

**Platform**  
**Pima County Democratic Party**  
**Approved by PCDP County Committee on August 21, 2021**

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## **PREAMBLE**

Our government's role is to ensure liberty, safety, security, justice and equitable opportunity for all, now and for future generations. In any democracy, government's power resides with the people. The United States Constitution, its Preamble, and the Declaration of Independence establish these principles and embody our nation's values. Democrats are committed to making our nation a place where these documents govern all lives equally.

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

- Protects and assures equal rights regardless of ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability and age.
- Provides security and safety to everyone.
- Builds and maintains an infrastructure that serves our economic and social needs.
- Generates a competent, accountable and effective public-services system for everyone.
- Respects and protects workers' rights.
- Promotes community, opportunity, responsibility and civic engagement.
- Assures fair, transparent and credible elections.
- Creates opportunities for all to participate in a sustainable, vibrant and just economy.
- Aspires to achieve a peaceful world through diplomacy rather than military action.
- Provides responsible and effective stewardship of our natural environment.
- Guarantees and delivers comprehensive healthcare for all.
- Delivers excellent public education and training for all.

Pima County Democratic Party constructed this platform. It outlines what we stand for. Not every Democrat will embrace every plank. A party that seeks diversity and strives for inclusion should expect this. We are open to suggestions for revision and will continue to seek constructive input. PCDP commits to educating candidates and elected officials about the platform, which they should consider a voting and policy-making guide.

For decades, Republicans' obstruction and Democrats' lack of resolve have prevented our government from adequately meeting these responsibilities, so that we now face a daunting backlog of unmet needs and unsolved problems. This platform addresses that backlog, focusing on eighteen areas of concern. For each area, we articulate our values, summarize the issues and propose specific solutions. The areas of concern are not discrete; they interconnect. Many solutions provide benefits in multiple areas of concern.

The areas of concern included in this platform are:

1. Access to, and Participation in, Our Democracy
2. Achieving Equity: Dismantling Racism, Bigotry and Discrimination
3. Criminal Justice
4. Disability
5. Labor and Economic Justice
6. Education

7. Energy, Infrastructure and Environment
8. Firearms Regulation
9. Healthcare
10. Housing
11. Human Rights
12. Immigration and the Borderlands
13. Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Tribal Sovereignty
14. Justice in Policing
15. Peace
16. Public Health and Safety
17. The Role of Government: Its Ability to Function
18. Technology

## CONCERNS 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 everyone opportunities for civic engagement, and strongly encourage each citizen's involvement in the democratic process. We must defeat attempts to suppress voting and to overturn voter-approved initiatives, protect our ability to participate in democratic activities, and guarantee fair, transparent and credible electoral processes. Voting is a right that should be easy to exercise.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Implement universal, automatic same-day voter registration for all citizens, including those who are incarcerated. [HR1 For the People Act of 2021] S & N.
- B. Mail a ballot to every registered voter. [HR1 For the People Act of 2021] S & N
- C. Abolish all forms of voter suppression and prevent future suppression. S & N.
- D. Provide bilingual (English/Spanish and/or other regionally applicable languages) voter-outreach information, materials and ballots.
- E. Secure indigenous peoples' voting rights by providing reservation-based registration and early-voting locations. S & N
- F. Recognize tribal villages and districts for voter registration, ballot initiatives and nominating petitions. S
- G. Improve rural voters' voting access. [HR1 For the People Act of 2021] S & N
- H. Strengthen Arizona's Clean Elections system, outlaw anonymous campaign contributions [HR1], reverse the Citizens United decision, and expand and support the My Voice Voucher Pilot Program to test public financing of Congressional campaigns. [HR 1 For the People Act of 2021]. S & N
- I. Protect and strengthen Arizona's non-partisan Independent Redistricting Commission and end partisan gerrymandering by supporting independent redistricting commissions nationwide. [HR1] S & N
- J. Guarantee verified paper ballots for every election while ensuring that every voter has a ballot-marking device. [N, HR1] S & N
- K. Offer universal early voting; allow multiple in-person voting days; fully fund an adequate number of conveniently located polling locations; and declare Election Day a work holiday. [HR1] N
- L. Restore the Help America Vote Act, which provides states funding and voter guidance. [HR1] N
- M. Restore the Federal Elections Commission to full function.
- N. Promote equal representation by ratifying the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, effectively eliminating the Electoral College. S
- O. End the filibuster in the U.S. Senate. N
- P. Offer statehood to Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories. N

## **2. ACHIEVING EQUITY: DISMANTLING RACISM, BIGOTRY, and DISCRIMINATION**

Bigotry and prejudice are attitudes. Discrimination translates them into action. We abhor discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Such discrimination weakens our nation's ability to function and has resulted in acts of violence that have killed individuals, destroyed families, and ruined communities.

This nation was built on the assumption of white Christian supremacy by which European colonizers justified violently subjugating non-white people. Bigotry continues to embolden and undergird discrimination against all people who deviate from that foundational prejudice. We will never overcome this bigotry without acknowledging its place in our history:

- The first Europeans who came to this continent landed in a place that the Wampanoag called Turtle Island. These Europeans believed they had a God-given right to invade indigenous lands from both coasts, impose Christianity, and perpetrate ethnic and cultural cleansing and genocide on indigenous peoples.
- The history of racism against American citizens of Mexican descent largely began with the 1848 Mexican Cession, which gave the United States Mexico's northern provinces of California and New Mexico and devalued the status of Mexican families who had inhabited these regions for centuries. The U.S. treated Mexican citizens as second-class citizens, suppressing their Mexican culture and language, and stealing their lands.
- African American oppression remains unique in its scale and barbarity. Two-and-a-half centuries of slavery followed by a century of Jim Crow segregation have created profound and lasting inequities in income, wealth, education, employment, housing, health and environmental quality for African Americans.
- White-supremacist, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim narratives have increased xenophobic animosity toward all non-whites and non-Christians. Violent attacks on Asian Americans and Jews and their institutions, in particular, are accelerating during a global pandemic.

Forming a more perfect union that extends equal opportunities to all citizens has been an elusive goal since this country's founding. From antebellum abolitionists to suffragists to civil-rights activists, some Americans have long fought to fulfill America's founding promises for all people. We seek to play a role in this cause by promoting equity and dismantling bigotry in every element of our governing agenda.

To achieve these objectives and end discrimination in all forms, we will work to:

- A. Promote educational policy and practices that eliminate the significant disparity in academic outcomes between white and non-white students.

- B. Expand and encourage multilingual education and culturally responsive and relevant education. Require all students to take one or more ethnic studies core-credit classes in order to graduate, such as Mexican American social studies or African American literature. Such courses teach our country's rich multiracial/multi-ethnic history.
- C. Promote K-12 curricula that include historical contributions that groups including Native people, Mexican/Hispanic Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans have made.
- D. Teach and celebrate significant landmark events in our national history that advanced human rights and racial justice, such as Juneteenth (June 19th), women's suffrage, and the 1965-1970 Delano grape strike.
- E. Remove from public properties symbols and images that celebrate the Confederacy, colonialism, and religious imposition.
- F. Enforce the separation of church and state to ensure that religious symbols and ceremonies are prohibited on government properties and/or during government-sponsored activities.
- G. Institute financial reparations that counter discrimination's lasting economic effects.
- H. Implement housing policies that:
  - a. end discrimination and unfair practices in the housing market;
  - b. combat gentrification that pushes long-time residents of color out of neighborhoods;
  - c. equalize access to credit and expand support for first-time homebuyers.
  - d. Eliminate redlining (see also Section 5, K).
- I. Promote the right to organize and collectively bargain. Overturn states' "right-to-work" laws, which restrict wages and perpetuate the pay gap between white male workers and everyone else.
- J. Create innovative policies to close racial wealth gaps and end intergenerational poverty, such as seed-capital grants that enable economic security through asset ownership, and a publicly-funded childhood trust account for every child at birth.
- K. Require the Federal Reserve to report on the extent of racial, ethnic, and gender employment and wage gaps, and demand remedies to these inequities.
- L. Invest in communities of color, low-income rural and urban communities by strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act. Improve federal support for women-and-minority-owned small businesses, and ensure they have equal access to credit.
- M. Restore and strengthen the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces policy, and incentivize private companies to recruit and advance racial/ethnic minorities, women, and people with disabilities.
- N. End the public health crisis that racism creates, through anti-racist policies including universal health coverage (See Healthcare Section Plank A). Expand funding for community health centers, rural health centers and mobile health clinics. Remedy environmental racism that disproportionately subjects communities of color to air pollution, unsafe water and toxic chemicals.
- O. Enact criminal-justice reforms that end the higher rates of incarceration of people of color.
- P. Restore the 1965 Voting Rights Act's full powers, and implement legislation to override state legislatures' attempts to curtail voting. Eliminate gerrymandering and reverse racially discriminatory policies that prevent people of color from voting.
- Q. Reinvent policing to end violence against people of color (see Issue 14).
- R. Support government legal action targeting groups that organize around Euro-white supremacy, and back policies that pursue truth and promote racial/ethnic healing.
- S. Remove barriers and proactively include and promote the participation of those who are underrepresented in our party infrastructure, and in all levels of government.

### **3. CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Our criminal-justice system stresses punishment over rehabilitation. It is inefficient, harms society, and acts as a tool of discrimination against people of color. Many incarcerated people committed relatively minor offenses, including low-level drug crimes tied to substance dependency. Mass incarceration is costly and immoral. Sentencing reform and judicial discretion can reduce the number of imprisoned non-violent offenders, saving lives, families, and billions of taxpayer dollars.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Implement restorative justice and end mass incarceration.
- B. Eliminate the use of fines and fees to fund local governments, and end probation revocation for unpaid fines and fees.
- C. Close private prisons and correctional agencies.
- D. Further the Tucson Police Department's efforts to increase public involvement in law enforcement through community policing.
- E. Establish independent Police Auditors in law-enforcement departments who can operate without political interference.
- 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 complete their sentences.
- J. Expunge marijuana-possession charges and convictions.
- K. Eliminate the death penalty [DNC Platform].
- L. Strengthen law enforcement accountability through meaningful public review and stricter personnel practices.

### **4. DISABILITY**

Our society generally regards disability as an individual defect to be fixed or cured, whether that disability is sensory, intellectual, mental health/psychiatric, neurodiverse, physical/mobility, or learning. Therefore, to be disabled is to constantly negotiate for self-determination and respect for one's autonomy while needing and advocating for support.

Democrats recognize and acknowledge that this paradigm obscures the systemic, economic, physical, and attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities experience. We commit to dismantling these barriers and support disabled people's expectation of equity and self-determination, starting with PCDP's own spaces, both brick-and-mortar and virtual.

Thus, we will work to:

- A. Ensure access to, and fully fund, home and community-based long-term care services.
- B. Reform Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance to end asset limits, increase benefit limits to at least the federal poverty level, and make it easier for disabled recipients to work without losing benefits.

- C. Eliminate the legal exceptions that allow employers to pay some disabled workers less than minimum wage.
- D. Reverse the requirement that private entities be given notice and the opportunity to cure access violations under the Arizonans with Disabilities Act before a person can sue.
- E. Consider alternatives to guardianship, such as supported decision making, which safeguard disabled people's fundamental rights while allowing them assistance from trusted others when making important life decisions.
- F. Provide social-service support rather than relying on an armed police response to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis (see issue 14).
- G. Ensure that governments have the resources to plan for disabled people's needs in public health and safety emergencies.
- H. Fund special education so that students with disabilities are able to learn in the most inclusive environment possible, with access to appropriate adaptive technology.
- I. Expand access to vocational rehabilitation programs.
- J. Offer employers financial incentives, such as tax breaks, to hire disabled people.
- K. Improve and expand affordable public transportation so that people with disabilities can use it safely and conveniently.
- L. Secure disabled people's reproductive and child-rearing rights and choices.

## 5. LABOR & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The United States ranks among the world's most economically inequitable nations. Because it rewards wealth, not work, wealth concentrates in the hands of a few, while too many Americans struggle and suffer. Economic inequality means disparities in wealth, income, education, opportunity, retirement benefits, healthcare and housing. Wages remain inadequate and don't reflect productivity. Business and government suppress labor unions. Economic injustice threatens our democracy.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Pass the PRO Act to 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 \$15 federal minimum wage that rises with inflation.
- C. Protect retirement rights for current and future beneficiaries in the Arizona State Retirement System and maintain the Arizona State Retirement System's defined benefit system. Secure these rights for all employees.
- D. Ensure at least 12 weeks of annual paid medical or family leave for all public and private employees. [N, S, DNC Platform].
- E. Retrain fossil-fuel industry workers to help grow our clean energy industry.
- F. Eliminate child poverty, per the American Rescue Plan [L, S, N].
- G. Base student-loan repayments on income and delay them for five years post-graduation. [National, DNC Platform].
- H. Prevent discrimination in pay and work conditions based on race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and sexual orientation.
- I. Strengthen labor laws to protect older workers from forced retirement.
- J. Provide regulated, subsidized childcare.
- K. End privatization of government services.
- L. Regulate banking and lending policies, including redlining and covenants, to ensure access for all.
- M. Strengthen consumer finance protections.
- N. End predatory short-term lending.
- O. Reform arbitration laws and eliminate mandatory arbitration in consumer and employment matters.
- P. Tax progressively, based on ability to pay. Close loopholes. Impose a wealth tax.
- Q. End corporate tax giveaways where this is no tangible or documented financial return on the public's investment.
- R. Protect and strengthen Social Security benefits.
- S. Expand nonprofit financial institutions and establish public banks [N, S, L], for example, post-office banking.
- T. Provide all Americans a universal basic income.
- U. Address the true cost of the damage done to indigenous nations and peoples and the descendants of enslaved people. Remediate that damage through reparations, policy reform and affirmative action.

## 6. EDUCATION

Education is essential to our democracy's economic, moral and political health. Because our future depends on education, all people must be able to access and afford it, from preschool through higher education or technical training. Our goal is to establish Arizona a recognized leader in educational excellence.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Provide free, quality public K-16 education for all, per the Arizona Constitution [DNC Platform].
- B. End publicly-funded for-profit charter and private schools, Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, and other workarounds.
- C. Make charter schools as accountable as public schools, with a focus on civil-rights accountability.
- D. Increase Arizona teacher salaries to at least the median salary level of our nation's top 10 states for teacher pay.
- E. Restore the state's full K-16 capital-improvement school funding.
- F. Develop free preschool and daycare programs for low-income families and provide universal all-day kindergarten.
- G. Prohibit donor and political influence on public school, charter school, college and university curricula.
- H. Reduce K-3 class sizes to less than 18 and reduce other class sizes to optimize learning.
- I. Fully fund education and services for disabled students.
- J. Eliminate third-grade standardized testing, 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 culturally responsive, culturally relevant, and multilingual education, and cultural competence [S, HCR2026 ballot referendum for 2020].
- M. Fully fund the Arizona Financial Aid Trust Fund.
- N. Institute science-based, age-appropriate sex education programs.

## **7. ENERGY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Human-caused climate change is an urgent, existential threat. Rising temperatures generate extreme and increasingly dangerous meteorological events. As the planet warms, glaciers melt, sea levels rise, and species, including plants and animals in our food supply, go extinct.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Support the Green New Deal. Adopt programs that address climate change and economic inequality by cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, expanding solar power, and decreasing fossil-fuel dependence.
- B. Build a clean-energy economy by investing in energy-efficient technologies, industries and approaches, especially Arizona solar.
- C. Require all publicly-funded building projects to use solar and alternative energy.
- D. Increase vehicle fuel efficiency and the number of electric vehicle fueling stations.
- E. Implement Tucson's 2030 District to reduce greenhouse gases, conserve water and address climate-change impacts; encourage similar programs countywide.
- F. Stop deforestation and reduce global warming through extensive reforestation.
- G. Limit the amount of carbon that polluters may emit.
- H. Restore and expand the renewable portfolio standards for utilities.
- I. Demand that the Arizona Corporation Commission reduce and control utility rates. Prohibit any entity that it regulates from making political campaign contributions, and prohibit ACC campaign donors from intervening at the ACC.
- J. Prohibit fracking.
- K. Appropriately fund the Arizona Department of Water Resources and institute sustainable water policies statewide, not just in Active Management Areas.

## **8. FIREARMS REGULATION**

Effective firearms regulation is long overdue. We cannot stand by while Americans terrorize and slaughter each other with guns. We must demand more from ourselves and our politicians.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Bar civilians from owning or using military-grade automatic and semiautomatic weapons, bump stocks, and magazines holding more than 10 rounds.
- B. Require universal background checks for all firearms purchases, include a waiting period for purchase, and close background-check loopholes.
- C. Institute licensing to own firearms that includes safety and proficiency training as a prerequisite to licensing.
- D. Prohibit those who perpetrate violence, including domestic abusers, from owning or possessing a firearm. We support use of Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO's) as an effective way to reduce suicides and domestic violence by allowing courts to temporarily remove firearms from those who pose a risk of harming themselves or others.
- E. Fully fund efforts to investigate and thwart domestic terror and white-supremacist organizations.

- F. Prohibit anyone under 18 from purchasing a firearm.
- G. Fund community-based intervention programs that can reduce gun violence and provide improved access to mental health services.

## 9. HEALTHCARE

Quality healthcare is a human right. The World Health Organization ranks the United States 37th for affordable healthcare availability and quality despite vastly outspending other nations. Millions of Americans cannot afford preventive care and treatment, in-home disability, eldercare and end-of-life care. More Americans go bankrupt from healthcare costs than any other reason. This is morally unacceptable and costly. We don't need to spend more on healthcare; we need to spend more sensibly.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Ensure affordable, comprehensive health insurance for all, including dental, vision, prenatal and mental-health care, abortion, and telehealth reimbursement. Medicare for All Act of 2021 provides the best solution.
- B. Protect women's rights to make their own reproductive-health decisions by keeping abortion accessible and legal.
- C. Increase access to mental health and substance-dependency treatment and decriminalize mental health-related crimes.
- D. Require immunizations for all public and private-school students, except where medically contraindicated.
- E. Increase funding for rural hospitals, including support for migrant and indigent care.
- F. Fully fund Indian Health Services.
- G. Fully fund veterans' healthcare.
- H. Fully fund women's healthcare: pre- and post-natal and reproductive, including abortion and contraceptives.
- I. Ensure pharmaceutical and health-care equality for everyone, regardless of race, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, disability or economic status.
- J. Permit assistance in dying under carefully considered and clearly specified conditions.
  - a. Increase access to insurance that enables patient autonomy by favoring home and community-based services over institutional care.
  - b. Increase access to state-regulated assisted-living facilities, at-home or residential eldercare, palliative care and hospice.
  - c. Guarantee that any assistance-in-dying law's "triggers" reflect individual end-of-life prognoses.
  - d. Ensure the state has capacity to enforce safeguards and any physician who is negligent in applying ordinary standards of care is subject to legal liability.
- K. Regulate the cost of medical care and hospital services.
- L. Reform the patent system for pharmaceuticals and medical devices.
- M. Support HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act).

## 10. HOUSING

Affordable housing is a human right and living in community creates positive outcomes. Making safe, secure and affordable housing available to all Americans should be our government's goal.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program for renters, provide higher funding limits for Section VIII vouchers, and mandate a portion of tax-increment financing (TIF) 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 programs to reduce evictions.

## **11. HUMAN RIGHTS**

Democrats are committed to pursuing equity and human rights for everyone. When we act to uplift communities that systemic discrimination harms, we advance the cause of universal human rights.

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 crisis of murdered and missing Indigenous women.
- C. Ensure women’s physical, economic and personal safety, and aggressively enforce Titles VII and IX.
- D. Support the Violence Against Women Act.
- E. Enact the Equality Act [N, HR5, S788 N].
- F. End discrimination against LGBTQ persons, including trans men and women in the active-duty military, and veterans. Prohibit schools from persecuting trans children, and repeal state laws that criminalize minors’ gender-conforming medical treatment.
- 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 city contractors, and enact a county nondiscrimination ordinance like the City of Tucson’s.
- I. Remove gendered and degrading language from government documents and statutes.
- J. Ensure universal civil and human rights, regardless of documentation.

## **12. IMMIGRATION AND THE BORDERLANDS**

Immigration is among our country’s defining characteristics. It makes us stronger and richer, both materially and culturally. Pima County is a vibrant, multiracial, multilingual, multicultural community sharing a border with Mexico. Racist, anti-immigrant, homophobic, misogynist policies and enforcement practices violate human and constitutional rights, disrupt commerce, and tear our borderland community’s cultural fabric.

The 30-foot wall along our southern border violates Tohono O’Odham and Hiaced O’Odham ancestral and cultural lands. It prevents Tribal people from moving freely, disrupts animal migration patterns, damages the natural desert environment, weakens both Arizona’s and Mexico’s economies, divides families and separates communities.

Therefore, we support the work to:

- A. Overhaul the U.S. immigration and naturalization system and permit undocumented people who have lived in the U.S. for at least five years to naturalize.
- B. Pass the DREAM Act.
- C. Repeal Arizona's SB1070.
- D. Reduce Border Patrol resources and increase asylum-processing resources.
- E. Reject collaboration between local law enforcement and federal agencies in immigration-law enforcement.
- F. Overhaul Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE). Withhold new funds from ICE until it stops violating civil rights and starts holding those who violate civil rights accountable.
- G. Increase aid to Latin American countries to reduce violence and improve living standards.
- H. Provide official municipal identification documents to all Tucson residents.
- I. Honor Tohono O'Odham Himdag (cultural heritage) and presence in this area and, with tribal guidance, remediate wall-construction damage.
- J. Remove the wall.
- K. Welcome and help refugees and immigrants.

### **13. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY**

The United States government has broken most, if not all, treaties with the Native Nations whose lands we occupy. Southern Arizona is the Tohono O'odham people's ancestral homeland, and the Tohono O'odham Nation's and Pascua Yaqui (Yoeme) Tribe's current homelands. Indigenous people did not become U.S. citizens until 1924, and could not vote in Arizona until 1948, establishing a legacy of voter suppression and disenfranchisement. Pima County must make Indigenous peoples' full voting accessibility a priority, taking their unique geographical and cultural challenges into account.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Recognize tribal villages and districts for voter registration, ballot and nominating petitions.
- B. Protect tribal land mining and environmental rights. Protect sacred sites on and off tribal lands.
- C. Guarantee 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 for their own well-being.
- D. Repair relationships with tribes by honoring all treaties. Treat tribal units as governments in transactions with local, state and the federal government.

### **14. JUSTICE IN POLICING**

It is time to re-invent policing in the US so that it achieves the objectives of public safety and meets the needs of our society. Fewer than five percent of 911 calls concern violent crimes, yet many American police departments have armed themselves with military weaponry, which they routinely and unnecessarily deploy against unarmed residents.

Municipalities spend lavishly on police arsenals instead of improving community conditions that lead desperate people to commit crimes. We over-police communities of color and subject their residents to disproportionate arrest, prosecution and imprisonment. Officer-involved shootings and uses of force disproportionately injure and kill non-white people. Prosecutors seldom criminally charge officers for killing an unarmed person. The qualified immunity doctrine shields police officers from civil liability for civil-rights violations.

Police officers without the appropriate and applicable training are dispatched to situations involving people in mental health or substance-dependence crises. Law-enforcement training reinforces a warrior culture that casts citizens – especially those of color – as constant potential threats, which prevents officers from establishing trust with the communities they serve. This not only endangers communities, but can leave officers feeling isolated, alienated and fearful, jeopardizing their physical and mental health, fracturing their families, and too often, contributing to suicides.

To address these problems, we work to compel federal, state and local governments to:

- A. Re-allocate portions of police budgets to entities that lift people out of poverty, unemployment, ill health, and food, housing and educational insecurity.

- B. Create unarmed community-response departments to handle assistance calls involving people experiencing physical and mental-health crises.
- C. Route assistance calls through dispatchers outside the police department trained in crisis management, mental health, first aid and substance disorders, who would determine the appropriate responding agency.
- D. Conduct thorough background checks and mental-health screenings on all police applicants. Reject applicants terminated by law-enforcement agencies or who resigned in lieu of termination. Reject applicants allied with white-supremacist groups.
- E. Require all officers to complete a two-year academy program in community-specific linguistic and cultural training, implicit and explicit bias, de-escalation, conflict resolution, and protecting every community member's wellbeing.
- F. Prohibit racial profiling in policing. Prohibit pre-textual stops and "no-knock" warrants.
- G. Create independent civilian oversight boards with authority over officer discipline and termination.
- H. Remove police departments' military-style weapons and equipment.
- I. Ban police use of physical and chemical restraints that hamper breathing.
- J. Equip all police officers with body cameras that officers cannot turn off while responding to a call. Create and administer unambiguous punishments for officers who knowingly violate this policy.
- K. Require police agencies to develop comprehensive use-of-force policies, mandating that officers always use minimal force to subdue individuals.
- L. Require police departments and their personnel to reflect the diversity in the communities they serve.
- M. Abolish the qualified immunity doctrine, thereby enabling people to hold police officers liable for violating a person's constitutional rights.
- N. Limit police union contracts to collective-bargaining issues.

## **15. PEACE**

With power comes responsibility. While our military must always be ready and able to defend us, we must first pursue peaceful diplomatic resolutions. We must consider our country's global impact and end our unsavory pattern of intervening in foreign conflicts.

Because we value peace, we will work to:

- A. Prioritize effective diplomacy over military action. Increase diplomatic spending and staffing and reduce military spending.
- B. Stop using regime change and land grabs to acquire resources.
- C. Pursue a credible, verifiable end to the production, deployment and use of nuclear weapons, including our own.
- D. Heed our military leaders' warnings about climate change, and shift resources to mitigating its impact.
- E. Prioritize cybersecurity to meet the level of threats we now face.
- F. Reinstate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

## **16. PUBLIC HEALTH and SAFETY**

Federal, state and local governments are responsible for preventing disease, providing pollution-free water and air, assuring food safety, medication safety and effectiveness, and the security and safety of our homes, roads, bridges, rails and airways. Public-health programs protect and improve the health of individuals and communities by diagnosing health problems and hazards, educating and informing people about health, and enabling individuals and mobilizing community partnerships to solve health problems.

Successful public-health initiatives produced more than 90 percent of America's 20<sup>th</sup> Century gains in health and life expectancy. But the COVID-19 pandemic revealed glaring disparities in healthcare access and outcomes. A public-health emergency exists at this time in our history. We have seen as never before how social isolation, violence, racism, trauma and food insecurity damage communities and individuals. This demands a major injection of fiscal and human resources into public-health programs.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Increase funding for the agencies that respond to public-health emergencies: the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Department of Homeland Security (including the Federal Emergency Management Agency), and the National Weather Service. Ensure that departments and agencies operate objectively, without political interference, and promote anti-racist policies.
- B. Restore and strengthen the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to protect, maintain and restore the quality of our air, land and water.
- C. Upgrade U.S. infrastructure via comprehensive legislative and policy initiatives that make it safer, more reliable, accessible, efficient, and environmentally sound.

## **17. THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND ITS ABILITY TO FUNCTION**

Relying on the fantasy that markets solve all problems, conservatives minimize government's role by privatizing systems such as the United States Postal Service, prisons, and the military, in whole or in part. Conservatives' tax cuts benefit corporations and wealthy individuals while depriving government of funds it needs to effectively serve the public. For example, reducing the IRS budget has limited the agency's ability to investigate and catch tax cheats. Regulatory agencies such as the FDA, USDA and NTSB must rely on industries they regulate for income, through fines and fees, while allowing industries to investigate themselves.

By installing political operatives who overruled competent experts, the previous administration undermined key government agencies' effectiveness, including the State Department, the Agriculture Department and intelligence services. This drove many dedicated professionals out of government service, gravely weakening our government.

To restore our government's ability to fulfill its role, Democrats will work to:

- A. Generate revenue that government needs to function effectively and promote general welfare through an efficient and fair tax structure, closing loopholes that benefit corporations and the rich.
- B. Authorize, fund and staff the IRS and state and local tax agencies, so they can collect all legally-owed taxes.
- C. Eliminate the two-thirds vote requirement for legislation to increase Arizona taxes.
- D. Restore government functions that have moved into the private sector, starting with privatized functions in the U.S. Postal Service, Veterans Administration and the federal prison system.
- E. Eliminate the conflicts of interest that arise when regulatory agencies treat the entities they regulate as paying customers. Adequately fund and staff all regulatory agencies so that they can meet their public welfare responsibilities.
- F. Prevent political interference in our non-political government agencies' work. Rebuild government-employee morale and invite highly-valued professionals who left government service during the prior administration to return.

## **18. TECHNOLOGY**

Rapid technological advances affect every aspect of our lives, driving profound changes in communication, manufacturing, leisure, learning and healthcare. Because advances make both information and misinformation more available, government must ensure that Americans enjoy technology's benefits while preventing or mitigating technology's damage.

Our government must promote improved broadband access and monitor technology's impact on jobs and the environment. The government must support research into the ways technological advances improve and/or harm human relationships, physical and psychological health, and national security.

Therefore, we will work to:

- A. Continually upgrade cyber security, protect privacy and regulate social media.
- B. Ensure net neutrality.
- C. Enforce antitrust statutes against platform monopolies.
- D. End trafficking in all personal information.
- E. Ensure high-speed Internet access in rural and underserved communities.
- F. Support policies governing the ethical use of digital technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) for workforce transformation and weaponry, and support policies that protect against rights abuses.
- G. Support programs that help workers transition to new jobs when technology eliminates their old ones.
- H. Authorize and fund National Institutes of Health (NIH) research on new technologies' physical, psychological and cognitive effects.
- I. Meaningfully address the rise in disinformation and media manipulation that affect elections, public health and domestic security.
- J. Require public participation in technology-infrastructure siting and construction.

**END**