NAACP ANALYSIS
of the 2016 PARTY PLATFORMS of the
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC &
THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN PARTIES

INTRODUCTION

August, 2016

Dear NAACP Members and Friends:

A political party’s platform is perhaps the best reflection of the party’s values as illustrated in the public policy it promotes. It lays out their values, their goals, their priorities, and their core beliefs. Both the Democratic and Republican platform committees held hearings in 2016 to gain insight into the priorities of different constituencies. Both parties considered testimony from a broad spectrum of individuals and groups including the NAACP. The platform committees reviewed common and contrasting views, mixed them with historical party priorities as well as long-standing party goals and beliefs, and came out with a final product – the party platform. Both parties unveiled their platform proposals just prior to their national conventions in the summer of 2016. The platforms were then considered and ultimately ratified by the entire body of voting delegates from across our Nation to the conventions.

The NAACP submitted written testimony to both the Democratic and Republican platform committees (the Republican party calls the committee which designs its platform its “Resolutions Committee”) and asked that the NAACP National Public Policy priorities for our Nation be incorporated into their final products. Our testimony was drawn from our National public policy priorities, which are available on the NAACP website at www.naacp.org, under the Washington Bureau section. Copies of the written testimony to both the Democratic and
Republican platform committees are available by contacting the NAACP Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940. We were further provided the opportunity to testify in person before the Democratic platform in June, 2016. Copies of our oral testimony are also available.

The final platform documents, which are then voted on by the delegates to the conventions, reflect the goals and public policy priorities of the two parties for the next 4 years. Because these documents address national policy and were approved of by delegates from around our country, it is also illustrative to look at the composition of the delegates themselves. At this year’s Republican convention, there were 18 African American delegates out of 2,472 total, comprising less than 1%. At the Democratic National Convention 1,182 of the total 4,766 delegates, or just under 25%, were African American.

What is printed on the following pages are passages, reprinted verbatim, from the Democratic and Republican 2016 Party Platforms (with the specific pages noted in the footnotes). The issues that are included here reflect policy priorities of the NAACP as established by the National Board of Directors and through the NAACP national convention resolutions process. To review the party platforms in their entirety, members of the public are encouraged to go to each party’s website –https://www.demconvention.com/platform/ and https://www.gop.com/the-2016-republican-party-platform/ Of course, the NAACP Washington Bureau is also always happy to answer any questions or take any comments you may have at (202) 463-2940 or washingtonbureau@naacpnet.org.

Sincerely,

Hilary O. Shelton
Director, NAACP Washington Bureau &
Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy
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**CIVIL RIGHTS / RACIAL JUSTICE**

**Issue**

Racism / Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other attribute.

**Democratic Platform**

“Democrats will fight to end institutional and systemic racism in our society. We will challenge and dismantle the structures that define lasting racial, economic, political, and social inequity. Democrats will promote racial justice through fair, just, and equitable governing of all public-serving institutions and in the formation of public policy...We will push for a societal transformation to make it clear that black lives matter and that there is no place for racism in our country.”¹

“Democrats will always fight to end discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. We need to promote civility and speak out against bigotry and other forms of intolerance that have entered our political discourse. It is unacceptable to target, defame, or exclude anyone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. While freedom of expression is a fundamental constitutional principle, we must condemn hate speech that creates a fertile climate for violence.”²

**Republican Platform**

“Democrats support removing the Confederate battle flag from public properties, recognizing that it is a symbol of our nation's racist past that has no place in our present or our future.”³

**Republican Platform**

“We denounce bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic prejudice, and religious intolerance. Therefore, we oppose discrimination based on race, sex, religion, creed, disability, or national origin and support statutes to end such discrimination.”⁴

“We support laws to confirm the longstanding American tradition that religious individuals and institutions can educate young people, receive government benefits, and participate in public debates without having to check their religious beliefs at the door.”⁵

**Issue**

The Confederate flag

**Democratic Platform**

“Democrats support removing the Confederate battle flag from public properties, recognizing that it is a symbol of our nation's racist past that has no place in our present or our future.”³

**Republican Platform**

No mention

**Issue**

Equal Opportunity Programs

**Democratic Platform**

No mention

**Republican Platform**

“(W)e reject unfair preferences, quotas, and set-asides as forms of discrimination.”⁶

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¹ P. 14
² P. 18
³ P. 14
⁴ P. 9
⁵ Pp. 11-12
⁶ P. 9
Democratic Platform

“Democrats will fight for the continued development of sex discrimination law to cover LGBT people. We will also fight for comprehensive federal non-discrimination protections for all LGBT Americans, to guarantee equal rights in areas such as housing, employment, public accommodations, credit, jury service, education, and federal funding. We will oppose all state efforts to discriminate against LGBT individuals, including legislation that restricts the right to access public spaces. We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate. We will combat LGBT youth homelessness and improve school climates. We will support LGBT elders, ensure access to necessary health care, and protect LGBT people from violence—including ending the crisis of violence against transgender Americans. We will also promote LGBT human rights and ensure America’s foreign policy is inclusive of LGBT people around the world.”

Republican Platform

“…to ensure these entities do not face government discrimination because of their views on marriage and family.”

Democratic Platform

“Democrats applaud last year’s decision by the Supreme Court that recognized that LGBT people—like other Americans—have the right to marry the person they love. But there is still much work to be done. LGBT kids continue to be bullied at school, restaurants can refuse to serve transgender people, and same-sex couples are at risk of being evicted from their homes. That is unacceptable and must change. Democrats will fight for the continued development of sex discrimination law to cover LGBT people. We will also fight for comprehensive federal non-discrimination protections for all LGBT Americans, to guarantee equal rights in areas such as housing, employment, public accommodations, credit, jury service, education, and federal funding. We will oppose all state efforts to discriminate against LGBT individuals, including legislation that restricts the right to access public spaces. We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate.”

Republican Platform

“Our laws and our government’s regulations should recognize marriage as the union of one man and one woman and actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous society. For that reason, as explained elsewhere in this platform, we do not accept the Supreme Court’s redefinition of marriage and we urge its reversal, whether through judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment returning control over marriage to the states.”

“Traditional marriage and family, based on marriage between one man and one woman, is the foundation for a free society and has for millennia been entrusted with rearing children and instilling cultural values. We condemn the Supreme Court’s ruling in United States v. Windsor, which wrongly removed the ability of Congress to define marriage policy in federal law. We also condemn the Supreme Court’s lawless ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges…”

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7 P. 19
8 P. 19
9 P. 28
10 Pp. 31-32
11 P. 11
Democratic Platform

“We have a profound moral and legal responsibility to the Indian tribes...That is why the Democratic Party will fulfill, honor, and strengthen to the highest extent possible the United States’ fundamental trust responsibility, grounded in the Constitution, treaties, and case law to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. We recognize the inherent sovereignty of Indian nations and will work to enact laws and policies that strengthen, not reduce, the powers of Indian nations over people who interact with them in Indian Country. We will work on a government-to-government basis to continue to empower Indian nations, and to provide sufficient and meaningful resources to Indian tribes to bolster economic development and self-determination. As Democrats, we will constantly seek to ensure that American Indian communities are safe, healthy, educated, innovative, and prosperous. We will restore tribal lands by continuing to streamline the land-into-trust process and recognize the right of all tribes to protect their lands, air, and waters. We will continue to work on a government-to-government basis to address chronic underfunding, and provide meaningful resources and financial investments that will empower American Indian tribes through increased economic development and infrastructure improvements on tribal lands. ..We will invest in Indian education from early childhood through higher education... We will build on the important provisions in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which reaffirmed the right of Indian tribes to prosecute perpetrators regardless of race who commit domestic violence on tribal lands. Democrats will continue to work to address criminal justice gaps that undermine the safety of tribal communities.... we support a robust expansion of the health care provided by the Indian Health Service. We will work ...to ensure that all American Indians have adequate, safe, and affordable access to primary care providers, including oral health, mental health practitioners, and substance abuse treatment options.... We will strengthen Indian voting rights, including improved access to polling locations. We will build on federal programs to reduce the disproportionate incarceration of American Indian and Alaska Native men and women, reduce disparities in prison sentencing, protect the religious rights of Native prisoners, reduce barriers to prisoner reentry, and offer access to housing and employment upon reentry.... Democrats also support efforts for self-governance and self-determination of Native Hawaiians.”

Republican Platform

"Based on both treaty and other law, the federal government has a unique government-to-government relationship with and trust responsibility for Indian Tribal Governments, American Indians, and Alaska Natives...Ineffective federal programs deprive American Indians of the services they need, and long-term failures threaten to undermine tribal sovereignty itself. ...We respect the tribal governments as the voice of their communities and encourage federal, state, and local governments to heed those voices in developing programs and partnerships to improve the quality of life for American Indians and their neighbors in their communities. Republicans believe that economic self-sufficiency is the ultimate answer to the challenges confronting Indian country.”

“Federal and state regulations that thwart job creation must be withdrawn or redrawn so that tribal governments acting on behalf of American Indians are not disadvantaged.... Native communities should have the same authority as state governments in labor matters, so that union bosses and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) cannot undermine the authority of tribal governments.. Republicans recognize that each tribe has the right of consultation before any new regulatory policy is implemented on tribal land... Better partnerships will help us to expand economic opportunity, deliver top-flight education to future generations, modernize and improve the Indian Health Service to make it more responsive to local needs, and build essential infrastructure in Indian country in cooperation with tribal neighbors. Like all Americans, American Indians want safe communities for their families; but inadequate resources and neglect have, over time, allowed criminal activities to plague Indian country...Everyone’s due process and civil rights must be safeguarded.”

Democratic Platform

“Offensive school and sports mascots that reflect derogatory stereotypes and that perpetuate racism. “

Republican Platform

No Mention
Democratic Platform

“(W)e must finally take sensible action to address gun violence.”¹⁶
“(W)e will expand and strengthen background checks and close dangerous loopholes in our current laws; repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA) to revoke the dangerous legal immunity protections gun makers and sellers now enjoy; and keep weapons of war—such as assault weapons and large capacity ammunition magazines (LCAM’s)—off our streets. We will fight back against attempts to make it harder for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to revoke federal licenses from law breaking gun dealers, and ensure guns do not fall into the hands of terrorists, intimate partner abusers, other violent criminals, and those with severe mental health issues. There is insufficient research on effective gun prevention policies, which is why the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must have the resources it needs to study gun violence as a public health issue.”¹⁷

Republican Platform

“We support firearm reciprocity legislation to recognize the right of law-abiding Americans to carry firearms to protect themselves and their families in all 50 states. We support constitutional carry statutes and salute the states that have passed them. We oppose ill-conceived laws that would restrict magazine capacity or ban the sale of the most popular and common modern rifle. We also oppose any effort to deprive individuals of their right to keep and bear arms without due process of law. We condemn frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers and the current Administration’s illegal harassment of firearm dealers. We oppose federal licensing or registration of law-abiding gun owners, registration of ammunition, and restoration of the ill-fated Clinton gun ban.”¹⁸

¹⁶ P. 39
¹⁷ P. 39
¹⁸ Pp.12-13
CRIMINAL JUSTICE, Continued

**Issue**
Mandatory Minimum Sentences / Sentencing reform

**Democratic Platform**
“We will reform mandatory minimum sentences...”\(^{19}\)
“The “war on drugs” has led to the imprisonment of millions of Americans, disproportionately people of color, without reducing drug use. Whenever possible, Democrats will prioritize prevention and treatment over incarceration when tackling addiction and substance use disorder. We will build on effective models of drug courts, veterans’ courts, and other diversionary programs that seek to give nonviolent offenders opportunities for rehabilitation as opposed to incarceration.”\(^{20}\)

**Republican Platform**
“Along with diversion of first-time, nonviolent offenders to community sentencing, accountability courts, drug courts, veterans treatment courts, and guidance by faith-based institutions with proven track records of rehabilitation, our platform emphasized restorative justice to make the victim whole and put the offender on the right path. As variants of these reforms are undertaken in many states, we urge the Congress to learn from what works. In the past, judicial discretion about sentences led to serious mistakes concerning dangerous criminals. Mandatory minimum sentencing became an important tool for keeping them off the streets. Modifications to it should be targeted toward particular categories, especially nonviolent offenders and persons with drug, alcohol, or mental health issues, and should require disclosure by the courts of any judicial departure from the state’s sentencing requirements.”\(^{22}\)

**Issue**
Private prisons

**Democratic Platform**
“We will... close private prisons and detention centers.”\(^{21}\)

**Republican Platform**
No mention

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\(^{19}\) P. 15
\(^{20}\) P. 16
\(^{21}\) P. 15
\(^{22}\) Pp. 39 - 40
Democratic Platform
“We will abolish the death penalty, which has proven to be a cruel and unusual form of punishment. It has no place in the United States of America. The application of the death penalty is arbitrary and unjust. The cost to taxpayers far exceeds those of life imprisonment. It does not deter crime. And, exonerations show a dangerous lack of reliability for what is an irreversible punishment. We have been inspired by the movements for criminal justice that directly address the discriminatory treatment of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and American Indians to rebuild trust in the criminal justice system.” 23

Democratic Platform
“We will work with police chiefs to invest in training for officers on issues such as de-escalation and the creation of national guidelines for the appropriate use of force.” 24
“We will require the Department of Justice to investigate all questionable or suspicious police-involved shootings, and we will support states and localities who help make those investigations and prosecutions more transparent, including through reforming the grand jury process.” 25

Democratic Platform
“We will encourage better police-community relations, require the use of body cameras...” 26

Republican Platform
“The constitutionality of the death penalty is firmly settled by its explicit mention in the Fifth Amendment. With the murder rate soaring in our great cities, we condemn the Supreme Court’s erosion of the right of the people to enact capital punishment in their states.” 27

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24 P. 15
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<td>Militarization of local law</td>
<td>“(We will) stop the use of weapons of war that have no place in our communities.”</td>
<td>No mention</td>
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<td>enforcement</td>
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<td>Racial profiling</td>
<td>“We will end racial profiling that targets individuals solely on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin, which is un-American and counterproductive.”</td>
<td>No mention</td>
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<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>“We should report national data on policing strategies and provide greater transparency and accountability.”</td>
<td>No mention</td>
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<td>Overall Criminal Justice Reform</td>
<td>Democrats are committed to reforming our criminal justice system and ending mass incarceration. Something is profoundly wrong when almost a quarter of the world’s prison population is in the United States, even though our country has less than five percent of the world’s population. We will reform mandatory minimum sentences and close private prisons and detention centers. Research and evidence, rather than slogans and sound bites, must guide criminal justice policies. We will rebuild the bonds of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve... We will require the Department of Justice to investigate all questionable or suspicious police-involved shootings, and we will support states and localities who help make those investigations and prosecutions more transparent...</td>
<td>“(We urge caution in the creation of new “crimes” and a bipartisan presidential commission to purge the Code and the body of regulations of old “crimes.” We call for mens rea elements in the definition of any new crimes to protect Americans who, in violating a law, act unknowingly or without criminal intent. We urge Congress to codify the Common Law’s Rule of Lenity, which requires courts to interpret unclear statutes in favor of a defendant.”</td>
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CRIMINAL JUSTICE, Continued

Issue
Successful reentry of returning citizens

Democratic Platform
“We will remove barriers to help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully re-enter society by “banning the box,” expanding reentry programs, and restoring voting rights. We think the next President should take executive action to ban the box for federal employers and contractors, so applicants have an opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications before being asked about their criminal records.”  

Republican Platform
“We encourage states to offer opportunities for literacy and vocational education to prepare prisoners for release to the community.”

Issue
Adequate Counsel

Democratic Platform
“We will assist states in providing a system of public defense that is adequately resourced and which meets American Bar Association standards.”

Republican Platform
No mention

Issue
Civil asset forfeiture

Democratic Platform
“(W)e will reform the civil asset forfeiture system to protect people and remove perverse incentives for law enforcement to “police for a profit.”

Republican Platform
“We call on Congress and state legislatures to enact reforms to protect law-abiding citizens against abusive asset forfeiture tactics.”

Issue
Violence Against Women

Democratic Platform
“We will continue to support the Violence Against Women Act to provide law enforcement with the tools it needs to combat this problem. We will support comprehensive services for survivors of violence and increase prevention efforts in our communities and on our campuses.”

Republican Platform
No mention

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33 P. 16
34 P. 15
35 P. 16
36 P. 38
37 P. 40
38 P. 15
CRIMINAL JUSTICE, Continued

**Democratic Platform**

“The Democratic Party supports legal immigration, within reasonable limits, that meets the needs of families, communities, and the economy as well as maintains the United States’ role as a beacon of hope for people seeking safety, freedom, and security.”

“The current quota system discriminates against certain immigrants, including immigrants of color, and needs to be reformed to the realities of the 21st century. And there are real questions about our detention and deportation policies that must be addressed.”

“We should repeal the 3-year, 10-year and permanent bars, which often force persons in mixed status families into the heartbreaking dilemma of either pursuing a green card by leaving the country and their loved ones behind, or remaining in the shadows. We will work with Congress to end the forced and prolonged expulsion from the country that these immigrants endure when trying to adjust their status.”

“We must fix family backlogs and defend against those who would exclude or eliminate legal immigration avenues and denigrate immigrants.”

“We believe immigration enforcement must be humane and consistent with our values.”

“We must take particular care with children, which is why we should guarantee government-funded counsel for unaccompanied children in immigration courts.”

“We will promote best practices among local law enforcement, in terms of how they collaborate with federal authorities, to ensure that they maintain and build trust between local law enforcement and the communities they serve.”

“We reject attempts to impose a religious test to bar immigrants or refugees from entering the United States.”

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**Republican Platform**

“(W)e both encourage the preservation of heritage tongues and support English as the nation’s official language, a unifying force essential for the advancement of immigrant communities and our nation as a whole.”

“We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed it.”

“(W)e support building a wall along our southern border and protecting all ports of entry.”

“(W)e support stiffer penalties, such as a mandatory minimum sentence of five years, for any illegal alien who illegally re-enters our nation after already having been deported.”

“(W)e support the right of the states to enact laws deterring illegal aliens from residing within their states.”

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39 Pp. 16 - 17
40 P. 17
41 P. 17
42 P. 17
43 P. 17
44 P. 17
45 P. 18
46 P. 18

47 P. 25
48 Pp. 25-26
49 P. 26
50 P. 26
51 P. 26
52 P. 26
**Democratic Platform**

"...it is long past time to close this racial wealth gap. Disparities in wealth cannot be solved by the free market alone, but instead, the federal government must play a role in eliminating systemic barriers to wealth accumulation for different racial groups and improving opportunities for people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds to build wealth. Federal policies must remove barriers to achieving sustainable homeownership, provide for greater diversity in federal and state contracting practices, incentivize and expand access to retirement investment programs, increase opportunities for quality jobs and education, and challenge the deeply rooted structures that perpetuate and exacerbate current disparities and ultimately stagnate the nation’s economic growth and security."\(^{53}\)

**Republican Platform**

"We will fight for Congress to adopt, and for the states to ratify, a Balanced Budget Amendment which imposes a cap limiting spending..."\(^{54}\)
Democratic Platform

“Eradication of Poverty

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

"...Democrats will protect proven programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)."

"The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program should be expanded for low-wage workers not raising children, including extending the credit to young workers starting at age 21. The Child Tax Credit (CTC) should be expanded, for example, by making more of it refundable, or indexed to inflation to stem the erosion of the credit."

"(W)e will oppose...plans to slash funding and block grant Medicaid and SNAP..."

Republican Platform

"Democrats propose to evaluate a poverty program by whether it actually reduces poverty and increases the personal independence of its participants."

"We propose instead the dynamic compassion of work requirements in a growing economy, where opportunity takes the place of a hand-out, where true self-esteem can grow from the satisfaction of a job well done. We call for removal of structural impediments which progressives throw in the path of poor people: Over-regulation of start-up enterprises, excessive licensing requirements, needless restrictions on formation of schools and day-care centers serving neighborhood families, and restrictions on providing public services in fields like transport and sanitation that close the opportunity door to all but a favored few."

Democratic Platform

“Equal Pay for women

“"We believe in at last guaranteeing equal pay for women.""

"We are committed to ensuring full equality for women. Democrats will fight to end gender discrimination in the areas of education, employment, health care, or any other sphere. We will combat biases across economic, political, and social life that hold women back and limit their opportunities and also tackle specific challenges facing women of color. After 240 years, we will finally enshrine the rights of women in the Constitution by passing the Equal Rights Amendment. And we will urge U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.""

Republican Platform

No Mention

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**ECONOMIC JUSTICE, Continued**

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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage</td>
<td>“…the current minimum wage is a starvation wage and must be increased to a living wage.”</td>
<td>“Minimum wage is an issue that should be handled at the state and local level.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We should raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour over time and index it, give all Americans the ability to join a union regardless of where they work, and create new ways for workers to have power in the economy so every worker can earn at least $15 an hour.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We also support creating one fair wage for all workers by ending the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers and people with disabilities.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and alternative means of transportation repair and expansion</td>
<td>“We will dramatically increase federal infrastructure funding for our cities—making significant new investments in roads and bridges, public transit, drinking and wastewater systems, broadband, schools, and more.”</td>
<td>“We propose to remove from the Highway Trust Fund programs that should not be the business of the federal government.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We will improve safety by repairing crumbling infrastructure in communities that need it most as well as on tribal lands.”</td>
<td>“More than a quarter of the Fund’s spending is diverted from its original purpose. One fifth of its funds are spent on mass transit, an inherently local affair that serves only a small portion of the population, concentrated in six big cities. Additional funds are used for bike-share programs, sidewalks, recreational trails, landscaping, and historical renovations. Other beneficiaries of highway money are ferry boats, the federal lands access program, scenic byways, and education initiatives. These worthwhile enterprises should be funded through other sources. We propose to phase out the federal transit program and reform provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act which can delay and drive up costs for transportation projects.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We will make new investments in public transportation and build bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure across our urban and suburban areas.”</td>
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**ECONOMIC JUSTICE, Continued**

**Issue**
Job training & job creation

**Democratic Platform**
“We will put Americans to work updating and expanding our roads, bridges, public transit, airports, and passenger and freight rail lines. We will build 21st century energy and water systems, modernize our schools, and continue to support the expansion of high-speed broadband networks. We will protect communities from the impact of climate change and help them to mitigate its effects by investing in green and resilient infrastructure. We will address the backlog of deferred maintenance in our four key public land management agencies. And we will protect public health and safety by modernizing drinking and wastewater systems.”

“...Democrats will provide direct federal funding for a range of local programs that will put young people to work and create new career opportunities.”

“We will create good-paying jobs and enhance opportunities by investing in small business, youth employment, and reentry programs for formerly incarcerated people.”

**Issue**
Social Security and retirement

**Democratic Platform**
“...we believe in protecting every American’s right to retire with dignity.”

“We will fight every effort to cut, privatize, or weaken Social Security, including attempts to raise the retirement age, diminish benefits by cutting cost-of-living adjustments, or reducing earned benefits.”

**Republican Platform**
“Private investment is a key driver of economic growth and job creation.”

“We endorse the recommendation of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, as well as the current Administration’s Export Council, to switch to a territorial system of taxation so that profits earned and taxed abroad may be repatriated for job-creating investment here at home.”

“We should reduce the occupational licensing laws that shut untold millions of potential workers out of entrepreneurial careers.”

“That is why our first priority is getting people back to work by fostering the kind of growth that creates jobs. That overarching goal unites all the sections of this platform. It runs through our commitments on education and workforce development. It underlies our approach to welfare reform, regulatory reform, and our determination to advance the kind of trade agreements that multiply opportunities for workers here at home. It also impels us to challenge the anachronistic labor laws that limit workers’ freedom and lock them into the workplace rules of their great-grandfathers.”

**Republican Platform**
“Current retirees and those close to retirement can be assured of their benefits. Of the many reforms being proposed, all options should be considered to preserve Social Security. As Republicans, we oppose tax increases and believe in the power of markets to create wealth and to help secure the future of our Social Security system.”

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81 Pp. 24 - 25
Democratic Platform

The Democratic Party believes that when workers are strong, America is strong. Democrats will make it easier for workers, public and private, to exercise their right to organize and join unions. We will fight to pass laws that direct the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union if a simple majority of eligible workers sign valid authorization cards, as well as laws that bring companies to the negotiating table. A major factor in the 40-year decline in the middle class is that the rights of workers to bargain collectively for better wages and benefits have been under attack at all levels... We will continue to vigorously oppose efforts that would eliminate dues check-off procedures, roll-back prevailing wage standards, abolish fair share requirements, restrict the use of voluntary membership payments for political purposes, attack seniority, restrict due process protections, and require annual recertification efforts. We oppose legislation and lawsuits that would strike down laws protecting the rights of teachers and other public employees."82

Republican Platform

"We renew our call for repeal of the Davis-Bacon law, which limits employment and drives up construction and maintenance costs for the benefit of unions."85

"...Project Labor Agreements discriminate against the overwhelming majority of workers by barring them from jobs on taxpayer-funded projects. Their patronizing and controlling approach leaves workers in a form of peonage to the NLRB. We intend to restore fairness and common sense to that agency."86

Democratic Platform

“We will defend (the new) overtime rule”83

Republican Platform

No Mention

Democratic Platform

“We will continue to vigorously oppose (right-to-work) laws...”84

Republican Platform

“We support the right of states to enact Right-to-Work laws and call for a national law”87

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83 P.4
84 P.4
85 P.5
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87 P.8
**ECONOMIC JUSTICE, Continued**

**Issue**
National, paid, family and medical leave

**Democratic Platform**
“Democrats will make sure that the United States finally enacts national paid family and medical leave by passing a family and medical leave act that would provide all workers at least 12 weeks of paid leave to care for a new child or address a personal or family member’s serious health issue. We will fight to allow workers the right to earn at least seven days of paid sick leave. We will also encourage employers to provide paid vacation.”

**Republican Platform**
No Mention

**Issue**
The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)

**Democratic Platform**
“We will prevent predatory lending by defending the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).”
“We oppose any efforts to change the CFPB’s structure from a single director to a partisan, gridlocked Commission and likewise oppose any efforts to remove the Bureau’s independent funding and subject it to the appropriations process. Democrats will also continue to support the CFPB in enforcing foundational civil rights laws protecting against discrimination in consumer lending.”

**Republican Platform**
“The worst of Dodd-Frank is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, deliberately designed to be a rogue agency. It answers to neither Congress nor the executive, has its own guaranteed funding outside the appropriations process, and uses its slush fund to steer settlements to politically favored groups. Its Director has dictatorial powers unique in the American Republic. Its regulatory harassment of local and regional banks, the source of most home mortgages and small business loans, advantages big banks and makes it harder for Americans to buy a home. Its one-size-fits-all approach to every issue threatens the diversity of the country’s financial system and would leave us with just a few enormous institutions, as in many European countries. If the Bureau is not abolished, it should be subjected to congressional appropriation.”

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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
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</table>
| High-cost, predatory, Pay-Day loans       | “Democrats condemn predatory payday lending, and will protect consumers by defending the CFPB and implementing strong new regulations.”  

Democratic Platform                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | No Mention |
| National Housing Trust Fund               | “We will preserve and increase the supply of affordable rental housing by expanding incentives to ease local barriers to building new affordable rental housing developments in areas of economic opportunity. We will substantially increase funding for the National Housing Trust Fund to construct, preserve, and rehabilitate millions of affordable housing rental units...Democrats believe that we should provide more federal resources to the people struggling most with unaffordable housing: low-income families, people with disabilities, veterans, and the elderly.”  

Democratic Platform                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | No Mention |
| Preventing foreclosure                    | “We will also expand programs to prevent displacement of existing residents, especially in communities of color; create affordable and workforce housing; and preserve neighborhood-serving nonprofit organizations and small businesses.”  

Democratic Platform                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | No Mention |

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<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>“...we will fight for robust funding to end homelessness in our cities and counties once and for all, through targeted investments to provide the necessary outreach, social services, and housing options for all populations experiencing homelessness. We will engage in a stronger, more coordinated, and better funded partnership among federal, state, and local governments to end chronic homelessness for millions of Americans. We will build on and expand...promising initiatives to end veteran and family homelessness in our country.”&lt;sup&gt;95&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>“The level of financial distress and homelessness among vets is a shame to the nation.”&lt;sup&gt;96&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eminent Domain</td>
<td>No Mention</td>
<td>“We call on any state legislatures that have not already done so to nullify the impact of <em>Kelo</em> within their jurisdiction by legislation or state constitutional amendments declaring that private property may be taken only for true public use, and we join ... in supporting the Private Property Rights Protection Act.”&lt;sup&gt;97&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Democratic Platform**

“We must make sure that everyone has a fair shot at homeownership. We will keep the housing market robust and inclusive by supporting more first-time homebuyers and putting more Americans into the financial position to become sustainable homeowners; preserving the 30-year fixed rate mortgage; modernizing credit scoring; clarifying lending rules; expanding access to housing counseling; defending and strengthening the Fair Housing Act; and ensuring that regulators have the clear direction, resources, and authority to enforce those rules effectively. We will prevent predatory lending by defending the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). These steps are especially important because over the next decade most new households will be formed by families in communities of color, which typically have less generational wealth and fewer resources to put towards a down payment.”

“(W)e will make investments in affordable housing near good jobs and good schools.”

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**Republican Platform**

“Our goal is to advance responsible home-ownership while guarding against the abuses that led to the housing collapse. We must scale back the federal role in the housing market, promote responsibility on the part of borrowers and lenders, and avoid future taxpayer bailouts. Reforms should provide clear and prudent underwriting standards and guidelines on predatory lending and acceptable lending practices. Compliance with regulatory standards should constitute a legal safe harbor to guard against opportunistic litigation by trial lawyers. We call for a comprehensive review of federal regulations, especially those dealing with the environment, that make it harder and more costly for Americans to rent, buy, or sell homes. For nine years, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been in conservatorship and the current Administration and Democrats have prevented any effort to reform them. Their corrupt business model lets shareholders and executives reap huge profits while the taxpayers cover all loses. The utility of both agencies should be reconsidered as a Republican administration clears away the jumble of subsidies and controls that complicate and distort home-buying. The Federal Housing Administration, which provides taxpayer-backed guarantees in the mortgage market, should no longer support high-income individuals, and the public should not be financially exposed by risks taken by FHA officials. We will end the government mandates that required Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and federally-insured banks to satisfy lending quotas to specific groups. Discrimination should have no place in the mortgage industry. Zoning decisions have always been, and must remain, under local control. The current Administration is trying to seize control of the zoning process through its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation. It threatens to undermine zoning laws in order to socially engineer every community in the country. While the federal government has a legitimate role in enforcing non-discrimination laws, this regulation has nothing to do with proven or alleged discrimination and everything to do with hostility to the self-government of citizens.”

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99 P. 21
100 P. 4
ECONOMIC JUSTICE, Continued

**Issue**
Veterans Benefits and Assistance

**Democratic Platform**
“(W)e will push for more educational benefits and job training, end chronic homelessness and combat suicide, and protect and preserve the post-9/11 GI Bill for future generations. We will also ensure that reservists and Guard members are treated fairly when it comes to employment, health, education benefits, deployment, and reintegration.”101

**Republican Platform**
“We urge the private sector to make hiring vets a company policy and commend the organizations that have proven programs to accomplish this. We will retain the preference given to veterans when they seek federal employment. We urge closer coordination with the state offices for veterans’ affairs, particularly with regard to expediting disability claims, since those closest to an individual can often best diagnose a problem and apply a remedy.”103

**Issue**
The Census

**Democratic Platform**
“(W)e will preserve and enhance the integrity and accuracy of the census and the American Community Survey (ACS). We will equip the Census Bureau with the resources needed to prepare for and conduct a cost effective, complete and accurate census, as well as improve counting segments of the population that are historically and persistently undercounted, specifically communities of color, immigrants, LGBT people, young children, those with disabilities, and rural and low-income populations.”102

**Republican Platform**
“The Constitution gives Congress authority to conduct the decennial census “in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.”104

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102 P. 26  
103 P. 45  
104 P. 16
**EDUCATION**

**Issue** Universal access to high quality public education / federal role in public education

**Democratic Platform**

“We believe a good education is a basic right of all Americans, no matter what zip code they live in.”

“...no matter who they are, how much their families earn, or where they live, should have access to a high-quality education, from preschool through high school and beyond.”

“Democrats are committed to making good public schools available to every child, no matter what zip code they live in...”

“...the federal government must play a critical role in making sure every child has access to a world-class education.”

“Schools should have adequate resources to provide programs and support to help meet the needs of every child. We will hold schools, districts, communities, and states accountable for raising achievement levels for all students—particularly low-income students, students of color, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.”

“(We support) equitable and adequate state funding for public education, and expanding Title I funding for schools that serve a large number or high concentration of children in poverty.”

**Issue** School-to-Prison Pipeline / restorative justice

**Democratic Platform**

“We will end the school-to-prison pipeline and build a cradle-to-college pipeline instead, where every child can live up to his or her God-given potential.”

“We will end the school-to-prison pipeline by opposing discipline policies which disproportionately affect African Americans and Latinos, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, students with disabilities, and youth who identify as LGBT. We will support the use of restorative justice practices that help students and staff resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully while helping to improve the teaching and learning environment.”

**Republican Platform**

“The federal government should not be a partner in that effort, as the Constitution gives it no role in education.”

“Congressional Republicans are leading the way forward with major reform legislation advancing the concept of block grants and repealing numerous federal regulations which have interfered with state and local control of public schools.”

**Republican Platform**

“We applaud America’s great teachers, who should be protected against frivolous lawsuits and should be able to take reasonable actions to maintain discipline and order in the classroom.”

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106 P. 30
107 P. 30
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111 P. 2
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113 P. 33
114 P. 34
115 P. 33
**EDUCATION, Continued**

**Issue**  
Pre-School and Head Start

**Democratic Platform**  
“Democrats will invest in early childhood programs like Early Head Start and provide every family in America with access to high-quality childcare and high-quality preschool programs. We support efforts to raise wages for childcare workers, and to ensure that early childhood educators are experienced and high-quality...”\(^{116}\)

**Republican Platform**  
No Mention

**Issue**  
Standardized testing

**Democratic Platform**  
“We are also deeply committed to ensuring that we strike a better balance on testing so that it informs, but does not drive, instruction. To that end, we encourage states to develop a multiple measures approach to assessment, and we believe that standardized tests must be reliable and valid.”\(^{117}\)

**Republican Platform**  
“We likewise repeat our long-standing opposition to the imposition of national standards and assessments, encourage the parents and educators who are implementing alternatives to Common Core, and congratulate the states which have successfully repealed it...[i]t rejects excessive testing and “teaching to the test” and supports the need for strong assessments to serve as a tool so teachers can tailor teaching to meet student needs.”\(^{119}\)

**Issue**  
High-stakes tests

**Democratic Platform**  
“We oppose high-stakes standardized tests that falsely and unfairly label students of color, students with disabilities and English Language Learners as failing; the use of standardized test scores as basis for refusing to fund schools or to close schools; and the use of student test scores in teacher and principal evaluations...”\(^{118}\)

**Republican Platform**  
No Mention

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\(^{116}\) P. 32  
\(^{117}\) P. 33  
\(^{118}\) P. 33  
\(^{119}\) P. 33
EDUCATION, Continued

**Issue** Charter Schools / school vouchers

**Democratic Platform**
“Democrats are committed to providing parents with high-quality public school options and expanding these options for low-income youth. We support democratically governed, great neighborhood public schools and high-quality public charter schools, and we will help them disseminate best practices to other school leaders and educators. Democrats oppose for-profit charter schools focused on making a profit off of public resources. We believe that high-quality public charter schools should provide options for parents, but should not replace or destabilize traditional public schools. Charter schools must reflect their communities, and thus must accept and retain proportionate numbers of students of color, students with disabilities and English Language Learners in relation to their neighborhood public schools. We support increased transparency and accountability for all charter schools.”

**Republican platform**
“We will continue our fight for school choice”
“We especially support the innovative financing mechanisms that make options available to all children: education savings accounts (ESAs), vouchers, and tuition tax credits.”
“We propose that the bulk of federal money through Title I for low-income children and through IDEA for children with special needs should follow the child to whatever school the family thinks will work best for them.”
“Their D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program should be expanded as a model for the rest of the country.”

**Issue** After School Opportunities / Mentoring

**Democratic Platform**
“We also support increased investments in afterschool and summer learning programs, which help working families, keep kids safe, and inspire learning at a time when many students are left unsupervised. We must find ways to encourage mentoring programs that support students in reaching their full potential. Mentoring is a strategy to ensure that children living in poverty have the encouragement and support to aim high and enter the middle class. We will focus on group mentoring, which is a low-cost, high-yield investment that offers the benefit of building a supportive network of peers who push one another towards success.”

**Republican platform**
No Mention

**Issue** Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

**Democratic Platform**
“The federal government will push more colleges and universities to take quantifiable, affirmative steps in increasing the percentages of racial and ethnic minority, low-income, and first-generation students they enroll and graduate.”

**Republican platform**
No Mention

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120 P. 34
121 P. 31
122 P. 32
123 P. 34
124 P. 34
125 P. 34
Reducing and managing higher education student debt

Democratic Platform
“Democrats are committed to making debt-free college a reality for all Americans.”\textsuperscript{126}
“Bold new investments by the federal government, coupled with states reinvesting in higher education and colleges holding the line on costs...”\textsuperscript{127}
“We will also make community college free...”\textsuperscript{128}
“Democrats will allow those who currently have student debt to refinance their loans at the lowest rates possible. We will simplify and expand access to income-based repayment so that no student loan borrowers ever have to pay more than they can afford. And we will significantly cut interest rates for future undergraduates because we believe that making college more affordable is more important than the federal government making billions of dollars in profit off those loans. Democrats will also fight for a student borrower bill of rights to ensure borrowers get adequate information about options to avoid or get out of delinquency or default. We will hold lenders and loan servicers to high standards to help borrowers in default rehabilitate and repay their debts. We will continue the important Public Service Loan Forgiveness and loan discharge programs begun by the Obama Administration. Finally, Democrats will restore the prior standard in bankruptcy law to allow borrowers with student loans to be able to discharge their debts in bankruptcy as a measure of last resort. To make progress toward these goals, the government should offer a moratorium on student loan payments to all federal loan borrowers so they have the time and get the resources they need to consolidate their loans, enroll in income-based repayment programs, and take advantage of opportunities to reduce monthly payments and fees.”\textsuperscript{129}

Republican platform
“The federal government should not be in the business of originating student loans. In order to bring down college costs and give students access to a multitude of financing options, private sector participation in student financing should be restored. Any regulation that increases college costs must be challenged to balance its worth against its negative economic impact on students and their families. In order to encourage new modes of higher education delivery to enter the market, accreditation should be decoupled from federal financing, and states should be empowered to allow a wide array of accrediting and credentialing bodies to operate.”\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{126} P. 30
\textsuperscript{127} P. 30
\textsuperscript{128} P. 30
\textsuperscript{129} P. 31
\textsuperscript{130} Pp. 35-36
EDUCATION, Continued

**Issue**
Pell Grants

**Democratic Platform**
“We will provide further assistance to students at these schools, as well as other students across the country, by restoring year-round Pell funding...”\(^{131}\)

**Issue**
Gainful Employment Rule

**Democratic Platform**
“(W)e will strengthen the gainful employment rule to ensure that for-profit schools enable students to complete their degrees and prepare them for work. We will go after for-profits that engage in deceptive marketing, fraud, and other illegal practices. We will also exercise our responsibility in oversight over the Department of Education to carry out their obligation to close down those for-profit schools that consistently engage in fraudulent and illegal conduct.”\(^{132}\)

**Issue**
Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority-Serving Institutions

**Democratic Platform**
“ensuring the strength of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions.”\(^{133}\)
“We will create a robust and historic dedicated fund to keep costs down, provide quality education, and ensure dedicated support to improve student outcomes and completion rates.”\(^{134}\)

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\(^{131}\) P. 31
\(^{132}\) P. 32
\(^{133}\) P. 31
\(^{134}\) P. 31
**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

**Issue**

**Democratic Platform**

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

“Climate change is an urgent threat and a defining challenge of our time.”

“Democrats share a deep commitment to tackling the climate challenge; creating millions of good-paying middle class jobs; reducing greenhouse gas emissions more than 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050; and meeting the pledge...to keep global temperature increases to “well below” two degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius.”

“We are committed to a national mobilization, and to leading a global effort to mobilize nations to address this threat on a scale not seen since World War II. In the first 100 days of the next administration, the President will convene a summit of the world’s best engineers, climate scientists, policy experts, activists, and indigenous communities to chart a course to solve the climate crisis.”

“We will not only meet the goals we set in Paris, we will seek to exceed them and push other countries to do the same by slashing carbon pollution and rapidly driving down emissions of potent greenhouse gases like hydrofluorocarbons. We will support developing countries in their efforts to mitigate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, deploy more clean energy, and invest in climate resilience and adaptation.”

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**Republican Platform**

“Climate change is far from this nation’s most pressing national security issue.”

“We will likewise forbid the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide.”

“Information concerning a changing climate, especially projections into the long-range future, must be based on dispassionate analysis of hard data. We will enforce that standard throughout the executive branch, among civil servants and presidential appointees alike. The United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a political mechanism, not an unbiased scientific institution. Its unreliability is reflected in its intolerance toward scientists and others who dissent from its orthodoxy. We will evaluate its recommendations accordingly. We reject the agendas of both the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which represent only the personal commitments of their signatories; no such agreement can be binding upon the United States until it is submitted to and ratified by the Senate. We demand an immediate halt to U.S. funding for the U.N.’s Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in accordance with the 1994 Foreign Relations Authorization Act.”

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<th>Republican Platform</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clean and Renewable Energy</td>
<td>&quot;We are committed to getting 50 percent of our electricity from clean energy sources within a decade, with half a billion solar panels installed within four years and enough renewable energy to power every home in the country. We will cut energy waste in American homes, schools, hospitals, and offices through energy efficient improvements; modernize our electric grid; and make American manufacturing the cleanest and most efficient in the world.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;We encourage the cost-effective development of renewable energy sources — wind, solar, biomass, biofuel, geothermal, and tidal energy — by private capital.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean environmental inclusion / diversity and conservation</td>
<td>&quot;We will take bold steps to...ensure no Americans are left out or left behind as we accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy...&quot;</td>
<td>Conservation is inherent in conservatism. As the pioneer of environmentalism a century ago, the Republican Party reaffirms the moral obligation to be good stewards of the God-given natural beauty and resources of our country. We believe that people are the most valuable resources and that human health and safety are the proper measurements of a policy’s success. We assert that private ownership has been the best guarantee of conscientious stewardship, while some of the worst instances of degradation have occurred under government control.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Racism</td>
<td>&quot;...clean air and clean water are basic rights of all Americans.&quot;</td>
<td>No Mention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;...we must make it a national priority to eradicate lead poisoning, which disproportionately impacts low-income children and children of color and can lead to lifelong health and educational challenges. We will prioritize hiring and training workers from affected communities to clean up toxic brownfields and expand clean energy, energy efficiency, and resilient infrastructure.&quot;</td>
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**Democratic Platform**

“We are going to fight to make sure every American has access to quality, affordable health care.”\(^{150}\)

“Democrats believe that health care is a right, not a privilege, and our health care system should put people before profits.”\(^{151}\)

“Democrats will never falter in our generations-long fight to guarantee health care as a fundamental right for every American. As part of that guarantee, Americans should be able to access public coverage through a public option, and those over 55 should be able to opt in to Medicare. Democrats will empower the states, which are the true laboratories of democracy, to use innovation waivers under the ACA to develop unique locally tailored approaches to health coverage. This will include removing barriers to states which seek to experiment with plans to ensure universal health care to every person in their state.”\(^{152}\)

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**Republican Platform**

“(The Affordable Care Act) must be removed and replaced with an approach based on genuine competition, patient choice, excellent care, wellness, and timely access to treatment.”\(^{154}\)

“It is time to repeal Obamacare and give America a much-needed tax cut. In its place we must combine what worked best in the past with changes needed for the future....To simplify the system for both patients and providers, we will reduce mandates and enable insurers and providers of care to increase healthcare options and contain costs.”\(^{155}\)

“We will empower individuals and small businesses to form purchasing pools in order to expand coverage to the uninsured.”\(^{156}\)

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**Democratic Platform**

“Democrats will also work to end surprise billing and other practices that lead to out-of-control medical debt that place an unconscionable economic strain on American households. We will repeal the excise tax on high-cost health insurance and find revenue to offset it because we need to contain the long-term growth of health care costs, but should not risk passing on too much of the burden to workers. Democrats will keep costs down by making premiums more affordable, reducing out-of-pocket expenses, and capping prescription drug costs. And we will fight against insurers trying to impose excessive premium increases.”\(^{153}\)

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**Republican Platform**

“Any honest agenda for improving healthcare must start with repeal of the dishonestly named Affordable Care Act of 2010: Obamacare.”\(^{157}\)

“(W)e will promote price transparency so consumers can know the cost of treatments before they agree to them.”\(^{158}\)

“We support state and federal legislation to cap non-economic damages in medical malpractice lawsuits,...”\(^{159}\)

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**HEALTH, continued**

**Issue**
Medicare / privatization of Medicare

**Democratic Platform**
“Democrats will fight any attempts...to privatize, voucherize, or “phase out” Medicare as we know it.”

**Issue**
Medicaid expansion / blockgranting Medicaid

**Democratic Platform**
“(W)e will oppose...plans to slash funding and block grant Medicaid...”
“We will keep fighting until the ACA’s Medicaid expansion has been adopted in every state.”

**Republican Platform**
“(W)e propose these reforms: Impose no changes for persons 55 or older. Give others the option of traditional Medicare or transition to a premium-support model designed to strengthen patient choice, promote cost-saving competition among providers, and better guard against the fraud and abuse that now diverts billions of dollars every year away from patient care. Guarantee to every enrollee an income-adjusted contribution toward a plan of their choice, with catastrophic protection. Without disadvantaging present retirees or those nearing retirement, set a more realistic age for eligibility in light of today’s longer life span.”

**Republican Platform**
“We will...by block-granting the program...”
“We will return to the states their historic role of regulating local insurance markets, limit federal requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid, and call on state officials to reconsider the costly medical mandates, imposed under their own laws, that price millions of low-income families out of the insurance market. To guarantee first-rate care for the needy, we propose to block grant Medicaid and other payments and to assist all patients, including those with pre-existing conditions, to obtain coverage in a robust consumer market.”

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**Democratic Platform**

“(W)e will make health equity a central part of our commitment to revitalizing communities left behind. Democrats believe that all health care services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate, and that neither fear nor immigration status should be barriers that impede health care access.”

“We will address the discrimination and barriers that inhibit meaningful access to reproductive health care services, including those based on gender, sexuality, race, income, disability, and other factors.”

“We must take a number of proactive steps so that all Americans—regardless of location, income or history—have the opportunity to live full, healthy lives.”

“We must renew and expand our commitment to Community Health Centers, as well as community mental health centers and family planning centers...We will fight for a comprehensive system of primary health care, including dental, mental health care, and low-cost prescription drugs by doubling of funding for federally qualified community health centers over the next decade...

“We must treat mental health issues with the same care and seriousness that we treat issues of physical health, support a robust mental health workforce, and promote better integration of the behavioral and general health care systems. Recognizing that maintaining good mental health is critical to all people, including young people’s health and development, we will work with health professionals to ensure that all children have access to mental health care. We must also expand community-based treatment for substance abuse disorders and mental health conditions and fully enforce our parity law.”

**Republican Platform**

No Mention

No Mention

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**Democratic Platform**

“We must confront the epidemic of drug and alcohol addiction, specifically the opioid crisis and other drugs plaguing our communities, by vastly expanding access to prevention and treatment, supporting recovery, helping community organizations, and promoting better practices by prescribers. The Democratic Party is committed to assisting the estimated 20 million people struggling with addiction in this country to find and sustain healthy lives by encouraging full recovery and integration into society and working to remove common barriers to gainful employment, housing, and education. We will continue to fight to expand access to care for addiction services, and ensure that insurance coverage is equal to that for any other health conditions.”171

**Republican Platform**

“The progress made over the last three decades against drug abuse is eroding, whether for cultural reasons or for lack of national leadership. In many jurisdictions, marijuana is virtually legalized despite its illegality under federal law. At the other end of the drug spectrum, heroin use nearly doubled from 2003 to 2013, while deaths from heroin have quadrupled. All this highlights the continuing conflicts and contradictions in public attitudes and public policy toward illegal substances. Congress and a new administration should consider the long-range implications of these trends for public health and safety and prepare to deal with the problematic consequences.”173

**Democratic Platform**

“(W)e will implement the National HIV and AIDS Strategy; increase research funding for the National Institutes of Health; cap pharmaceutical expenses for people living with HIV and AIDS; reform HIV criminalization laws; and expand access for harm reduction programs and HIV prevention medications, particularly for the populations most at risk of infection. Abroad, we will continue our commitment to the...Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and increase global funding for HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment. Democrats will always protect those living with HIV and AIDS from stigma and discrimination.”172

**Republican Platform**

No Mention

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>“In Cuba, we will build on (the) historic opening and end the travel ban and embargo. We will also stand by the Cuban people and support their ability to decide their own future and to enjoy the same human rights and freedoms that people everywhere deserve.”¹⁷⁴</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>“(I)n Haiti, we will support local and international efforts to bolster the country’s democratic institutions and economic development. We will also help more Haitians take advantage of Temporary Protected Status.”¹⁷⁵</td>
<td>No mention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>“Africa is home to many of the fastest growing economies in the world. Democrats will strengthen our partnership and collaboration with the African Union, emphasizing trade while increasing development assistance to bolster the continent’s domestic economies. We will engage our African partners on the full range of global challenges and opportunities, and we will continue to strengthen democratic institutions and human rights, fair trade and investment, development, and global health. We will help our African partners improve their capacity to respond to crises and protect citizens, especially women and girls.”¹⁷⁶</td>
<td>“We pledge to be the best partner of all African nations in their pursuit of economic freedom and human rights.”¹⁷⁸</td>
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VOTING RIGHTS

Issue

Democratic Platform

“...we will fight to ... restore the full power of the Voting Rights Act.”¹⁷⁹

“We must rectify the Supreme Court decision gutting the Voting Rights Act, which is a profound injustice. We will stop efforts...to disenfranchise people of color, low-income people, and young people, and prevent these voters from exercising their right to vote through onerous restrictions. We will ensure that election officials comply with voting protections, including provisions mandating bilingual materials and voter assistance.”¹⁸⁰

“We support efforts to defeat ill-motivated voter suppression tactics. We also support Ohio’s proposed Voters Bill of Rights amendment, North Carolina’s Moral Monday movement, and similar initiatives to permanently safeguard this inalienable right.”¹⁸¹

Republican Platform

No mention

Issue

Democratic Platform

“...we must make it easier to vote, not harder...We will bring our democracy into the 21st century by expanding early voting and vote-by-mail, implementing universal automatic voter registration and same day voter registration, ending partisan and racial gerrymandering, and making Election Day a national holiday.”¹⁸²

“(W)e will continue to fight against discriminatory voter identification laws, which disproportionately burden young voters, diverse communities, people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities, the elderly, and women.”¹⁸³

“We support fully funding the Help America Vote Act and will work to fulfill the promise of election reform, including fighting to end long lines at voting booths and ensuring that all registration materials, voting materials, polling places, and voting machines are truly accessible to seniors, Americans with disabilities, and citizens with limited English proficiency. We will support local, county, and state governments in their efforts to upgrade old voting equipment and machines with modern systems, including voter-verified paper ballots, to ensure that all voters are able to exercise this sacred right in the quickest, most convenient, secure and accurate manner possible.”¹⁸⁴

Republican Platform

“...we support legislation to require proof of citizenship when registering to vote and secure photo ID when voting. We strongly oppose litigation against states exercising their sovereign authority to enact such laws. In addition, to guarantee that everyone’s vote is counted, we urge that electronic voting systems have a voter-verified paper audit trail. We urge every state to join the Interstate Voter Registration Cross Check Program to keep voter rolls accurate and to prevent people from voting in more than one state in the same election.”¹⁸⁵

“In order to preserve the principle of one person, one vote, we urge our elected representatives to ensure that citizenship, rather than mere residency, be made the basis for the apportionment of representatives among the states.”¹⁸⁶

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**VOTING RIGHTS, continued**

**Issue**
Campaign Finance Reform

**Democratic Platform**
"...while stopping corporations’ outsized influence in elections. We will fight to end the broken campaign finance system, overturn the disastrous *Citizens United* decision."\(^{187}\)

"We will fight for real campaign finance reform now."\(^{188}\)

"Democrats support a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court’s decisions in *Citizens United* and *Buckley v. Valeo*."\(^{189}\)

"We need to overhaul and strengthen the Federal Election Commission so that there is real enforcement of campaign finance laws. And we need to fight to eliminate super PACs and outside spending abuses."\(^{190}\)

"We will appoint judges who defend the constitutional principles of liberty and equality for all...curb billionaires’ influence over elections because they understand that *Citizens United* has fundamentally damaged our democracy."\(^{191}\)

**Republican Platform**
"We support repeal of federal restrictions on political parties in McCain-Feingold, raising or repealing contribution limits, protecting the political speech of advocacy groups, corporations, and labor unions, and protecting political speech on the internet."\(^{194}\)

**Issue**
Voter Re-enfranchisement of Ex-Felony Offenders

**Democratic Platform**
"We will restore voting rights for those who have served their sentences."\(^{192}\)

**Republican Platform**
No Mention

**Issue**
Statehood Rights for the residents of the District of Columbia

**Democratic Platform**
"Restoring our democracy also means finally passing statehood for the District of Columbia, so that the American citizens who reside in the nation’s capital have full and equal congressional rights as well as the right to have the laws and budget of their local government respected without Congressional interference."\(^{193}\)

**Republican Platform**
"Statehood for the District can be advanced only by a constitutional amendment. Any other approach would be invalid."\(^{195}\)

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