

PLATFORM
of the Pima County Democratic Party
(adopted Dec 7, 2019)

PREAMBLE

The job of our government is to ensure freedom, liberty, safety, security, justice and prosperity for all, now and for generations to come. In any democracy, the power of government resides with the people. These principles are set forth in the United States Constitution, its Preamble, and the Declaration of Independence. Democrats are committed to making our nation a place where these values are lived realities for all.

In practice, this means we stand for a government of the people, by the people, and for the people that:

- Achieves true equality among people regardless of ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical ability, age and class;
- Provides security and safety for all;
- Generates a competent, accountable and effective system of public services for everyone;
- Respects the dignity of work and protects the rights of workers;
- Recognizes and facilitates the people's right to the truth;
- Promotes community, opportunity, responsibility and civic engagement;
- Creates opportunities for equitable participation in a sustainable, vibrant, and just economy;
- Aspires to a peaceful world achieved with a preference for diplomacy over military action;
- Provides responsible and effective stewardship of our environment, securing quality of life for ourselves and for generations to come;
- Guarantees comprehensive, universal health care;
- Ensures excellent public education and training for all.

The multiple challenges facing our nation call for a bold agenda. This platform addresses local, state and national issues, focusing on 16 areas of concern with solutions for each. In prioritizing public policy solutions, we considered:

1. Impact: How great a difference will this solution make?
2. Scope: How many people will benefit, for how long?
3. Justice: Will people who have historically been excluded be included in the benefits?

CHALLENGES AND POLICY SOLUTIONS

(in alphabetical order)

1-ACCESS TO, AND PARTICIPATION IN, OUR DEMOCRACY

Democracies succeed when their citizens understand, accept, and act in accord with their civic responsibilities. However, the United States has one of the lowest rates of participation in the democratic process. We must provide opportunities for civic engagement to all. We must defeat attempts to suppress participation in elections and other democratic activities. And we must make sure our electoral processes are fair, transparent and credible.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Implement universal, automatic same day voter registration [HR1 For the People Act of 2019];
- B. Prevent voter suppression efforts, voter ID requirements and restrictions on early ballot drop-off;
- C. Secure the voting rights of indigenous people, and establish satellite locations for in-person voter registration and in-person early voting for indigenous voters;
- D. Recognize tribal villages and districts for voter registration, ballot initiatives and nominating petitions;
- E. Improve voting access for rural voters;
- F. Strengthen Arizona's Clean Elections system, outlaw dark and dirty money, reverse the Citizens United decision, and expand and support the My Voice Voucher Pilot Program to test public financing of Congressional campaigns. {HR1 For the People Act of 2019};
- G. Protect Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission;
- H. Guarantee verified paper ballots for every election [N, HR1 For the People Act of 2019];
- I. Make Election Day a work holiday, and extend in-person voting to more than one day;
- J. Restore the Help America Vote Act, which provides funding and guidance to states for voting. [HR1 For the People Act of 2019];
- K. Restore the Federal Elections Commission to its full functioning capacity.

2-ANTI-RACISM

Racism has infected and undermined our democracy throughout our nation's history. Until we, as Americans and as Democrats, acknowledge this truth, we will continue to treat the symptoms rather than eliminate the disease. We cannot be satisfied with symbolic gestures, half-measures and half-truths. We Democrats acknowledge our contribution to this moral sickness, and must approach every one of the issues in our platform with a commitment to addressing how race and discrimination affects power structures and the policies we uphold. We intend to serve as a model for how to meaningfully address this issue.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Eliminate racism in our ranks, our communities and our country;
- B. Authentically address the cost of the damage done to the descendants of people who were enslaved and Native Americans through measures including reparations, policy reform and affirmative action;
- C. Remove barriers to participation in government by those who are underrepresented, including in our party infrastructure.

3-CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Our current criminal justice system focuses on punishment rather than rehabilitation. It is inefficient, harms society as a whole, and discriminates against people of color. Many of those incarcerated are guilty of relatively minor offenses, including low-level drug crimes. The high rate of incarceration is costly and immoral. Reducing the number of imprisoned non-violent offenders through sentencing reform and judicial discretion will save billions of dollars in correctional costs. Additional savings, both societal and financial, will be realized by eliminating private, for-profit prisons. Most importantly, education and rehabilitation incentives can be applied to non-violent offenders via parole or probation.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. End privatization and profiting from corrections and detainment;
- B. Eliminate the use of fines and fees to fund local governments;
- C. End probation revocation for unpaid fines and fees;
- D. Move toward restorative justice, and end mass incarceration;
- E. Further the Tucson Police Department's efforts to institute community policing as a means of increasing public involvement in law enforcement;
- F. Restore judicial discretion in sentencing by eliminating mandatory sentencing laws [AZ HB2245, 2019];
- G. End the cash bail system;

- H. End solitary confinement;
- I. Automatically restore convicted felons' voting rights after they pay their debts to society;
- J. Legalize and regulate marijuana possession and use, and expunge charges and convictions for marijuana possession;
- K. Eliminate the death penalty [DNC Platform];
- L. Strengthen law enforcement accountability through measures such as meaningful public review and reforming personnel practices.

4-ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The United States is among the most economically unequal nations in the world. Wealth is concentrated in the hands of very few while too many suffer from this oppressive inequity. Economic inequality means disparities in wealth, income, education, opportunity, retirement benefits and housing. Wages remain inadequate and do not keep up with productivity. Labor unions that would otherwise counteract disparities have been suppressed. Economic injustice is intolerable and presents a threat to a functional democracy. We stand for a prosperous *and* equitable nation where the economic system rewards work not wealth.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Make it easier for workers, public and private, to exercise their rights to organize and join unions, including eliminating "right to work" laws [N, S, DNC Platform, PRO Act HR2474];
- B. Require a livable \$15 minimum wage that rises with inflation;
- C. Protect the retirement rights of Arizona State employees and maintain the defined benefit program of the Arizona State Retirement System. Secure these rights for all employees;
- D. Ensure at least 12 weeks of annual paid medical or family leave [N, S, DNC Platform];
- E. Build a job skills transfer program to help grow our clean energy industry while easing the economic burden for those whose jobs depend on fossil fuels;
- F. Eliminate child poverty [N, American Family Act of 2017-S. Brown, M. Bennett];
- G. Prohibit requiring repayment of student debt until five years after graduation, and base payments on income [N, DNC Platform];
- H. Prevent discrimination in pay and work conditions based on race, ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation;
- I. Provide regulated, subsidized child care;

- J. End privatization of governmental services, including the Veterans Administration and the United States Postal Service;
- K. Regulate banking and lending policies to ensure access for all (no redlining, covenants);
- L. Strengthen consumer finance protections;
- M. End predatory short-term lending;
- N. Eliminate mandatory arbitration laws (consumer and employment), and reform arbitration laws;
- O. Tax progressively, based on ability to pay. Close loopholes. Impose a wealth tax;
- P. End tax giveaways to corporations;
- Q. Protect and strengthen Social Security benefits;
- R. Expand nonprofit financial institutions and establish public banks [N, S, L,] for example, post-office banking;
- S. Provide all Americans with a universal basic income;
- T. Authentically address the true cost of the damage done to indigenous nations and peoples and the descendants of people who were enslaved through reparations, policy reform and affirmative action.

5-EDUCATION

Education is essential to the economic, moral and political health of democracy. Because our future depends on education, opportunities beginning with pre-school and extending through higher education or technical training, must be made available and affordable to all.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Provide free public K-16 quality education for all in compliance with the Arizona Constitution, which states that education “shall be free, uniform, and non-sectarian.” [DNC Platform];
- B. Eliminate public funds for for-profit charter and private schools, including work-arounds and Empowerment Scholarship Accounts;
- C. Make charter schools as accountable as our public schools;
- D. Increase Arizona teacher salaries to at least the median salary level of our nation’s top 10 states for teacher pay;
- E. Restore full capital improvement (buildings and maintenance) funding of K-16 schools from the state;
- F. Develop programs to offer free preschool and daycare for low-income families, and provide all-day kindergarten for all;

- G. Prohibit donor influence in public schools, charter schools and universities;
- H. Reduce K-3 class sizes to under 18 and reduce other class sizes to optimize learning;
- I. Fully fund education and services for disabled students;
- J. Eliminate third grade standardized testing and minimize standardized testing in all grades, and allow opt-outs;
- K. Fund and support trade schools and technical training;
- L. Abolish English-only standards. Promote bilingual education and cultural competence [S, HCR2026 ballot referendum for 2020];
- M. Fully fund the Arizona Financial Aid Trust Fund (AFATF);
- N. Improve educational quality to place Arizona’s education system among the nation’s top 10 state systems.

6-ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Climate change due to human activities is an urgent existential threat. Rising temperatures generate extreme and more dangerous meteorological events. As the planet warms, glaciers melt, sea levels rise, and species (including those responsible for our food supply) go extinct. Little time remains for us to mitigate these effects if our species are going to survive. We must shift from dependence on fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, thus reducing CO2 and other greenhouse gases responsible for global warming.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Adopt The Green New Deal, a proposed stimulus program that addresses climate change and economic inequality – expanding solar power and decreasing dependence on other forms of nonrenewable and nuclear energy;
- B. Build a clean-energy economy by investing in efficient energy technologies, industries and approaches, especially solar energy in Arizona;
- C. Require all publicly-funded building projects to use solar and alternative-energy techniques;
- D. Increase vehicle fuel efficiency and support other solutions that reduce fossil fuel use;
- E. Implement Tucson’s 2030 District to reduce greenhouse gases, conserve water, and address climate-change impacts;
- F. Stop deforestation and engage in extensive reforestation to reduce global warming;
- G. Recommit to Paris Climate Accords, and participate in good faith;
- H. Limit the amount of carbon that polluters are permitted to emit;

- I. Restore and expand the renewable portfolio standards for utilities;
- J. Demand that the Arizona Corporation Commission reduce and control utility rates and prohibit any entity regulated by the ACC from contributing to political campaigns.

7-HEALTHCARE

Quality healthcare is a human right. Although we spend far more on health care than any other nation, the World Health Organization ranks the United States only 37th for affordable health-care availability and quality. Millions of Americans are unable to receive preventive care and treatment for illnesses and injuries. Healthcare costs are the leading cause of personal bankruptcies in the United States. This reality is morally unacceptable and costly. We don't need to spend more on medical care; we need to spend smarter.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Ensure affordable health care and comprehensive health insurance for all, including dental, vision, prenatal and mental health care, abortion, and telehealth reimbursement. This solution is currently best represented in the Medicare for All proposals, which include mechanisms for funding;
- B. Increase access to mental health and addiction treatment, and decriminalize mental-health issues;
- C. Require immunizations as a condition to attend all public and private schools, except where medically contraindicated;
- D. Increase funding for rural hospitals, including support for migrant and indigent care.
- E. Fully fund Indian Health Services.
- F. Fully fund veterans' health-care services.
- G. Fully fund prenatal care, women's health and reproductive health, including abortion and access to contraceptives.
- H. Ensure pharmaceutical and health-care equality so that all people get the same quality of care regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic status;
- I. Legalize and appropriately regulate medical marijuana use;
- J. Increase support for palliative care, and permit physician-assisted suicide under carefully considered and clearly specified conditions;
- K. Regulate the cost of medical care and hospital services;
- L. Reform the patent system for pharmaceuticals and medical devices;
- M. Increase access to assisted living facilities, eldercare and hospice;
- N. Support the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

8-HOUSING

Affordable housing is a human right, and living in community creates positive outcomes for people. Our governments should take positive steps to make safe, secure and affordable housing available to all Americans.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program for renters, provide higher levels of funding for Section VIII vouchers, and mandate a portion of tax increment financing (for example, Rio Nuevo) for affordable housing;
- B. Support fair housing standards and anti-discrimination regulations;
- C. Eliminate public incentives for flipping houses
- D. Promote and expand housing trust funds and non-profit efforts to allow people to avoid eviction.

9-HUMAN RIGHTS

Over the course of American history, we have made progress toward realizing equality and human rights for all, but there is more work to do. Democrats are committed to the pursuit of equity and human rights for all people. When we act to uplift communities that are harmed by systemic discrimination, we advance the cause of human rights for all.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Enact the Equal Rights Amendment [S];
- B. Direct local, state and federal agencies to collaborate with tribal police to address the issue of murdered and missing indigenous women;
- C. Ensure women's physical, economic and personal safety, and aggressively enforce Title IX;
- D. Support the Violence Against Women Act;
- E. Enact the Equality Act, [N, HR5, S788 N];
- F. End all forms of discrimination against LGBTQ persons, including trans men and women in the military (active duty and veterans), and persecution of trans children in schools.
- G. Outlaw forced gender-conversion therapy;
- H. End Pima County's discrimination against trans employees in health insurance, extend the City of Tucson's nondiscrimination protections to cover city contractors, and enact a county-level nondiscrimination ordinance like the City of Tucson's;
- I. Remove gendered and degrading language in government documents and statutes;
- J. Ensure civil and human rights of all, regardless of documentation status.



10-IMMIGRATION AND OUR BORDERLAND COMMUNITY

Migration is a natural phenomenon. Involuntary migration is a phenomenon for which we must be responsible as good stewards of our planet and as those who created many of the factors that caused it. Immigration is a defining characteristic of our country. Immigrants make us stronger and richer, both materially and culturally.

Pima County is a vibrant, multiracial, multilingual, multicultural borderland community. Racist, anti-immigrant policies not only violate human and constitutional rights, they disrupt our commerce and tear the cultural fabric that holds our community together.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Overhaul the U.S. immigration and naturalization system and permit naturalization of all undocumented people who have lived in the U.S. for at least five years, should they choose it;
- B. Pass a “clean” Dream Act;
- C. Repeal Arizona’s SB1070 legislation promoting severe anti-immigration policies;
- D. Reduce emphasis on Border Patrol resources and increase resources for asylum processing;
- E. Reject Operation Stonegarden funds or any collaboration between local law enforcement and federal agencies for the purpose of immigration-law enforcement;
- F. Overhaul Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) until it has eradicated all civil rights violations and put systems of accountability in place. Until such time, the agency should not receive new funds;
- G. Provide development assistance to raise standards of living in Latin America;
- H. Prohibit citizenship questions on the U.S. census;
- I. Provide municipal ID to all residents in the city of Tucson;
- J. Welcome and help refugees and immigrants.



11-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

The United States Government has a history of broken treaties with the Native Nations whose land we occupy. This region is the ancestral homeland of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Our region is also the current homeland of the Tohono O'odham and Pascua Yaqui Tribe (Yoeme). Indigenous people were not considered United States citizens until 1924 and did not win the right to vote in Arizona until 1948, setting up a legacy of voter suppression and disenfranchisement. Full voting accessibility to indigenous people and addressing their unique geographical and cultural challenges must be a priority for Pima County.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Recognize tribal villages and districts for voter registration and ballot and nominating petitions;
- B. Protect tribal land rights: mining rights, environmental rights, and sacred sites on and off tribal lands;
- C. Ensure guaranteed water rights including the Central AZ Project and the Equitable AZ Drought Contingency Plan; recognize tribal nations' rights to their own water as well as their right to protect, manage and conserve water use for their own well-being;
- D. Repair relationship with tribes by honoring all treaties, including support of tribal consultation that enforces and honors government-to-government relationships.

12-PEACE

With power comes responsibility. While our military must be ready and able to defend us whenever necessary, we must pursue resolutions intelligently, thoughtfully, respectfully and peacefully through diplomacy whenever possible. We must also think about our global impact and end our unsavory pattern of getting involved in conflicts abroad.

Because we value peace, we support the work to:

- A. Fully fund diplomacy and diplomatic professional staff;
- B. Prioritize effective diplomacy, not military action;
- C. End international intervention in the pursuit of resources through regime change and land grabs;
- D. Pursue a credible and verifiable end to the production, deployment and use of nuclear weapons, including our own;
- E. Heed the warnings of our military leaders and shift resources to mitigating the human impact from climate change;
- F. Reinstate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act;
- G. Significantly reduce military spending.

13-PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities through education, policy making and research. More than 90 percent of America's gains in health and life span in the 20th century result from successful public-health initiatives. Federal and state governments are responsible for ensuring disease prevention, pollution-free water and air, food safety, medication safety and effectiveness, and the security and safety of our homes, roads, bridges, rails and airways.

Therefore we support the work to:

- A. Restore the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to protect, maintain and restore, if necessary, the quality of our air, land and water;
- B. Ensure the Food and Drug Administration's ability to operate objectively, free from political interference;
- C. Authorize the Centers for Disease Control to pursue research on all health issues, including gun violence, and to make public all its findings;
- D. Increase funding to the National Institutes of Health and ensure that it can support whatever health-related research its professional staff deem warranted;
- E. Rebuild the professional staff of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and support them in conducting their research objectively;
- F. Support US Public Health Service and increase the number of commissioned officers;
- G. Fully fund the National Weather Service and enhance its ability to warn Americans of potentially dangerous weather events;
- H. Better fund the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state and local emergency services, strengthening their ability to help when disasters strike;
- I. Undertake a comprehensive program to renovate and improve U.S. infrastructure, making it safer, more reliable, efficient and environmentally sound.

14-SECURITY AND SAFETY

Conversation about public safety today focuses on police and emergency services. Abuse by law enforcement destroys public trust. The rise of white nationalism breeds civil disorder. Among the worst threats to personal and public safety is the gun violence that has reached epidemic proportions. Americans cannot feel safe in their homes, schools, businesses, even their places of worship. We cannot stand by while our children are slaughtered. We must demand more from ourselves and our politicians. Effective firearms regulation is long overdue.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Ban civilian possession and use of military-grade automatic and semiautomatic weapons, bump stocks, and high-capacity magazines (no more than 10 rounds);

- B. Implement universal background checks for the purchase of any firearm, and close background-check loopholes;
- C. Prohibit perpetrators of violence, including domestic abusers, from ownership and/or possession of a firearm;
- D. Increase community-oriented policing, including officer education and retraining in the racial context of discriminatory law enforcement;
- E. Fully fund investigation and enforcement efforts to track and thwart the rise in domestic terror and white-supremacist organizations;
- F. Strengthen law-enforcement transparency and accountability through measures such as body cams, meaningful public review, and reformed personnel practices. This must begin with mechanisms for community collaboration.

15-TAXES, REVENUE, & SPENDING

Any government must raise enough revenue to carry out its duties. Thus, the first authority that the U.S. Constitution assigned to the federal government is that of levying taxes. No one likes to pay taxes, but all citizens have a basic duty to contribute our fair share to our government. To generate sufficient revenue, our government should levy taxes efficiently, fairly, and always with the aim of promoting the general welfare. It must diligently collect all legally-owed taxes, and be a prudent and transparent steward of our tax funds.

Therefore, we propose that federal, state and local governments:

- A. Base individuals' taxes on ability to pay, close loopholes, and assess wealth taxes;
- B. End corporate tax breaks and use funds to fully fund public education;
- C. Establish criteria for repayment of real estate and corporate development incentives;
- D. Raise sufficient revenue to fund current government expenses and reduce the national debt;
- E. Eliminate the two-thirds vote requirement for any legislation that increases taxes in Arizona;
- F. Fully fund and staff the Internal Revenue Service so the agency can ensure that all Americans pay their legally-owed taxes.

16-TECHNOLOGY

Rapid technological advances affect every aspect of our lives, driving profound changes in communication, manufacturing, leisure, learning, and availability of both information and misinformation. Government must ensure that Americans enjoy the benefits of technological advances, while preventing or mitigating the harms.

Government needs greater focus on improved Internet access, the harmful byproducts of social-media platforms, and the effects of these changes on our employment and environment. Areas for further government supported-research should include the impact of technological advances on human relationships, physical and psychological health.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Continually upgrade cyber security, protect privacy, and regulate social media;
- B. Ensure net neutrality;
- C. Enforce current antitrust statutes against platform monopolies;
- D. End trafficking in all personal information;
- E. Ensure high-speed Internet access in rural communities;
- F. Support policies governing the ethical use of digital technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), for workforce transformation and weaponry, and policies that provide protection against human and animal-rights abuse;
- G. Support programs that help workers transition to new roles when technology affects or eliminates their jobs, and that mitigate negative effects of job loss or change;
- H. Authorize and fund National Institutes of Health (NIH) research on the physical and psychological health effects of new technologies;
- I. Meaningfully address the rise in disinformation and media manipulation that affect elections.