of chronic conditions, while preventing unnecessary, expensive trips to emergency rooms.

As Democrats, we will fight for a comprehensive system of primary medical, dental, and mental health care and low-cost prescription drugs through a major expansion of community health centers. Democrats know that one of the key ingredients to the success for these health centers is a well-supported and qualified workforce. We will fight to train and support such a workforce. We will also encourage providers to work with underserved populations through the National Health Service Corps, and create a strategy to increase the pool of primary care health professionals.

#### *Prescription Drug Costs*

It is unacceptable that the United States pays, by far, the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs and that one out of five Americans between the ages of 18 and 64 cannot afford to fill the prescription drugs prescribed to them by their doctors. A lifesaving drug is no good if it is unaffordable to the very people who need it most. While Democrats are committed to investing in the research, development, and innovation that creates lifesaving drugs and lowers overall health costs, the profiteering of pharmaceutical companies is simply unacceptable. And many drug companies are spending more on advertising than on research. The largest pharmaceutical companies are together earning \$80 to \$90 billion per year in profits at higher margins than other industries, while charging Americans thousands of dollars for new drugs—often at much higher costs than in other developed nations.

We will crack down on price gouging by drug companies and cap the amount Americans have to pay out-of-pocket every month on prescription drugs. We will prohibit anti-competitive “pay for delay” deals that keep generic drugs off the market, and we will allow individuals, pharmacists, and wholesalers to import prescription drugs from licensed pharmacies in Canada and other

countries with appropriate safety protections. Democrats will also fight to make sure that Medicare can negotiate lower prices with drug manufacturers.

#### *Medical Research*

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

#### *Drug and Alcohol Addiction*

We must confront the epidemic of drug and alcohol addiction, specifically the opioid crisis, by vastly expanding access to treatment, supporting recovery, helping community organizations, and promoting better practices by prescribers.

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

#### *Mental Health*

We must treat mental health issues with the same care and seriousness that we treat issues of physical health and promote better integration of the behavioral and general health care systems. We must also expand community-based treatment for substance abuse disorders and mental health conditions and fully enforce our parity law. And we should create a national initiative around suicide prevention across the lifespan—to move toward the goal of Zero Suicide that has been promoted by the Department of Health and Human Services.

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

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

We will address the barriers that inhibit meaningful access to reproductive health care services, including those based on gender, sexuality, race, income, and other factors. We recognize that quality, affordable comprehensive health care, evidence-based sex education, and a full range of

family planning services help reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and thereby also reduce the need for abortions. And we strongly and unequivocally support a woman's decision to have a child, including by ensuring a safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth, and by providing services during pregnancy and after the birth of a child, including adoption and social support services.

#### *Public Health*

Investment in our nation's crumbling public health infrastructure is critical to ensuring preparedness for emerging threats; for preventing disease, illness, and injury in communities; and for promoting good health and wellbeing. Inadequate access to public health services has a disparate impact on poor and minority communities where public health services are a significant source of health care. Democrats will fight for increased investments in public health to better address emerging threats and the needs across our country.

#### *Violence Against Women and Sexual Assault*

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

#### *Gun Violence Prevention*

With 33,000 Americans dying every year, Democrats believe that we must finally take sensible action to address gun violence. While gun ownership is part of the fabric of many communities, too many families in America have suffered from gun violence. We can respect the rights of responsible gun owners while keeping our communities safe. We will expand background checks and close dangerous loopholes in our current laws, hold irresponsible dealers and manufacturers accountable, keep weapons of war—such as assault weapons—off our streets, and ensure guns do not fall into the hands of terrorists, domestic abusers, other violent criminals, and those with severe mental health issues.

### **Principled Leadership**

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

Democrats further believe that when America leads, it should be as a principled force for peace and prosperity in the world. We believe that empowering women and other minorities is essential for security and economic growth. We believe the smart use of diplomacy, development, and economic statecraft can prevent crises, foster stability, and make us safer. And we believe that

we are stronger when we work with our partners and allies, including the largest economic and military powers in the world, rather than try to go it alone. Our global network of alliances is not a burden—it is a source of tremendous strategic advantage.

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

These principles have underpinned the important progress of the last eight years. When President Obama assumed office, the world economy was in the worst crisis since the Great Depression, our alliances were strained, Osama bin Laden remained at large, Iran was racing toward a nuclear weapon, and we were mired in two costly wars. We brought bin Laden to justice, crippled Al Qaeda's core leadership, saved America from a second Great Depression, repaired our alliances, reestablished relations with Cuba while continuing to press for reforms, and—without firing a shot, dropping a bomb, or putting a single American soldier in harm's way—blocked Iran's ability to pursue a nuclear weapon. America is stronger abroad and safer at home because of this principled leadership.

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

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

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

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

Democrats believe America must continue to have the strongest military in the world. We support a smart, predictable defense budget that meets the strategic challenges we face, not the arbitrary cuts that the Republican Congress enacted as part of sequestration. We must prioritize military readiness by making sure that our armed forces remain the best trained and equipped and that the Department of Defense invests its budget wisely. As we look beyond the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the conclusion of long-term nation-building with large military footprints, we will continue to get rid of outdated Cold War-era systems and ensure our security with a more agile and more flexible force.

At the same time, we must end waste in the defense budget, which is an abuse of taxpayer dollars. That is why we will audit the Pentagon, launch a high-level commission to review the role of defense contractors, and take greater action against those who have been involved in fraud.

Our country has a sacred, moral responsibility to keep faith with our veterans. We must take care of those who have put their lives on the line to defend us. That is why we will push for more educational benefits and job training, end chronic homelessness and combat suicide, and protect and preserve the post-9/11 GI Bill for future generations. We are outraged by the systemic problems plaguing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and will fight for every veteran to have access to timely, high-quality health care. The delays in processing claims and appeals are unacceptable. We must also look for more ways to make certain that the VA provides veteran-centric care, such as providing women with full and equal treatment, including reproductive health services; expanding mental health programs; continuing efforts to identify and treat invisible, latent, and toxic wounds of war; and expanding the post-9/11 veteran's caregiver program to include all veterans. We reject attempts by Republicans to sell out the needs of veterans by privatizing the VA. We believe that the VA must be fully resourced so that every veteran gets the care that he or she has earned and deserves.

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

Democrats welcome and honor all Americans who want to serve and will continue to fight for their equal rights and recognition. We are proud of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the opening of combat positions to women. Our military is strongest when people of all races, religions, sexual orientations, and gender identities are honored for their service to our country.

### **Confront Global Threats**

Democrats will protect our country. We will strengthen our homeland security, deal wisely and firmly with those who seek to imperil America or our partners, deter aggression, promote peace,

and use all the tools of American power, especially diplomacy and development, to confront global threats and ensure war is the last resort.

### *Terrorism*

We must defeat ISIS, Al Qaeda, and their affiliates, and prevent other groups from emerging in their place. First, Democrats will continue to lead a broad coalition of allies and partners to destroy ISIS' stronghold in Iraq and Syria. We will press those in the region, especially the Gulf countries and local forces on the ground, to carry their weight in prosecuting this fight. Second, we will dismantle the global network of terror, which supplies terrorists with money, arms, and fighters, and stop them from recruiting and inspiring potential radicals. Third, we will harden our defenses at home, as well as those of our partners, against external and homegrown threats. We will strengthen our resilience, reminding the terrorists and ourselves that America will always come together and stand up to terror. Democrats will also seek an updated Congressional Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) that is more precise about our efforts to defeat ISIS and that does not involve large-scale combat deployment of American troops.

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

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

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



*Iran*

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

Democrats will also address the detrimental role Iran plays in the region and will robustly enforce and, if necessary, strengthen non-nuclear sanctions. Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism. It violates the human rights of its population, denies the Holocaust, vows to eliminate Israel, and has its fingerprints on almost every conflict in the Middle East. Democrats will push back against Iran's destabilizing activities including its support for terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, counter Iran's ballistic missile program, bolster the capabilities of our Gulf partners, and ensure that Israel always has the ability to defend itself.

*North Korea*

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

*Russia*

Russia is engaging in destabilizing actions along its borders, violating Ukraine's sovereignty and attempting to recreate spheres of influence that undermine American interests. It is also propping up the Assad regime in Syria, which is brutally attacking its own citizens. Donald Trump would overturn more than 50 years of American foreign policy by abandoning NATO partners who help us fight terrorism every day and embracing Russian President Vladimir Putin instead. We believe in strong alliances and will deter Russian aggression, build European resilience, and protect our NATO allies. We will make it clear to Putin that we are prepared to cooperate with him when it is in our interest—as we did on reducing nuclear stockpiles, dismantling Iran's nuclear program, sanctioning North Korea, and resupplying our troops in Afghanistan—but we will not hesitate to stand up to Russian aggression.

*Cybersecurity*

Democrats will protect our industry, infrastructure, and government from cyberattacks. We will strengthen our cybersecurity, seek to establish global norms in cyberspace, and impose consequences on those who violate the rules. We will do all this while protecting the privacy and civil liberties of the American people.

*Non-proliferation*

We believe America will be safer in a world with fewer weapons of mass destruction. Donald Trump encourages the spread of nuclear weapons across Asia and the Middle East, which would weaken the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and he is unwilling to rule out using a nuclear weapon against ISIS. Democrats want to reduce the number of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons around the world, as well as their means of delivery. We will stop the spread of nuclear weapons and loose nuclear material, as well as strive to eliminate these weapons entirely as President Obama laid out in his speech in Prague in 2009. Democrats will be informed by a new Nuclear Posture Review in determining continued ways to appropriately shape our nuclear deterrent, with the aim of reducing our reliance on nuclear weapons while meeting our national security obligations. Democrats will also seek new opportunities for further arms control and avoid taking steps that create incentives for the expansion of existing nuclear weapons programs.

*Climate Change*

Climate change poses an urgent and severe threat to our national security. According to the military, climate change is a threat multiplier that is already contributing to new conflicts over resources, catastrophic natural disasters, and the degradation of vital ecosystems across the globe. While Donald Trump says that climate change is a “hoax” created by and for the Chinese, Democrats recognize the danger facing our country and our planet. We believe the United States must lead in forging a robust global solution to the climate crisis. We will not only meet the goals we set in Paris, we will seek to exceed them and push other countries to do the same by slashing carbon pollution and rapidly driving down emissions of potent greenhouse gases like hydrofluorocarbons. We will support developing countries in their efforts to mitigate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, deploy more clean energy, and invest in climate resilience and adaptation. And as a proud Arctic nation, we are against putting the region at risk through drilling in the Arctic Ocean or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Instead, while protecting our strategic interests, we will seek collaborative, science-based approaches to be good stewards of the rapidly changing Arctic region.

**Protect Our Values**

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

*Women and Girls*

We believe the United States must continue to be the world’s strongest advocate for the rights of women and girls. We will encourage their economic, political, and educational opportunities, and protect them from violence at home and abroad. We will support sexual and reproductive health and rights around the globe. In addition to expanding the availability of affordable family

planning information and contraceptive supplies, we believe that safe abortion must be part of comprehensive maternal and women's health care and included as part of America's global health programming. Therefore, we support the repeal of harmful restrictions that obstruct women's access to health care information and services, including the "global gag rule" and the Helms Amendment that bars U.S. assistance to provide safe, legal abortion throughout the developing world.

#### *Trafficking and Modern Slavery*

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

#### *Young People*

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

#### *Religious Minorities*

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

#### *Refugees*

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

#### *Civil Society*

Democrats support progress towards more accountable governance and universal rights. As autocrats and strongmen around the world crack down on civil society and imprison those who speak out to demand greater freedom, we will continue to bolster groups and individuals who fight for fundamental human rights.

#### *Anti-Corruption*

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

### *Torture*

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

### *Closing Guantánamo Bay*

The Democratic Party remains committed to closing the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay. Keeping the facility open is a blemish on our record, serves as a recruiting tool for extremists, and undermines our standing in the world.

### *Development Assistance*

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

### *Global Health*

It is vital that we protect our nation's health security. While the Republican Party refuses to fund important measures that could contain and address the Zika pandemic, Democrats are ready to limit the reach of Zika—just as we did with Ebola—and support funding for diagnostic tests for the virus, vaccine, and treatment. We also need to prepare for potential pandemics, like H1N1, by working with first responders and health officials to reduce the risks associated with unintentional or deliberate outbreaks of infectious diseases.

### *HIV and AIDS*

Democrats believe an AIDS-free generation is within our grasp. But we know far too many Americans still suffer, which is why we will implement the National HIV and AIDS Strategy, increase research funding for the National Institutes of Health, cap pharmaceutical expenses for people living with HIV and AIDS, address HIV criminalization laws, and expand access for HIV prevention medications, particularly for the populations most at risk of infection. Abroad, we will make the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief more effective and increase global funding for HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment. Democrats will always protect those living with HIV and AIDS from stigma and discrimination.

### *International Labor*

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

Democrats will promote broad-based economic growth across the world, pursuing a global economic agenda that promotes rising wages and invests in quality public services, workers' rights, and environmental protections. We believe that we need to coordinate our economic actions with other countries to address economic insecurity, specifically youth un- and underemployment, gender inequality, digital transformation, and the transition towards green jobs.

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

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

#### *Asia-Pacific*

From the Asia Pacific to the Indian Ocean, we will deepen our alliances in the region with Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand. Democrats will continue to invest in a long-term strategic partnership with India—the world's largest democracy, a nation of great diversity, and an important Pacific power. We will work with our allies and partners to fortify regional institutions and norms as well as protect freedom of the seas in the South China Sea. We will push back against North Korean aggression and press China to play by the rules. We will stand up to Beijing on unfair trade practices, currency manipulation, and cyberattacks. And we will promote greater respect for human rights, including the rights of Tibetans.

Democrats are committed to a "One China" policy and the Taiwan Relations Act and will continue to support a peaceful resolution of Cross-Strait issues that is consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan.

#### *Middle East*

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

We will continue to work toward a two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiated directly by the parties that guarantees Israel's future as a secure and democratic Jewish state with recognized borders and provides the Palestinians with independence, sovereignty, and dignity. While Jerusalem is a matter for final status negotiations, it should remain the capital of Israel, an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths. Israelis deserve

security, recognition, and a normal life free from terror and incitement. Palestinians should be free to govern themselves in their own viable state, in peace and dignity.

#### *Europe*

Europe remains America's indispensable partner and a cornerstone of global security. Democrats will help our European allies and partners deter Russian aggression, address security challenges to Europe's south, and deal with unprecedented economic and social challenges. We reject Donald Trump's threats to abandon our European and NATO allies, all while he praises Putin. When the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001, our NATO allies invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, stating that an attack against one is an attack against all—for the first and only time in its history. Our NATO allies fought alongside us in Afghanistan and are still there today. We will maintain our Article 5 collective security commitments to NATO because we are stronger when we have our allies at our side.

#### *Americas*

The Americas are a region of singular strategic, economic, and cultural importance and opportunity for the United States. Democrats reject Donald Trump's proposal to build a wall on our southern border and alienate Mexico, a valuable partner. We will instead embrace our neighbors and pursue strong, fruitful partnerships across the region, from Canada to Latin America and the Caribbean. We will build on our long-term commitment to Colombia and work with Central American countries to stabilize the Northern Triangle. We will bolster democratic institutions, promote economic opportunity and prosperity, and tackle the rise of drugs, crime, and corruption. In Cuba, we will build on President Obama's historic opening to end the travel ban and embargo. We will also stand by the Cuban people and support their ability to decide their own future and to enjoy the same human rights and freedoms that people everywhere deserve. And in Venezuela, we will push the government to respect human rights and respond to the will of its people.

#### *Africa*

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

#### *Global Economy and Institutions*

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

Democrats believe that global institutions and multilateral organizations have a powerful role to play and are an important amplifier of American strength and influence. Many of these

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organizations need reform and updating, but it would be reckless to follow Donald Trump and turn our back on the international system that America built. It has provided decades of stability and economic growth for the world and for America.