

ALBANY COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

Adopted - April 13, 2024

Preamble

The Albany County Democratic Party continues to pursue “a more perfect Union.” In that spirit, Democrats are committed to government of the people, by the people, and for the people and to a world in which all people have the opportunity to lead healthy, fulfilling lives. Democrats have given us Social Security, Medicare, and a constitutional republic that defeated fascism and outlasted Soviet communism. Today’s issues, including the threat to dismantle our democracy, the climate crisis, and other challenges to our peace and prosperity, urgently require democratic leadership, which we offer with future generations in mind. To make our County, our State, and our Country stronger, safer, and more equitable, we adopt the following platform.

1. Defending Democracy

The success of our democracy relies on active citizens committed to constitutional norms and fair play, regardless of party.

A. Donald Trump and his supporters are an existential threat to democracy. It is our civic duty — through the electoral process — to ensure that they never hold power again.

B. Elections should be free, fair, and secure. We support the federal Voting Rights Act. Redistricting should be by non-partisan commissions. We oppose frequent Republican efforts to reduce turnout or hinder voting by particular groups of citizens, including indigenous Americans, minorities, the homeless, and the poor. We support restoring voting rights for those who have completed their criminal sentences.

C. We must end the dominance of money in politics. Corporations are not people. Dark money, opaque political action committees, and wealth used to effectively buy offices are symptoms of a corrupt political system that is bought and paid for. All political contributions and donations should be limited and reported. We support overturning the Citizens United decision.

D. We favor changing our state constitution to make citizen initiatives easier.

E. In keeping with the founding principle of equal representation, we support abolishing the Electoral College and ending the filibuster in the U.S. Senate.

2. Combatting Inequity: Equality, Prosperity, and Workers' Rights

We believe that our government is fundamental to fighting inequity. Equality for all Americans means equal access to safe and healthy communities. We believe that a more equitable society benefits all Americans.

A. We support a living wage for all workers, closing the gender wage gap, a safety net for those suffering hardship and infirmity, and universal health care. We support affordable day care and elder care, paid sick leave and parental leave, affordable housing, and affordable internet access. We support the right to a safe, healthy, respectful workplace. We support wage increases for Wyoming government employees, including but not limited to educators, firefighters, teachers, snowplow drivers, and law enforcement.

B. We support investment in Wyoming's economy and new technologies to promote job creation, retain workers in our state, and to ensure the continued economic power and leadership of our state. We support Wyoming as a technological and environmental leader in clean energy.

C. We support infrastructure investments to improve health in our homes, workplaces, and schools, including safe drinking water, clean air, and a healthy environment.

3. Economic Policy

Our market economy produces abundance. Good public policy shares that abundance and enforces reasonable rules for markets.

A. Our current tax system favors capital over labor, encourages financial manipulation, is complex for everyone, and penalizes work. We support fundamental reform of federal taxes to include a constitutionally limited, universal, and uniform wealth tax. Income taxes should be made fair and simple.

B. Government should promote the general welfare by supporting the elderly, helping the young, providing education, assisting the poor, and providing health care or access to health care for all.

C. Work and access to work are the main source of security for most Americans. We favor reducing barriers to employment at living wages. We support the freedom of small businesses to earn a living. We support workers' rights to unionize and collectively bargain. Government workers should have market pay and benefits, including in Wyoming. Wyoming government pensions should include cost-of-living adjustments.

D. We oppose corporate welfare.

E. We support strong consumer protection, starting with antitrust laws.

F. We support the return of passenger rail to Wyoming.

G. We recognize the value of public amenities in retaining and attracting a vibrant workforce and support collecting tax dollars to improve the quality of life in our communities.

4. Education

Quality education, rooted in the public school system, is essential to the economic, moral, and political health of our country. We support universal access to free education from pre-school through grade 12 and adequate financial

support for college, university, or vocational education, without burdening students with lifetime debt.

A. We support education and teaching as professions, worth good pay and benefits.

B. We support educators' rights to voluntarily organize and collectively bargain for pay and benefits.

C. We call on the legislature to fully fund public education, community colleges, and the University of Wyoming as required by the state constitution.

D. We oppose diversion of public school funds for non-public schools.

E. We oppose efforts by ideological or religious groups to take control of public schools to implement their own agendas. Public schools should operate for the broad-based interests of students and families, with evidence-based curricula and methods, and with access to a wide variety of age-appropriate books and learning materials. We oppose banning books.

F. Fully funded higher education should not enmesh students in decades of debt. We support allowing student loan debt to be discharged in bankruptcies.

G. We support academic freedom, freedom of expression, and diversity of opinion for the faculty, staff, and students at the University of Wyoming. We support academic freedom in selecting and designing courses and content.

H. We support secure schools protected by professional law officers.

5. Immigration

Immigration strengthens our nation and enhances our culture. Our nation's spirit, epitomized by the Statue of Liberty, is to take in the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

A. Our immigration system must be updated and made more humane. We support ending irregular immigration and expanding legal immigration.

B. Persons in the U.S. waiting for immigration claims to be adjudicated should have access to work permits, identification, and social services. The Immigration and Naturalization Service should add resources to adjudicate cases fairly and quickly.

C. Provide an immediate path to citizenship for the Dreamers, long-time immigrants brought to the U.S. as children.

6. Safe and Orderly Society

A fair and impartial justice system is necessary if our communities are to be free of fear, oppression, and violence. Everyone should be judged by the content of their character and the merits of their actions — equal in the eyes of the law.

A. We oppose private prisons and immigrant detention centers.

B. We support a faster justice system — speedy justice — so long as rights are protected.

C. We will promote police training, accountability, and reform to minimize conflicts.

D. We support reasonable alternatives to prison, including restorative justice.

E. We support legalizing marijuana.

F. We oppose the death penalty.

G. We demand adequate funding for public defenders.

H. We recognize the rights of the disability community to have full access to the justice system.

7. Equality in the Equality State

The fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution must be recognized equally for every person across our country. We demand equal access and protection under the law, equality for women in all aspects of life, and oppose discrimination in all forms.

A. We will protect reproductive rights, including access to abortion. We will support reproductive health care for all.

B. We support legislation to include LGBTQ+ citizens under the protections of existing anti-discrimination laws.

C. We support the rights of the disability community to have full access to all spaces, equal wages, and full and equal human rights.

D. We support ending systemic racism and inequalities. We should strive to reach the ideals of our founding documents.

E. We support examining the roles of race and gender in our history, in education, and in social discourse.

F. We support marriage equality.

G. We support increasing opportunities for marginalized groups in leadership roles in our communities and encourage their involvement as candidates for office.

H. We support the Violence Against Women Act and the Women's Health Protection Act.

I. We promote and respect women's full and equal participation in families, relationships, society, workplaces, and government.

J. We will work to eliminate the gender wage gap.

8. Native Sovereignty

Our government has a legal and moral obligation toward Native American Tribes and Indigenous communities. We are committed to honoring, upholding, and strengthening Wyoming's trust obligations to Tribal Nations and communities, as enshrined in treaties, federal statutes, and case law. We pledge to find our commonalities, celebrate our differences, and creatively work together for our shared future and that of generations to come.

A. We recognize and support the sovereignty of Tribal Nations and the protection of Tribal lands, spiritual artifacts and places, resources, and treaty rights.

B. We honor, respect, and support the values, traditions, history, and cultural practices of Indigenous peoples in Wyoming.

C. We support efforts to eliminate violence against Indigenous women.

9. Healthcare

Accessible, quality healthcare is a human right. Promoting the general welfare is a constitutional obligation of our government and healthcare is integral to public welfare.

A. We support creating a universal health care system.

B. We will work to protect women's access to reproductive health services, including all forms of contraception and safe, legal abortion.

C. We will work to expand Medicaid coverage in Wyoming as authorized by the Affordable Care Act.

D. We believe increasing access to mental health and substance-dependency treatment is essential for healthy communities. We support decriminalizing mental health-related offenses.

E. We believe medical professionals should guide decisions on public health and safety, including vaccinations and masking.

F. We support ending healthcare deserts in our state.

10. A Healthy and Sustainable Earth

Our highest priority must be protecting this planet which all humanity calls home. For our descendants to enjoy clean air and water as well as healthy landscapes and abundant wildlife, we must come together to protect and conserve our natural resources and meet the challenges of climate disruption. The climate crisis is accelerating. There is still hope, but only if it is accompanied by action.

A. We support renewable energy sources and energy conservation to reduce our carbon footprint. We recognize the role of renewable energy and energy efficiency in economic growth, sustainability, and diversification.

B. We support taking into account climate change adaptation when planning for food systems, energy production, and ecological integrity.

C. We will protect our aquifers and rivers.

D. We support conservation and protection of our waterways, native vegetation, wildlife, and habitats, for their natural, cultural, and economic benefits.

E. We support public lands, open space, outdoor recreation, and tourism for health, enjoyment, and economic development.

F. We support job transition programs for Wyoming workers impacted by the shift to new energy sources.

11. Freedom of Speech and the Press

Free expression is a basic right of the American people. Whether it is through print, internet platforms, or public speech and protest, that right must be protected.

- A. We will work to prevent the banning of books.
- B. We will protect the right to assemble peacefully.
- C. We support improving government transparency.
- D. We believe media organizations should be accurate and honest.

12. Second Amendment Rights

We support the constitutional guarantee of our citizens' right to bear arms. We will protect our citizens' Second Amendment rights through responsible gun ownership legislation.

- A. We support requiring background checks before acquiring firearms.
- B. We will work to restrict access to firearms by domestic abusers, violent felons, and the mentally ill, with appropriate due process.
- C. We oppose armed vigilante groups.
- D. We support regulating military-style high-capacity weapons of war.

13. Foreign Relations and National Defense

With great power comes great responsibility. The United States should:

- A. Not start unjust wars, not overthrow governments, and never support authoritarians, dictators, or war crimes.
- B. Follow the Constitution, so that Congress authorizes any war or military intervention.
- C. Work within the United Nations when possible and work with responsible allies when possible.
- D. Support peace between Israelis and Palestinians based on equal human rights, mutual respect, and the complete renunciation of terror and war crimes.
- E. Support Ukraine and Taiwan in resisting aggression while avoiding direct conflicts with Russia or China.
- F. We support the struggles of Iranian and Afghan women to freedom and equal rights.
- G. We call on all nations to end atrocities, war crimes, and starvation across the world, including Sudan, Myanmar, and Nigeria.
- H. Promote peace and mutual understanding through robust diplomacy, humanitarian foreign aid, and educational exchanges.
- I. Support fair international trade agreements that recognize the right to bargain collectively and prohibit child labor, forced labor, and discrimination in employment.
- J. Support agreements regarding shared global interests, such as climate change, oceans, and nuclear arms control.

IN CLOSING

We urge all Democrats and all citizens to get and stay involved,
hold elected officials accountable, volunteer for boards and commissions,
and run for office. Above all, VOTE!