

2008 Platform

Johnson County Democrats

(As approved by the Johnson County Convention March 15 2008)

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Statement of Principles

1. We believe the purpose of government is to act on behalf of the public good, to create and execute policies and laws that promote and protect everyone's human rights equally, to protect our shared environment, to promote justice, safety and security and to oversee the equitable distribution of resources, affording all citizens the opportunity to attain their highest level of social, cultural, economic, mental and physical well being.
2. We value diversity. We are committed to the inclusion and full participation of diverse populations in our society, in the Democratic Party and in the democratic processes of government regardless of status within any protected class such as age, race, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, associational preference, ethnicity, disability, illness or language.
3. We affirm our commitment to social and economic justice. Whenever the rights of any of our citizens are threatened, the rights of all are endangered. We take seriously the obligation to uphold the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, to preserve, protect and secure basic human rights, civil rights and civil liberties.
4. We believe in a society in which fairness and community are guiding values, where every person has an equal opportunity.
5. We believe the family, whether traditional or non-traditional, should be sustained and enhanced. We share, through government, the responsibility to assist those families who cannot adequately provide for their members.
6. We believe a full and rewarding life includes access to, and the opportunity to participate in and support the arts and humanities.

7. We reaffirm the separation of church and state.
8. We continue to support candidates running as Democrats in Johnson County who adhere to this Johnson County Democratic Platform.
9. The sections of Statement of Issues address specifically:
10. As temporary stewards of our natural resources, we demand that our governing bodies develop policies and laws promoting sound energy practices permanently protecting our environment and addressing the problems of global warming. As stewards of Iowa's heritage, we cherish our land and family farms and deplore the concentration of food production in the hands of a few corporations.
11. We believe a healthy American economy depends on the dignity with which the American worker is treated. We affirm the right of all workers to bargain collectively and support organized labor. A sustainable economy and job growth depend on a positive climate for small business development. We support a progressive system of taxation.
12. An informed citizenry is essential for a democratic society. We are strongly committed to free public education and providing accessible, affordable, and lifelong quality education to all at all educational levels.
13. We are committed to honest and open government. The complexities of crime and violence issues demonstrate the need for multifaceted solutions involving legislation, education, community action, and personal responsibility.
14. We believe all people have a right to accessible, affordable, quality health care and the benefits of continued medical research.
15. We affirm the ideal of a world in which all peoples live peacefully with tolerance and good will toward others. United States foreign and domestic policy decisions should promote that ideal.

Statement of Issues

Agriculture and the Environment

Agriculture:

We support:

1. The fundamental right for all people to safe and healthy food.
2. Environmentally responsible agriculture.
3. Organic farming, crop diversification and reduced subsidy for industrial-scale cropping.
4. Funding of local soil conservation districts.
5. Renegotiated international trade rules to halt export dumping of commodities below their cost of production.
6. Reform of America's agricultural policies to reverse farm consolidation, to restore production diversity and to regain the functioning of local food systems.

Energy

We support:

7. Efficiency as a primary strategy to reduce energy required by U.S. lifestyle.
8. Improved CAFÉ standards, mass transit and low emission vehicles.
9. Realignment of energy tax incentives and disincentives.

10. Investment in renewable energy and distributed energy.
11. A carbon tax together with a cap and trade system to reduce greenhouse gasses.
12. Hybrids, EVs and charging stations.

We oppose:

13. Government subsidy of nuclear power.
14. The development of new nuclear power until the problem of waste storage is solved.
15. New coal burning power plants.
16. Storage of nuclear waste on tribal lands.
17. Offsite storage of nuclear waste.

Environment

We support:

18. The preservation of the commons and the prohibition of private or commercial activity degrading these resources.
19. State wide land-use planning to restrict urban sprawl and to prevent conversion of agricultural land to other uses.
20. Reinstating caps on mercury emissions from coal burning power plants.
21. Preservation of Endangered Species Act.
22. Dark night sky.
23. The Johnson County Clean Water, Conservation, and Trails bond initiative.

We oppose:

24. Exempting any power plants from the current requirements of the Clean Air Act.
25. Importation into Iowa of coal from mountain tops and strip mining.
26. The assumption agricultural operations have a grandfathered right to pollute.
27. Clear-cutting on public lands and publicly subsidizing logging, mining and grazing.

28. Oil drilling in sensitive areas.

Zoning and Building

We support:

29. Certification of the design and construction for projects financed with public money to meet accepted benchmarks for sustainable site and high performance green building.
30. The establishment of significant economic incentives for private development certification of design and construction to meet accepted benchmarks for sustainable site and high performance green building.
31. Local control of CAFOs site location, maintenance and operations.
32. Land-use planning to restrict urban sprawl and to prevent conversion of agricultural land to other uses with significant financial disincentives for conversion.
33. Radon testing.

Food Supply

We support:

34. A federal ban on meat-packer ownership of livestock.
35. Anti-trust regulation and the prohibition of the concentration of control in food production, processing, and retailing.
36. Increased funding for independent research on anti-biotic and hormone use in agriculture.
37. Actions to reduce emergence and spread of multi-drug-resistant bacteria, their presence in the environment, and their affect on humans and animals.
38. Independent, credible testing of GMOs before they are approved for consumption.
39. The full and accurate labeling of all foods including those containing or which are produced from GMOs, cloned animals and irradiated food.

40. Stable and safe regional food supplies.
41. Guidelines and initiatives to promote locally produced products.

Acronyms:

GMOs---Genetically Modified Organisms

CAFO---Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

CAFÉ---Corporate Average Fuel Economy

Economy, Commerce and Labor

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We support:

42. Employee protection during plant closure or bankruptcy.
43. A government-run job and job training program and a WPA-like program.
44. Encouraging local enterprise through loans and development.
45. Eliminating barriers to scientific research in order to keep the US competitive.
46. Requiring mortgage servicing companies and investors to mediate with borrowers to explore modifying loans prior to foreclosure.
47. Fair Use Doctrine.
48. Restoration of the public domain.

We oppose:

49. The DMCA.

Trade Regulation

We support:

- 50. A Fair Trade model that provides Congressional oversight during trade negotiation.
- 51. Environmental and labor standards in all trade agreements.

Taxation

We support:

- 52. Increasing the dependency exemption.
- 53. Reestablishing estate taxes.
- 54. Property tax credits for veterans, lower income, and elderly and disabled people.
- 55. Windfall profit taxes on fossil fuel companies to be used for research and development of alternative energy.
- 56. Rescinding the federal subsidy for research and development of off-shore oil drilling.

Job Security and Workers' Rights

We support:

- 57. Laws discouraging "temps" replacing permanent employees.
- 58. Eliminating employee/independent contractor misclassification.
- 59. Expanded job security, including more flexibility for single parents.
- 60. Increasing safety for every workplace.
- 61. Benefits and protections for those on strike.
- 62. Iowa law being changed to state that employers and unions have the option of negotiating Fair Share Labor Agreements as a mandatory subject of bargaining.

63. Whistleblower protection for all employees.
64. Equal workers' rights and employment opportunities for GLBT people.
65. Equal pay for equal work by women.

We oppose:

66. Efforts to limit overtime pay.
67. Mandatory overtime.
68. Right-To-Work laws.
69. Employment-at-will doctrine.
70. Prison labor that displaces non-incarcerated workers.
71. Privatization of public jobs.
72. Mandatory genetic screening, polygraph tests, and drug tests in employment except in cases where public safety is at risk.

Business Regulations

We support:

73. Strong fair labor standards.
74. PLAs on public works construction.
75. Bidders' safety records for government contracts
76. Strengthening OSHA and NIOSH through funding, staffing, and increasing participation by employers and unions.
77. Strengthening the NLRA, including full funding for the NLRB.

Living Wage

We support:

78. Raising the minimum wage to \$10 immediately, and index it to the Federal Cost of Living.
79. Public entities paying prevailing wages in contracted projects.

Pension/Insurance

We support:

80. Incentives for long-term and retirement savings.
81. The right to choose one's caregiver for job injuries.
82. Keeping IPERS solvent by incorporating an independent board of trustees.
83. Non-discriminatory parental leave benefits.
84. Part-time and contingent employees receiving proportionate wages and benefits.
85. Unemployment benefits for those involved in labor disputes.

Acronyms:

- WPA---Work Projects Administration
- IPERS--- Iowa Public Employee's Retirement System
- GLBT--- Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender/Transsexual people
- PLA---Project Labor Agreement
- OSHA--- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- NIOSH--- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
- NLRA--- National Labor Relations Act
- NLRB--- National Labor Relations Board
- DMCA--- Digital Millennium Copyright Act

Education

Funding

We support:

86. Equal Access to all educational services and resources for all students.
87. Coordinated family service centers in local schools supported by joint efforts of state and local agencies and governments.
88. Increasing funding for regent universities and community colleges.
89. Adequate funding of Area Education Agencies.
90. Continued funding for publicly provided non-mandatory early childhood education programs for all three-five year old children.
91. Increasing salaries of K-12 educators.
92. Paying a living wage to support professionals in our public schools.
93. Increasing the allowable growth rate for Iowa public schools' controlled budgets to six percent.
94. Increased technology funding for community colleges.
95. Full federal funding of special education.
96. An awareness campaign in public schools on ways to reduce individual and community environmental impacts.
97. Increasing access to college tuition assistance and loan forgiveness programs for students who stay in Iowa.
98. Greater access to higher education by offering a) a fully refundable College Opportunity Tax Credit, and b) aid to states that keep tuitions low.
99. We support low college loan interest rates.

We oppose:

- 100. Any mid-year pullback of allotted funds to the State Board of Regents institutions.
- 101. Diverting public money from public schools to fund vouchers, charter schools, tuition tax credits, or for-profit education businesses.
- 102. The School Choice Doctrine.

Education Curricula

We support:

- 103. The teaching of comprehensive medically accurate sex education in the public schools, by qualified personnel.
- 104. MCGF education.
- 105. Community-based service as a requirement for high school graduation.
- 106. Teaching about the United Nations, international human rights conventions and the Millennium Development Goals.

We oppose:

- 107. “Abstinence only” sex education programs.
- 108. The teaching of “intelligent design” as science in the public schools.
- 109. Corporate propaganda presented as education materials.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

We support:

- 110. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as reauthorized in 1994 and the repeal of the portion referred to as No Child Left Behind.
- 111. K-12 class size reduction programs.

112. Classrooms that permit teacher creativity and innovation.

We oppose:

113. Using standardized assessments as the primary measure of learning or the focus of instruction.

Acronyms:

NCLB (No Child Left Behind)

MCGF (Multicultural Gender Fair)

Government and Law

Campaigns and Elections

We support:

114. Election Day voter registration.

115. Publicly financed elections.

116. Repealing use of Democratic nominating superdelegates.

117. More computer expertise on IA Board of Examiners.

118. Hand recount audits.

119. Statistically significant, mandatory, random hand audits.

120. Limited use of caucus absentee/proxy ballots.

121. Optical-scanner voting.

We oppose:

122. Caucuses on federal holidays.

Civil Rights and Liberties

We support:

123. Repealing Patriot Act.

124. Uniform full enforcement of Civil Rights Act and ADA.

125. Universal habeas corpus.

We oppose:

126. Warrantless wiretapping and searches.

127. "Enemy detainee" status.

Taxes and Social Security

We support:

128. Repealing Bush's tax cuts for top 10% income bracket.

129. Progressive income taxation.

130. Expanded tax credits for college tuition and student loan interest payments.

131. Increased earned income tax credits.

132. Lifting the income cap on SS payroll taxes.

133. "Green" incentives.

We oppose:

- 134. Privatization of SS.
- 135. SS benefit reductions.
- 136. “Off-shoring” incentives.
- 137. Taxation of unemployment, worker compensation and SS benefits.

Government Services

We support:

- 138. Increased funding for social services, dependent care and food stamps.
- 139. Reduced defense funding.

Reproductive Rights

We support:

- 140. State legislation guaranteeing abortion rights.
- 141. Mandating all Iowa pharmacists provide EC on demand.
- 142. Requiring insurance companies cover all prescribed FDA approved contraceptives.
- 143. Affordable, anonymous HIV/AIDS and STD tests.
- 144. Comprehensive universal access to all aspects of family planning with public funding.
for low income or uninsured women and active duty military and dependents.
- 145. Abortion services for active duty military and dependents.

We oppose:

- 146. Eroding women’s right to abortion.
- 147. Approval of Supreme Court Justices opposed to Roe v. Wade.

- 148. Parental notification and consent legislation.
- 149. Banning medically necessary abortions.

Criminal Justice

We support:

- 150. Impeaching George W. Bush and Dick Cheney.
- 151. Legalization of marijuana.
- 152. Automatic restoration of voting rights to felons.
- 153. Human rights and open hearings for all immigrants.
- 154. Full funding for Violence Against Women Act, services to crime victims and programs to prevent sexual violence.
- 155. Enforcement of stalking laws and no-contact orders.
- 156. Hate Crime Prevention Act.
- 157. Treatment alternatives to incarceration for substance abusers.
- 158. Community-based alternatives to incarceration of non-violent offenders.
- 159. Prisoners' human rights.
- 160. Binding plea bargains.

We oppose:

- 161. Capital punishment.
- 162. Mandatory sentencing.
- 163. Unenforceable sex offender residential restrictions.
- 164. Racial profiling.
- 165. Forced labor for inmates.
- 166. Prosecuting humanitarian aid.

Internet and Telecommunications

We support:

- 167. First Amendment protection for all electronic media.
- 168. Publicly owned broadband networks.
- 169. Affordable access to broadband and broadcast media.
- 170. Network Neutrality.
- 171. Local government cable franchise fees to fund Public Access, Education, and Government (PEG) channels.
- 172. Depoliticizing and increasing transparency in public broadcasting and CPB.
- 173. Legislatively codifying the Fairness Doctrine.
- 174. Antitrust legislation to rollback consolidation of media ownership.

We oppose:

- 175. Internet censorship.
- 176. Preventing local government oversight of media carriage.
- 177. Government propaganda and fake news.
- 178. Warrantless government electronic spying on US residents.

Consumer Protection

We support:

- 179. Consumer Fraud Act.

We oppose:

- 180. Corporate personhood.
- 181. Exempting corporations from oversight.

Reasonable Gun Regulation

We support:

- 182. Banning handguns.
- 183. Banning assault weapons.
- 184. Safety certification for hunters.
- 185. Criminalizing selling weapons to barred individuals.
- 186. Licensing, pre-ownership safety training, background investigation, registration for all firearms.

Marriage and Civil Unions

We support:

- 187. Civil marriage for same-sex couples.
- 188. UAFA.

We oppose:

- 189. DOMA.
- 190. Maternal bias in custody decisions.
- 191. Discrimination against GLBT on parenting rights.

Veterans

We support:

- 192. Comprehensive mental health and disability payments/pensions for active duty veterans and retirees.
- 193. Dole/Shalala Committee recommendations.
- 194. Services for homeless vets.
- 195. Limiting National Guard to domestic duties and Reserves for emergencies only,
- 196. Sufficient pay, training and benefits to sustain a voluntary armed forces.
- 197. Iowa Democratic Veterans Caucus.

We oppose:

- 198. GLBT discrimination.
- 199. Stop-loss.

Participation in Government

We support:

- 200. Fair juror compensation.
- 201. Government transparency.
- 202. Greater youth involvement.

We oppose:

- 203. Recess appointments.

Transportation

We support:

- 204. Improved funding and availability of public transit.
- 205. Expanding bike/hike trails.
- 206. High speed rail.
- 207. Fully funded port inspections.
- 208. "Complete Streets".

We oppose:

- 209. "No-fly" list.
- 210. Infrastructure privatization.
- 211. Denying cyclists access to Iowa's roadways or judicial system.

Acronyms:

ADA = American's with Disabilities Act

SS = Social Security

EC = Emergency Contraception

FDA = Food and Drug Administration

STD = Sexually Transmitted Disease

UAFA = Uniting American Families Act

DOMA = Defense of Marriage Act

GLBT = Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered people

Health and Human Services

Universal Healthcare

We support:

212. Comprehensive, evidence-based, and affordable healthcare for all, to be provided by a national, universal, single-payer, tax-based healthcare plan, with accountability to agreed upon standards of quality. Including but not limited to these services:

1. Encouraging wellness and prevention efforts.
2. Accessibility at time of need.
3. Choices of long-term care including community-based services.
4. Mental health and brain disorders parity.
5. Chemical dependency services.
6. Universal hearing and vision screening.
7. Universal dental services.
8. Universal access to affordable prescription drugs.

Mental Health

We support:

213. Nondiscriminatory treatment for mental health, mental retardation, developmental disabilities, brain disorders, and autism patients and programs.

Medical Research

We support:

214. Increased funding for research and the National Institutes of Health.

Health and Human Services

We support:

215. Increased funding for Health and Human Services programs.

Patients Rights

We support:

216. The right of the healthcare team and patient to have the primary responsibility for decisions about patient care with singular authority.

217. Enforcing and raising safe staffing standards.

218. Federal funding for HIV/AIDS-related education and care.

219. Right-to-die legislation.

Medicare/Medicaid

We support:

- 220. Increased funding for minimum national standards for assistance when welfare is delegated to states through block grants.
- 221. Legislation for negotiated prescription drug prices and a competitive bid system for suppliers, while maintaining standards of quality.
- 222. Division of spousal resources before making spend down determinations.

We oppose:

- 223. Charging Medicaid/Medicare and non-governmental agencies different rates for the same services and supplies.
- 224. Privatization of Medicare/Medicaid.

Housing and Homelessness

We support:

- 225. Safe, decent, affordable housing for all, including short and long-term support for persons with mental or physical disability, teenage mothers, children, and other broad community services.
- 226. The Housing Trust Fund.
- 227. Johnson County Local Homeless Coordinating Board.
- 228. Homeless Shelters Operation Grants.
- 229. The "Section 8" housing voucher program.
- 230. Job and life skills training.
- 231. Programs to transition persons from shelters into programs for care, treatment, and permanent housing.

We oppose:

232. Substitution of private organizations for public social services.

Disability

We support:

233. Equal rights for persons with disabilities.

234. Family and community support services.

235. Increased program flexibility and funding to permit home living.

236. Strengthening and expanding the ADA.

237. Overturning *Buck v. Bell* and eugenic sterilization of mentally disabled persons.

We oppose:

238. Forced sterilization and forced contraception.

Substance Abuse:

We support:

239. Increased funding and emphasis on evidence-based prevention and treatment

240. Legalization of marijuana for prescribed medical purposes.

241. Mandatory federal funding into the efficacy of marijuana treatment for medical uses

Children

We support:

- 242. Governmental involvement in childcare improvement.
- 243. Pursuit and prosecution of unpaid child support.
- 244. State of Iowa use of national child abuse registries and criminal background checks for third-party providers working with dependants.

Tobacco Use Prevention and Education

We support:

- 245. State and federal tobacco use prevention and cessation programs.

Acronym:

ADA--- Americans with Disabilities Act

International Affairs

United Nations

We support:

- 246. Adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and ICESCR.
- 247. Payment of dues, and active participation in the U.N..
- 248. Participation in multilateral peacekeeping missions.
- 249. Full participation in the Human Rights Council.

International Law, Treaties, and Agreements

We support:

- 250. CEDAW, UNCRC, CTBT, BWC, RSICCJ, CWC, Ottawa Land Mine Treaty, and the Kyoto Treaty on Global Warming.
- 251. Development of and abidance by international law.
- 252. Adherence to the Geneva and Vienna Conventions.
- 253. International fair trade initiatives.

Development Assistance

We support:

- 254. Tying foreign aid to promotion of human rights.
- 255. Assistance for comprehensive reproductive health care and family planning.
- 256. Funding for prevention and treatment of pandemic and endemic diseases.
- 257. US funding of UN Millennium Development Goals.

We oppose:

- 258. Using the military in the war on drugs.

National Security

We support:

- 259. Peaceful resolution of conflicts, US engagement in cooperative diplomacy, development assistance, and multilateral solutions to international problems.
- 260. Combating the root causes of conflict and terrorism: poverty, illiteracy, injustice, economic exploitation, and denial of human rights.

261. Reduction of military aid to foreign countries.

We oppose:

262. Using terror as rallying cry for extended wars and conflict.

263. Development of new weapons of mass destruction.

264. Preemptive warfare.

265. All forms of torture.

Iraq

We support:

266. Orderly removal of all US combat troops and private security forces including Blackwater.

267. Transfer of power to the people of Iraq.

268. International efforts to rebuild Iraq.

269. Accountability of private security forces including prosecution for legal violations.

We oppose:

270. Permanent US military bases.

Israeli/Palestinian Conflict.

We support:

271. Two-state solution based on the Geneva Initiative of 2003.

272. A direct, active, and even-handed US role to facilitate a peaceful final resolution.

We oppose:

- 273. Israeli settlement activity on territory captured in the six-day war of 1967.
- 274. Moving the US embassy from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem prior to final resolution.
- 275. The Separation Wall.
- 276. Use of human shields, collective punishment and violations of international laws.

Asian Subcontinent

We support:

- 277. US and international efforts to promote peace, stability and fair governance.

Afghanistan

We support:

- 278. US and international infrastructure development.
- 279. Funding of social services.

Central and South America

We oppose:

- 280. Training, military, and financial support of repressive regime.
- 281. Mass aerial application of herbicides.

Africa

We support:

- 282. UN Security Council Resolution 1325.
- 283. Efforts to end armed conflicts.
- 284. Robust world effort to prevent and end genocide.
- 285. Collection of information about situations or threats of genocide.
- 286. Rapid international peacekeeping intervention in armed conflicts.

We oppose:

- 287. Illegal transfer of weapons to armed groups.
- 288. Amnesty for war criminals.
- 289. Rape as weapon of war.

Immigration and Refugees

We support:

- 290. Non-discriminatory immigration policy that considers undocumented immigrants.
- 291. Integration of immigrants without stressing assimilation/"Americanization".
- 292. Judicial review of visa denials and removal orders.
- 293. 'Point system' that allocates most value to family reunification.
- 294. Refugee policy based on humanitarian goals.
- 295. Development of economies of countries with high emigration rates.
- 296. Relaxing the "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship" requirement.

We oppose:

297. Limits on number of refugees admitted.

298. "Temporary worker programs".

Acronyms:

ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

CEDAW - UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

UNCRC - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

CTBT - Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

BWC - 1925 Geneva Protocol, the Biological Weapons Convention

RSICCJ - Rome Statute of the International Court of Criminal Justice

CWC - Chemical Weapons Convention