

# 2010 - KING COUNTY DEMOCRATS PLATFORM DRAFT 3/11/10

## OUR VALUES

**We are the Democrats, the party of the people, the party of good government.**

We cherish the American heritage of opportunity and inclusion. We pledge ourselves to the pursuit of the Constitutional guarantees of liberty and justice for all. We believe good government serves and protects all of its people by cooperative efforts both at home and abroad. We believe it is our duty to pass a better world to future generations.

### **We are dedicated to:**

- ✓ Creating peace
- ✓ Counteracting global climate change and its effects
- ✓ Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations
- ✓ Health care for all
- ✓ High-quality public education
- ✓ Fighting poverty and ending homelessness
- ✓ Economic justice, with living-wage jobs and fairness in tax policy
- ✓ Fiscal responsibility, integrity, openness and accountability in government
- ✓ Redesigning the criminal justice system to emphasize rehabilitation
- ✓ Preserving the rule of law and keeping our judicial system free of politics
- ✓ Respecting religious liberty by upholding the separation of church and state
- ✓ Protecting human rights at home and abroad
- ✓ Equal rights for all

## SUMMARY OF KING COUNTY DEMOCRATS PLATFORM

**Agriculture:** We support farmers as the stewards of this nation's precious agricultural lands. We must preserve family farms, strengthen rural communities, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of the land.

**Corporate Power and Media Reform:** Corporations are not entitled to the Constitutional rights of people. An informed citizenry and persistently inquisitive media are essential for democracy to flourish.

**Economic Justice, Jobs, and Tax Fairness:** We are committed to creating strong communities based on fairness, opportunity, and prosperity for all. "Taxes are the dues we pay for the privilege of membership in an organized society." –President Franklin Delano Roosevelt

**Education:** A free, universal public school system is the backbone of our democratic society. We support excellent-quality public education, pre-school through university, with equal access for all.

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

**Foreign Policy:** The United States should lead by example and work within the world community in a spirit of peace, cooperation, generosity, and democracy.

**Government and Political Reform:** Democracy requires maximum participation by an informed electorate; a voting process that is fair, transparent, and open to all citizens; and elected officials who are responsive to the needs of society.

**Health Care:** Health care is a basic human right. Our government should assure, and guarantee by law, accessible and affordable health care for all.

**Human Rights and Civil Rights:** The rights guaranteed by our Constitution and by international human rights law are at the heart of the American identity and should not be compromised for any reason.

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

**Immigration:** Immigrants strengthen America. All immigrants should be afforded full human rights and a fair, safe, and timely path to legal status.

**Indian Tribes and Sovereignty:** Tribal governments are a part of our national identity and community. They must be recognized as sovereign nations.

**Labor:** We believe in the dignity of work. A strong economy and nation depend on jobs that provide safe working conditions, fair and living wages, and benefits. These are best obtained by ensuring workers' rights to join labor unions, to bargain collectively, and to take part in setting their working conditions.

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

**Military:** Washington citizens have always answered their country's call to duty, and we are proud of our military contributions to the nation. We support our troops and honor our veterans, and we will continue to press for the money and resources necessary to ensure our veterans receive all this nation has promised—and owes them.

**Transportation:** Transportation policies should contribute to equal opportunity and better communities. Reducing our dependence on the automobile reduces the impacts of transportation on the environment.

## **AGRICULTURE**

*We support farmers as the stewards of this nation's precious agricultural lands. We must preserve family farms, strengthen rural communities, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of the land.*

1. Crop diversity, conservation, and environmental efforts that preserve agricultural land and natural resources are critical to the viability of food, fuel, and forest production into the future. We support sustainable agriculture and forestry that not only improve our environment and potentially mediate climate change, but provide local jobs that cannot be outsourced.
2. Organic farming and reduced use of herbicides, pesticides, and other toxic materials are critical to a healthy population.
3. Clear labeling of food, including where and how produced and any genetic modification, is essential for consumers to make informed food choices. Disclosure of components in soil products and amendments is essential.
4. Local farmers' markets promote the local economy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels in the transport of foods.
5. School lunch programs using local foods should be promoted.
6. Renewable energy production on farms should be facilitated.
7. Inspections of both domestic and imported foods and livestock should be increased to ensure the quality of food.
8. Biofuel production that is sustainable and reduces greenhouse gas emissions should be pursued.
9. Farm subsidies that disproportionately favor large corporate farmers should be phased out.
10. Decisions about ground and surface water resources should be based on sound scientific and economic information.

## **CORPORATE POWER AND MEDIA REFORM**

*Corporations are not entitled to the Constitutional rights of people. An informed citizenry and persistently inquisitive media are essential for democracy to flourish.*

1. We oppose the undue influence of corporations on our government, including but not limited to that of the military-industrial complex.
2. The Constitution must be amended to establish that corporations shall not be considered a "persons" for purposes of political activity, and to reverse the pernicious notion that money equals speech.
3. Whistleblower laws must be strengthened and enforced, to provide active protection and restitution for any whistleblowers who lose their livelihoods.
4. Investment banking must be separated from retail banking and subjected to tighter regulation, transparency, and accountability.
5. U.S. businesses should not be allowed to evade taxes by incorporating offshore.
6. Government should reduce concentration of media ownership, restore local programming, and encourage multicultural and minority-owned media.
7. Public radio and public television should be accorded adequate, stable funding free of political pressure.
8. A Freedom of Information Act that permits withholding of information for years provides no transparency or accountability; FOIA time limits must be enforced and the Act funded.
9. False claims of "national security" stifle investigative journalism; inappropriate classifications should be promptly adjudicated.

10. Government-funded propaganda should not be published as news.
11. A shield law to protect journalists from being pressured to reveal their sources is necessary for the public's right to know.
12. An informed public must have uncensored access to reporting from theaters of war, so long as it does not reveal tactical information nor endanger our troops.
13. Recognizing the Internet as the conduit of "new media," the FCC should guarantee Internet neutrality—in which all users and content providers have equal access to Internet service, without discrimination or prioritization on the basis of source, destination, or technology.
14. The FCC should allocate low-power broadcast frequencies to educational and non-profit institutions.
15. The Fairness Doctrine for broadcast media during election campaigns should be reinstated and made applicable to cable networks, to promote greater balance in coverage.
16. Cable companies should fairly compensate local governments for their use of the public right-of-way.

## **ECONOMIC JUSTICE, JOBS, AND TAX FAIRNESS**

*We are committed to creating strong communities based on fairness, opportunity, and prosperity for all. "Taxes are the dues we pay for the privilege of membership in an organized society."  
—President Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

1. Corporations are artificial entities and should not have the same rights and privileges as natural persons.
2. The charters of corporations that repeatedly violate laws and regulations should be revoked.
3. Investment banking must be separated from retail banking and subjected to tighter regulation, transparency, and accountability.
4. A publicly owned Bank of Washington should be established as the repository for state funds, to foster economic development by participating in commercial loans and to make direct student and farm loans.
5. Economic policies and business practices should promote creation of living-wage jobs and a sustainable economy, including but not limited to a federal minimum wage of \$10/hour (adjusted annually for inflation).
6. Federal, state, and local governments should assure equal employment opportunity and equal pay for equal work
7. Small businesses create jobs and strengthen the middle class; government policy should foster them and promote new-technology and research industries.
8. We support creation of a national service program, including but not limited to building, repairing, and maintaining the nation's infrastructure.
9. Public services should not be privatized, downsized, outsourced, or moved offshore.
10. Our state needs a more progressive tax system, including personal and corporate income taxes, an estate tax, reduced sales and business and occupation (B&O) taxes, and subjection of property taxes to circuit-breaker legislation that would assist low-income homeowners and renters.
11. State taxes and other revenues must be set at a level sufficient to meet constitutional requirements and promote the general welfare. The rainy-day fund must be maintained to buffer economic downturns.
12. Non-performing tax exemptions should automatically expire after 10 years. Those proven to have met their goals may be reinstated.
13. The Federal estate tax should be reinstated for estates of \$5 million or more, keyed to inflation.

14. The Bush tax cuts for the wealthy should be allowed to expire.
15. The Earned Income Tax Credit should be expanded to help the working poor, and the Alternative Minimum Tax indexed to inflation to protect the middle class.
16. The cap on income subject to Social Security tax should be removed.
17. Government should protect pensions and the rights of pensioners.
18. Consumer protections should be expanded and strengthened, including:
  - a. Capping payday loan interest at a 36% annual percentage rate, as it is for military families;
  - b. Adjusting mortgages where warranted, to keep distressed homeowners in their homes;
  - c. Assuring that neither auto nor homeowners insurance rates are based on education, income or credit score, and
  - d. Enacting legislation to protect homeowners from faulty construction.

## **EDUCATION**

*A free, universal public school system is the backbone of our democratic society. We support excellent-quality public education, pre-school through university, with equal access for all.*

1. The primary purpose of our school system is to produce informed, reasoning, and thoughtful citizens prepared to participate in our democratic society.
2. A stable source of education funding must be implemented per our state's constitutional requirement to amply fund public schools, enabling:
  - a. Reduction of class sizes to levels that provide optimal learning experiences,
  - b. Expansion of pre-school (including Head Start) and after-school programs,
  - c. Provision of vital support specialists such as school nurses and counselors,
  - d. Inclusion of music, the arts, and library programs and specialists, and
  - e. Vocational education, with shop and technological programs, in both middle school and high school.
3. The federal government must fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
4. Rigorous, data-based science must be taught at all levels. Mathematics instruction must include both arithmetic fluency and critical thinking skills, with proficiency measured using international standards. Social sciences should include civics and world history and cultures.
5. Evaluation of school programs should provide valid and useful measures of Washington progress relative to other states and nations, individual student progress, and teacher and administrative performance.
6. All high school graduates in Washington must have access to higher education, regardless of means. Community colleges and technical schools should be tuition-free, and we support expansion of work/study and other programs that offer further education in exchange for public service. Pell grants should be doubled and adjusted for inflation.
7. The state university system is a public asset deserving of ample funding competitive with other institutions.
8. To attract and maintain outstanding teachers, the state must provide competitive salaries for faculty and staff at all levels, including higher education. Salary and benefits for part-time college instructors should be based on qualifications and seniority, pro-rated according to credit-hours taught.
9. All public education employees, including part-time faculty, must have the right to organize, engage in collective bargaining, and strike, without fear of reprisal or replacement.
10. Publicly funded charter schools and voucher programs for private schools are unacceptable because they drain needed resources from the public sector and thereby erode educational opportunities.

11. Restraints must be placed on aggressive military recruiting in public schools, and opposing views must be afforded equal access.
12. Students should not be subjected to commercial exploitation in the name of school funding.
13. Schools must provide a safe environment for all students and staff.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY**

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

1. We must respect the web of life, of which we are a part, and preserve it for future generations.
2. Global warming is the foremost threat to survival of the earth as we know it. Government and individuals must take aggressive action now to reduce our production of greenhouse gases, including listing such gases as pollutants under the Environmental Protection Act.
3. We can and must establish clean, sustainable, and renewable energy sources while protecting our environment through:
  - a. Increasing fuel efficiency standards for all vehicles;
  - b. Supporting widespread research and use of energy-efficient and renewable sources of power, including wind, solar, and other innovative technologies;
  - c. Opposing new or expanded nuclear and coal-fired power plants without demonstration that such technology can be “clean” and waste can be dealt with responsibly;
  - d. Opposing development and oil exploration in any wildlife refuge;
  - e. Promoting intelligent economic incentives for energy conservation and clean energy systems, and repealing tax breaks for oil companies;
  - f. Ending the trading of energy and pollution credits that maintain abuses of resources; and
  - g. Encouraging the development of alternative technologies that do not contribute to toxic environmental overloads.
4. Our economic and environmental well-being requires managing population and growth intelligently, limiting urban sprawl, and preserving farmland, wildlife habitat, and natural resources. The Growth Management Act should be maintained and strengthened where needed.
5. Viable neighborhoods must be affordable to people with a wide range of incomes, and they must include open space, playfields, and libraries, among other public and private investments.
6. Public lands must be managed as a public trust and preserved for their scenic beauty and majesty. State and national parks should be adequately funded.
7. Environmental laws and regulations must be strengthened and vigorously enforced.
8. Responsible waste management is critical and requires many strategies including:
  - a. Reducing, reusing, or recycling all residential and business waste,
  - b. Creating viable markets for reusable and recycled materials,
  - c. Holding manufacturers financially responsible for clean-up and disposal of products at the end of their useful life,
  - d. Reinstating the Superfund Tax to make polluters pay for despoiling the environment, and
  - e. Subjecting the export of toxic waste to other countries to strong environmental safeguards.
9. It is the sovereign right of the people and necessary to their well-being to enact laws that protect their health, safety, and welfare. Government should make no rule, law, treaty, or agreement limiting the application or effect of national, state, or local laws or regulations protecting clean air, clean water, food safety, or worker safety.

## **FOREIGN POLICY**

*The United States should lead by example and work within the world community in a spirit of peace, cooperation, generosity, and democracy.*

1. Our nation must have an effective, comprehensive plan to ensure our security while protecting our constitutional rights and the human rights of all.
2. The U.S. government must:
  - a. Demonstrate our commitment to peace, never initiating unprovoked war,
  - b. Work with other nations to eliminate terrorist networks, and
  - c. Resolve international conflicts through diplomacy and international institutions.
3. We must complete a timely withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan in such a way as to do the least harm to the peoples of the region and to promote stability. We must support the rebuilding of both countries and provide humanitarian relief for the well-being of their peoples.
4. The United States should support organizations that promote human rights, adherence to international law, democratic elections, health and safety, peace, commerce, and cultural understanding. The United States should participate cooperatively in the United Nations and pay our full U.N. dues.
5. The United States must lead international efforts to prevent genocide. Our government should sign and ratify the U.N. agreement forming an International Criminal Court, and it should honor the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
6. Our government should provide our fair share of effective foreign aid to reduce poverty and improve health, education, and access to safe water and food. We must restore programs that support family planning worldwide.
7. The United States must:
  - a. Sign the Mine Ban Treaty;
  - b. Ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
  - c. Comply with the Geneva Conventions, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, and other international treaties protecting civilian populations; and
  - d. Build on efforts taken in concert with the Kyoto Protocol and secure long-term international agreements setting enforceable goals to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.
8. All governments that possess nuclear weapons should reduce or eliminate their nuclear arsenals. Our government must renounce the development of new nuclear weapons and act to accomplish nuclear nonproliferation, arms reduction, and international control of fissile material.
9. Our government should not engage in overt or covert efforts to destabilize other nations' governments.
10. The government of the United States should work with transnational corporations and lending institutions, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank to improve regulation of financial systems to prevent economic disruptions and to develop ways to better handle Third World debt.
11. Existing international trade agreements should be renegotiated to incorporate—and future international trade agreements should incorporate—human rights, labor rights, environmental laws, transparency at all levels, and basic democratic procedures.
12. The United States should use its full influence, through serious, constructive and persistent engagement, to promote negotiations and other actions that lead to a successful and sustainable resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on mutual recognition, that ensures security, economic growth, and quality of life for the peoples of the sovereign state of Israel and a sovereign state of Palestine.

## **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL REFORM**

*Democracy requires maximum participation by an informed electorate; a voting process that is fair, transparent, and open to all citizens; and elected officials who are responsive to the needs of society.*

1. We believe that Government is unique and not a business. It has a very different function and purpose. The need for its services increases during economic downturns. To provide essential services and safety for its citizens, government must levy taxes and enforce laws and regulations for the good of all.
2. We demand a productive legislative process in our Federal government.
3. We must curtail the influence of special interests on our political processes. Campaigns should be publicly financed so that qualified citizens have an opportunity to run for office regardless of their income level or resources. Until that is attained, contribution and spending limits should be an integral part of campaign finance reforms.
4. We must preserve the integrity of our electoral processes throughout the nation. All elections should be conducted either with carefully-supervised paper ballots or open-source software, with a verifiable record of all votes.
5. The sources of campaign funds, including "issue advertising" and separately controlled campaigns (such as independently controlled political action committees), must be fully disclosed. Monetary contributions should not have the protected status of free speech.
6. We support reforms that would result in election of the President of the United States by popular vote, accurately reflecting the will of the majority of our nation's voters.
7. We must significantly shorten the process of selecting Presidential nominees and allow for accessible and meaningful citizen participation.

## **HEALTH CARE**

*Health care is a basic human right. Our government should assure, and guarantee by law, accessible and affordable health care for all.*

1. A comprehensive and effective national health care system should be established for all, without exclusions or terminations. Our strong preference is to implement this through a single-payer system.
2. Our health care system should be organized to serve both individual and public health needs, at a cost individuals and society can afford. Medical decisions should be based on what is right for patients, not on a profit motive.
3. Our health care system should emphasize prevention, primary care, and chronic disease management, using available evidence-based guidelines.
4. Benefits should include outpatient and inpatient services; acute and long-term care; home care and hospice; mental health care and substance abuse programs; dental, vision, and hearing services; family planning with contraceptive care, including access to safe abortions; and rehabilitation, all according to health care needs. Prescription drugs, medical supplies, durable medical equipment, and medical technology should be covered, with attention to assuring effectiveness, appropriate usage, and cost containment.
5. Government has a right and an obligation to use its purchasing power to negotiate prices, including pharmaceuticals.
6. Until a national plan is established, our state should work to develop and implement our own high-quality, affordable universal health care plan with emphasis and benefits as enumerated above.
7. We are entitled to freedom of choice in our own health care, including choosing a personal provider and a "medical home" to provide coordinated care with continuity.

8. To increase the supply of primary care providers, we should grant incentives for working in primary care and with underserved communities and populations.
9. We must establish a unified electronic medical record system to reduce errors and enable a more seamless transfer of information among portals of care, while providing a more accurate way to assess clinical outcomes and compare treatment approaches. Patient privacy must be safeguarded throughout.
10. Public health policy should be based on sound scientific guidelines and follow recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
11. Medical research under the National Institutes of Health must be amply funded. Support for medical research should be based on scientific merit, not a political agenda.
12. A public agency to compare the effectiveness of procedures and treatments should be established, free of commercial bias and influence.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL RIGHTS**

*The rights guaranteed by our Constitution and by international human rights law are at the heart of the American identity and should not be compromised for any reason.*

1. Discrimination of any kind is wrong. Those who face discrimination must be afforded the legal means and economic opportunities to overcome such injustice.
2. Privacy is a basic human right that government and business must recognize and respect.
3. A woman's right to reproductive choice, regardless of age or ability to pay, must be protected in the United States and abroad.
4. Provisions of the USAPATRIOT Act and Protect America Act that infringe on constitutional rights and freedoms must be repealed; warrantless governmental eavesdropping and illegal searches must be stopped.
5. We support using the criminal justice system to prosecute accused terrorists.
6. The rights of people with disabilities must be protected and enforced. These rights include equal access to public accommodations, employment, transportation, telecommunications, voting, and government services, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
7. The rights and responsibilities conferred by marriage should be available to all committed adult couples regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The Defense of Marriage Act should be repealed.
8. Human trafficking, especially of children, must be stopped.
9. Freedom of religion and its separation from government are fundamental to our country's values, enshrined in the First Amendment of the Constitution; they must be upheld in practice.
10. Our nation must guarantee the right of conscientious objection, including the right to refuse to support injustices, without fear of reprisal.
11. Cultural pluralism makes this country strong, and we oppose efforts to legislate English as the official language.
12. Laws should ensure that prejudice does not present a barrier to obtaining education, employment, promotion, housing, insurance, or any other social or economic good. Affirmative action remains an important technique for addressing and correcting the present effects of discrimination.

## **HUMAN SERVICES**

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

1. Ensuring compassionate human services must be among the highest priorities of federal, state, and local government.
2. The only worthwhile welfare reform is one that reduces poverty, not just the welfare rolls.
3. We must galvanize the political will to end homelessness and ensure that all people have access to safe, affordable housing, including shelters and low-income housing for those unable to work. We support weighting affordable housing programs toward those who need them most.
4. We support affordable workforce housing programs, especially those targeting workers earning between minimum wage and a living wage, but in no case more than 80% of the area median income, to avoid competing with marketplace housing.
5. The state should plan transitional housing for those being released from state institutions.
6. We support increasing the Disability Lifeline stipend (state public assistance for people with disabilities; i.e., General Assistance-Unemployable/GA-U) from \$339 a month.
7. Quality affordable childcare, education, training, and substance abuse treatment must be provided to help working parents leave welfare and poor people escape poverty.
8. Any religious institution that receives public funding must not discriminate in hiring and firing and must not encourage or require any profession of faith or act of worship for staff or recipients of care.
9. Preventing child abuse and neglect must be a priority for our state. The foster care system must be restructured and adequately funded and administered.
10. Adult Family Homes and in-home elder care alternatives to nursing homes should be adequately regulated and funded.
11. Respite for family care providers should be fully funded and promoted.
12. The state should fund the Family Medical Leave Act.
13. The Federal poverty level is no longer a useful benchmark, since agencies serving poor people generally use twice the poverty level to determine neediness. The poverty level should be redefined to reflect actual living costs below which health, safety, and human dignity are at risk.

## **IMMIGRATION**

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

1. We support policies to integrate immigrants more fully into a community of greater shared prosperity, opportunities, and higher living standards for all.
2. United States immigration policy must undergo comprehensive reform, protecting the integrity of our borders while recognizing the basic human rights of immigrants and protecting them with due process for all proceedings.
3. We must discourage illegal immigration and encourage lawful immigration by eliminating ethnic bias in quotas and speeding timely processing of applications for entry, asylum, temporary work permits, and lawful permanent residence ("green cards").
4. We must create a more efficient, just, and compassionate system for granting asylum.
5. We must provide fair and humane treatment of those entering the United States, reuniting families of all kinds and crafting a fair path to legal status and eventual citizenship for immigrants already here.

6. We must put effective border control measures, consistent with individual liberties, into operation.
7. We oppose using local law enforcement as agents of immigration enforcement.
8. We oppose any effort to deputize, commission, finance, or otherwise encourage vigilante border militia groups in the United States.
9. We support provisions to improve wages and working conditions of immigrant workers—including safe and adequate housing, medical care, and education—to protect them from exploitation and to protect American workers from being undercut by an illegal and exploited workforce.
10. We must allow access to health care and human services without discrimination based on immigration status.
11. We support allowing undocumented immigrant students who graduate from US high schools, are of good moral character, arrived in the US as children, and have been in the country continuously for at least five years prior to the bill's enactment, the opportunity to earn permanent residency.
12. We must work with other nations to improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions which are incentives to illegal immigration.

## **INDIAN TRIBES AND SOVEREIGNTY**

*Tribal governments are a part of our national identity and community. They must be recognized as sovereign nations.*

1. Local, state, and federal governments must respect the decisions of the Native American nations and tribal governments, affirm their rights derived from treaties and state compacts, and oppose attempts to diminish their sovereignty and cultures.
2. Salmon runs and protected shellfish resources, critical to Indian needs, should be maintained and restored.
3. Sites of historic, cultural, and religious significance must be preserved and protected.
4. Under treaty obligations, the federal government must act to improve the social, economic, and health status of Native Americans.
5. Federal recognition of the Duwamish tribe must be restored.

## **LABOR**

*We believe in the dignity of work. A strong economy and nation depend on jobs that provide safe working conditions, fair and living wages, and benefits. These are best obtained by ensuring workers' rights to join labor unions, to bargain collectively, and to take part in setting their working conditions.*

1. We support a living wage. Until that is realized the Federal minimum wage must be raised to \$10 an hour and indexed to the cost of living. The advantages reach beyond workers to include the society, the economy, and the businesses patronized by the workers.
2. We support a Workers' Bill of Rights that includes:
  - a. A safe and healthy workplace with rights of association, assembly, and free speech;
  - b. Due process including protection for whistleblowers and union activities;
  - c. Democratic and fair elections within unions;
  - d. Benefits including health care, retirement, and paid family leave for wage earners and their families;
  - e. A work environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment;
  - f. Job training, education, and related services when employers outsource, downgrade, or eliminate jobs; and
  - g. Equal pay for comparable work for all workers.

3. The National Labor Relations Board must be reformed to streamline the appeals process and institute meaningful penalties for employers found to have engaged in unfair labor practices.
4. The union-restricting Taft-Hartley Act and “Right to Work” laws should be repealed.
5. Workers should not be fired without cause.
6. Tax breaks and incentives must be repealed for companies that move jobs out of state.
7. Workers who are locked out or on strike should be protected from reprisal or permanent replacement.
8. Locked-out workers should receive full unemployment benefits.
9. Official unemployment statistics should include persons who are underemployed or who have given up looking for work or whose benefits have been exhausted.
10. Farm workers and their families should have safe and adequate housing, sanitary facilities, medical care, and education.
11. Hourly workers should not be forced to work off the clock; their overtime work should be voluntary and compensated with overtime pay.
12. Employers who force workers to work off the clock should be prosecuted.
13. Federal, state, and local funding should be available for retraining workers who are displaced, unemployed, or underemployed.
14. Unions should have automatic recognition based on signatures of those represented (card check).
15. Workers should be free from mandatory meetings about unionizing, politics, or religion.

## **LAW AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

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

1. Criminal justice should emphasize prevention and rehabilitation over incarceration alone. Prisons should provide inmates with education, training, therapy, and meaningful work.
2. Our nation must invest in children and work actively to abolish poverty in order to eliminate a major cause of crime.
3. Drug addiction isn’t cured by incarceration. We support widespread drug education, treatment, and community-based aftercare for every offender who needs it.
4. The death penalty should be abolished.
5. Mandatory and indeterminate sentencing should be ended, and nonviolent crime removed from the “Three Strikes” list.
6. Racial profiling by law enforcement must be eliminated.
7. White-collar crime should be given jail time on the same basis as other non-violent crime.
8. Asset seizures should be based on court conviction rather than mere arrest or presumption of guilt.
9. Operation of prisons should not be privatized.
10. Possession of small amounts of marijuana should be decriminalized.
11. Gun-sale background checks and waiting periods must be made sufficiently effective, and applicable to gun shows and other transactions, to keep guns out of the hands of felons, mentally unstable persons, and others likely to misuse or allow the misuse of them. We support mandatory registration and licensing, together with safety training (including safety locks and secure storage) for hunters and other gun owners, and a total ban on automatic weapons.

## **MILITARY**

*Washington citizens have always answered their country's call to duty, and we are proud of our military contributions to the nation. We support our troops and honor our veterans, and we will continue to press for the money and resources necessary to ensure our veterans receive all this nation has promised—and owes them.*

1. Military services must be provided by volunteers or draftees, but not by mercenaries or contractors.
2. Troops should be supported by establishing mandated breaks between overseas tours, strict time limits on each tour of duty in a combat zone, and strict limits on total number of combat tours.
3. We should abolish the “don't ask, don't tell” policy and enact legislation to end discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.
4. All persons serving in the military must be kept safe from sexual harassment and sexual assault; we strongly support the prosecution of offenders.
5. We must honor our veterans' service by restoring treatment at VA medical facilities for all veterans, per their enlistment agreement.
6. We back full funding of VA mental health treatment, including treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries.
7. Our government should review and correct all the military partial disability ratings since the start of the Iraq war.
8. All American military personnel must be instructed in their rights and responsibilities under the Geneva Conventions, and this responsibility must be enforced at the highest levels of command.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

*Transportation policies should contribute to equal opportunity and better communities. Reducing our dependence on the automobile reduces the impacts of transportation on the environment.*

1. Air quality and health considerations should be important factors in all transportation planning decisions.
2. We must fund essential public infrastructure projects and services. Building more highway capacity will not solve congestion.
3. The ferry system is a critical part of the overall transportation system and must be adequately maintained.
4. We must fund practical public transportation choices that reduce dependence on the automobile. We must modify the 18th Amendment to the Washington State Constitution to allow funding of all transportation purposes, not just “highways.”
5. Government must institute measures to reduce pollution and dependence on oil, including increased fuel efficiency standards; revised zoning and building codes and housing policies; provision of public transit services and more HOV lanes; and improved facilities for pedestrians, people in wheelchairs, and bicyclists.
6. Coordinating the planning and implementation of transportation facilities and services across agency and jurisdictional boundaries is the best way to efficiently and cost-effectively meet the region's transportation needs. The priority for funding and implementation of transportation facilities and services should be movement of people and freight, not cars.
7. Congestion pricing, including tolling and managed lanes—to pay for critical facilities, manage traffic, or pay for transit services—should identify and correct any disproportionate adverse effects on low income and minority populations. In order to encourage their use, transit, vanpools, and carpools should not be charged tolls.