

Green Party of Onondaga County

2013 Platform

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The Green Party of Onondaga County is an independent political party committed to Grassroots Democracy, Nonviolence, Social Justice, and Ecology. To find out more about us visit our website at: <http://syracusegreens.nationbuilder.com/>. We are an affiliated county organization of the Green Party of New York State (<http://www.web.gpnys.com/>), which is affiliated with the Green Party of the United States, a confederation of Green Parties from states around the country ([.http://www.gp.org](http://www.gp.org)).

2013 Green Party of Onondaga County Platform Planks

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Preamble

The Green Party has a vision of our community's future that is informed by 10 key values.

1. Grassroots Democracy
2. Social Justice and Equal Opportunity
3. Ecological Wisdom
4. Nonviolence
5. Decentralization
6. Community-Based Economics and Economic Justice
7. Feminism and Gender Equality
8. Respect for Diversity
9. Personal and Global Responsibility
10. Future Focus and Sustainability

The Green Party is committed to value-based politics, as expressed in our ten key values. These values guide us in working for systemic change through action directed at the root causes of problems, not just the symptoms. In contrast, the Democratic and Republican Parties, whose members currently hold all elected offices in Syracuse and Onondaga County, offer little by way of analysis of our problems and seldom propose solutions that address root causes. They designate candidates who solicit campaign funds, largely from special interests that do business with government. Once in office, these candidates serve the interests of their campaign donors, rather than dealing with root causes of issues. Instead they generally act on symptoms once they become too big to ignore.

The Green Party's vision of governance, based on our ten core values, is embodied in this platform. It aims to strengthen the democratic power of the People, promote social and economic justice and heal the environment through direct action that targets the root causes of our local problems. The following table presents six examples of the root causes of problems we are facing and the actions that we believe target the root causes of these problems.

Root Cause	Direct Action
1. The roots of noncompetitive elections and low voter turnout grow out of private campaign financing of public elections and gerrymandered districts drawn to be "safe" for one party under the winner-take-all voting system.	Create competitive elections, fair representation of all political perspectives, and increased voter participation through proportional representation and public campaign financing
2. The roots of growing educational and income disparities and segregation by class, which overlaps with race, grow out of competition between municipal jurisdictions, urban and suburban sprawl, and disparities in the allocation of resources within the City and the County as well as decisions regarding zoning and land use planning.	Reduce sprawl, class segregation and inequality by restructuring governments and school districts in the county around a structure that combines centralized taxation, planning, revenue-sharing, and human rights enforcement with decentralized administration and grassroots accountability to neighborhood assemblies and town meetings as the grassroots direct democracies at the base of a confederated city-county government.

Root Cause

Direct Action

3. The roots of Syracuse's fiscal crisis grow out of a declining tax base and decreasing state and federal revenue sharing.

Revitalize Syracuse's fiscal health with progressive tax reforms and revenue sharing, such as a city income tax on the 60,000 plus who commute into the city to work, and land-value taxation that rewards property improvements in the city and discourages sprawl. Advocate at the state and federal levels for a Marshall Plan for our distressed cities that includes revenue to the city from a more progressive state tax and federal tax.

4. The roots of the decline of good-paying manufacturing and other jobs in locally-owned businesses grow out of the absentee-ownership of global corporations that have moved plants to other places with cheaper labor under repressive governments.

Revive the region's manufacturing and business base by targeting economic development assistance to locally-owned firms that are anchored in our community through ownership that is cooperative, public, or held in stocks whose voting rights are restricted to local residents.

5. The roots of street crime grow out of the lack of opportunities for education, employment, and recreation; as well as the war on drugs, which is really a war on the poor and people of color.

Provide disadvantaged youth and adults with good opportunities for education, work and recreation that save us the greater long-term costs of crime. Opt out of local support for the war of drugs.

6. The roots of environmental problems such as sprawl, degradation of Onondaga Lake, solid waste disposal, toxic pollutants, and global warming grow out of an economic development model that values short term profits and disregards long-term social and environmental costs.

Reorient economic development policies around the concept of ecological sustainability to assure that long-term social and environmental costs borne by the whole community can no longer be imposed by private developers and businesses in the quest for short-term profits.

The Green Party vision of participatory democracy, progressive taxation, local democratic ownership, ecological sustainability, and good opportunities for all is embodied in the Green Party of Onondaga County, 2013 Platform. Party platforms are a United States political invention that has become a lost tradition worth recovering at the local level. While it appears that the Democrats and Republicans do not have party platforms for their local candidates, Green Party candidates have pledged to support not only the Green Party's 10 core values but also the principles embodied in planks of this platform. We understand that voters may not agree with everything in the Green Party Platform. By putting forth a value-based platform of proposed actions that address the root causes of our problems voters can know where the Green Party stands on the issues.

Do you know where the candidates of the other parties stand on the issues we address in the platform?

The Green Party welcomes your comments, your questions, and your support. Contact us at syracusegreens@yahoo.com or Green Party of Onondaga County, P.O. Box 562, Syracuse NY 13205

10 Key Values

- 1. Grassroots Democracy:** Every human being deserves a say in the decisions that affect his or her life and should not be subject to the will of another. Therefore, we will work to increase public participation at every level of government and to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We will also work to create new types of political organizations which expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in the decision making process.
- 2. Social Justice and Equal Opportunity:** All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law.
- 3. Ecological Wisdom:** Human societies must operate with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature. We must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet. We support a sustainable society which utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation. To this end we must practice agriculture which replenishes the soil; move to an energy efficient economy; and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems.
- 4. Non-Violence:** It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments. We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in helpless situations. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.
- 5. Decentralization:** Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization. Therefore, we support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by and mostly benefits the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all citizens.
- 6. Community Based Economics:** Redesign our work structures to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy. Develop new economic activities and institutions that will allow us to use our new technologies in ways that are humane, freeing, ecological and accountable, and responsive to communities. Establish some form of basic economic security, open to all. Move beyond the narrow "job ethic" to new definitions of "work," "jobs" and "income" that reflect the changing economy. Restructure our patterns of income distribution to reflect the wealth created by those outside the formal monetary economy: those who take responsibility for parenting, housekeeping, home gardens, community volunteer work, etc. Restrict the size and concentrated power of corporations without discouraging superior efficiency or technological innovation.

7. Feminism and Gender Equity: We have inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics. We call for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domination and control with more cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender. Human values such as equity between the sexes, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience. We should remember that the process that determines our decisions and actions is just as important as achieving the outcome we want.

8. Respect for Diversity: We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines. We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We acknowledge and encourage respect for other life forms than our own and the preservation of biodiversity.

9. Personal and Global Responsibility: We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal wellbeing and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

10. Future Focus and Sustainability: Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or “unmaking” all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions. Make the quality of life, rather than open-ended economic growth, the focus of future thinking.

Section 1 Grassroots Democracy & Election Reform

Introduction

Our nation was born as the first great experiment in modern democracy. We seek to rescue that heritage from the erosion of citizen participation and dissolve the grip on public discourse by big-money interests that cast government as intrinsically opposed to liberty. All citizens should have the right and opportunity to participate in the political and economic decisions that affect their lives. Political power should be transferred from elected elites and bureaucracies to the people at the grassroots. The Green Party seeks to replace the vertical hierarchy of the centralized government, with a horizontal confederation of citizen assemblies.

Our guiding principle is to think globally and act locally. Community needs recognize a diversity of issues, and local control recognizes a variety of approaches to solving problems, ones that tend to be bottom-up not top-down. We take the conversation among informed citizens and the New England town meeting system of participatory democracy that dates back to colonial times to be the foundation of participatory democracy. Community is the basic unit of green politics because it is personal, value-oriented, and small enough for each member to have an impact. Community involvement is a foundation for public policy and we call for local governments to be organized accordingly.

We believe the power of civic action is an antidote to the control of government exercised by corporations and special interests groups. The pervasive abuse imposed by corporate power increasingly undermines our democracy. The Green Party seeks to rekindle the flame of strong, participatory democracy. As voting citizens, taxpayers, workers, consumers, and stakeholders, we unite to exercise our rights and, as Thomas Jefferson urged, to counteract the “excesses of the moneyed interests.” Toward this end, we consider serious reform of campaign funding, curbs on the influence of corporations on lawmakers and regulatory agencies, and fundamental election reform like preference balloting and proportional representation to be essential along with strong participatory democracy through neighborhood assemblies and town meetings to be essential to fulfill the promise of democracy.

The Green Party considers United States democracy to be an ongoing, unfolding project that is both an ethical ideal and a dynamic way of life that requires experimentation with new ways of creating a more human experience in which all share and to which all contribute. We are committed to the strengthening of our civil society, including the many mediating institutions at the community level that have always characterized our democracy. Everyone deserves the opportunity to influence the governmental decisions that affect them. To achieve genuine citizen participation, citizens must share in the power of governing. Greens seek to bring vibrant grassroots democracy to every community through fundamental reform of how policies are made and how elections are conducted, including election finance reform and conducting elections in more fair and representative ways that transform the predominant winner-take-all voting system which results in low voter participation, little choice or competition in countless elections, and far too few women, minorities and diverse policy perspectives in elected office.

Section 1 Grassroots Democracy & Election Reform

Policies

1-1. Honor, Respect & Trust Indigenous Nations: The Green Party's understanding of democracy, as an ethical ideal and a way of life, compels us to honor the heritage, respect the rights and trust the actions of the indigenous nations that we share a homeland with. We recognize the sovereignty of indigenous nations and support New York's recognition of the right of indigenous nations to self-determination and self-government.

1-1a. Negotiate Settlements of Grievances: We call for negotiated settlements of grievances and land rights actions of the Onondaga Nation and the other indigenous nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

1-1b. Support the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign: We support the "Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign" that seeks to restore the mutual commitment to friendship, peace between peoples, and living in parallel in perpetuity established in the chain of treaties between the Haudenosaunee and federal, state, and colonial governments.

1-2. Establish Neighborhood Assemblies & Town Meetings: The Green Party calls for establishing Neighborhood Assemblies and Town Meetings for direct democracy in city neighborhoods and county towns. The Neighborhood Assemblies and Town Meetings should be grassroots legislative assemblies, similar to New England Town Meetings open to all community residents.

1-2a. Create a New Grassroots Structure for Syracuse: Create Neighborhood Assemblies that reflect natural neighborhood patterns of affiliation to replace the current TNT Area Planning Councils. The new Neighborhood Assemblies should be open to all residents and address barriers to participation, such as transportation and child care. Assemblies should organize around criteria established by residents and city and county planning bodies.

1-2b. Organize Neighborhood Assemblies with Policy & Budget Authority: Neighborhood Assemblies and Town Meetings that meet established city and county criteria should have the power to instruct their elected representatives on policy issues and utilization of resources provided through city and county revenue sharing for neighborhood programs and projects.

1-2c. Create a Council of Neighborhood Assemblies: Each Neighborhood Assembly in the City of Syracuse should elect a representative to city-wide Council of Assemblies that is advisory to the Mayor, Common Council, Syracuse School Board, and representatives to county, state and federal governments.

1-3. Allow Citizen Initiated Referendums & Right of Recall: The Green Party supports amending the city and county charters to allow citizens to initiate legislation and to recall elected officials by initiative petitions that put proposed issues before the voters in a referendum. This should include enacting signature gathering standards that empower volunteer collection efforts and financial disclosure requirements that identify the sources of funding behind paid signature efforts and advocacy for or against ballot initiatives.

1-4. Promote Fair, Clean Money Elections & Electoral Reforms: Our fundamental commitment to strong, participatory democracy compels us to call for fair elections with full public financing, clean money, and proportional representation that transform the predominant winner-take-all voting system

that results in low voter participation, little choice or competition in countless elections, and far too few women, minorities, and political viewpoints in elected office.

1-4a. **Promote Full Public Financing, Clean Money Campaigns:** We call for systems of full public campaign financing at all levels of government to stem the domination of big money and corporate power in our political system. These systems should provide for full public campaign financing through clean money that is awarded as equal grants to all ballot qualified candidates, not partial matching funds that only provide supplemental public funds to privately financed campaigns.

1-4b. **Require Full Financial Disclosure:** The Green Party believes that full disclosure of financial interests from all candidates running for local public office, including source of salary and non-salaried income, is required to help prevent moneyed special interests from controlling elections.

1-4c. **Establish Equal Ballot Access:** We advocate eliminating all ballot access laws and rules that currently favor the two major political parties and discriminate against smaller parties and independent candidates; and place an undue burden on the right of citizens to run for office We call for reducing the number of petition signatures required for independent candidates to gain ballot access.

1-4d. **Utilize Instant Runoff Elections:** We support electing all single seat offices, such as Mayor, County Executive, district Common Councilors, and County Legislators by preference voting, where voters rank their choices in order of preference and a candidate must take more than 50% of the vote to win. If no one wins a majority in the first round, second choice votes of the last place candidate are distributed and counted, and this process continues until a candidate exceeds 50% of the vote.

1-4e. **Implement Proportional Representation:** We support replacing the winner-take-all system with proportional representation in order to give all ethnic communities and political viewpoints their fair share of representation and power. We believe that a more just representation of diverse demographics and viewpoints will result from electing both the County Legislature and the Syracuse Common Council by a “mixed-member” system of proportional representation in which half the representatives are elected by district, half at-large, and the overall composition proportionally represents the voters' support for each party. Schools Boards should also be elected with proportional representation through ranked choice balloting.

1-5. **Restore Full Voting Rights for Felons:** The Green Party advocates changing New York State law to permit individuals convicted of a felony to vote while incarcerated or on parole. We also call for criminal justice officials to inform individuals of the current law that allows felons upon completion of a sentence (including parole) to exercise their right to vote provided that they register with their county board of elections.

Section 2 Education for Lifelong Learning & Citizenship

Introduction

A great challenge facing the people of the United States is to educate ourselves to build a just, sustainable, democratic future and become responsible citizens of the local and global communities we share. The Green Party believes every child deserves a quality public education that fosters critical and holistic thought, and provides the breadth and depth of learning necessary to become a constructive member of society. We do not believe our public school system, as it presently operates, helps us reach that goal.

The Green Party views learning as a lifelong and life-affirming process to which all people should have equal access. We cannot state more forcefully our belief that in learning, and in openness to learning, we find the foundation of our Platform. It is commonplace to say that education should not cease when one leaves school. When this commonplace expression is taken seriously it reveals the true purpose of school, to ensure the continuance of education throughout life by organizing the experience of the student, and the students' understanding of backward and forward connections between consequences and events, to ensure continued growth. This basic truth is lost when education is narrowly viewed as preparation for a later phase in life. The Green Party believes in education, not training or indoctrination. We do not think that schools should turn our children into students, employees, consumers or citizens who are servile. We must teach our children and youth to ask questions, to develop critical consciousness, to be leaders; and we must challenge them with great works of literature, science, economics, philosophy, history, music, and the arts.

The Green Party is strongly opposed to the movement toward privatization of education through charter schools that are not accountable to the public, vouchers and other mechanisms that take education out of the public domain. We believe that the best educational experience is guaranteed by the democratic empowerment of organized students, their parents, educators and other community stakeholders.

We also call attention to the results of a quarter century of corporate funding from the likes of the Bradley Foundation, Wal-Mart Family Foundations, the Gates Foundation, the Eli Broad Foundation and a decade of No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top — a vast, well-endowed sector which seeks to regiment schools through rigid standardization, to reduce the influence of teachers unions, and to privatize or dismantle public education. We are especially troubled by the growing power of corporate educational consultancies that are using the conjunction of the Common Core State Standards (known as Common Core Learning Standards in New York), high stakes testing and data mining to influence the educational agenda in ways that usurp public control of schools and the education of our children.

We must stop the disinvestment in public education and instead put it at the top of our social, economic and political agenda. Too many of our teachers are overworked, underpaid, and starved of key resources. We must be more generous to our schools so that our children will learn what generosity is, and know enough to be able to be generous to others in return.

Section 2

Education for Lifelong Learning & Citizenship

Policies

2-1. Guarantee Free Public Education from Pre-K thru 4 Yr. Post-secondary School: The Green Party views education for life-long learning and citizenship as a pillar of democracy and essential for economic justice. All children are entitled to a free, quality public education from pre-k through four years of post high school education. Toward that end, we support the Say Yes Scholars program that provides free college tuition at New York State Colleges and private compact schools for qualified students. The Green Party calls for the expansion of the Say Yes Scholars program to include tuition for remedial courses that prepare students for college level work and funding for trade schools. In the long term, we support free public higher education for all not just residents of Syracuse who qualify as Say Yes Scholars.

2-2. Strengthen Our Public Education System: The Green Party considers a strong public education system that is adequately funded to provide a quality education to every student in every school in the Syracuse City School District (SCSD) to be essential for the economic and cultural development of our community. We call for the immediate restoration of state funding to 2007 levels and structural reform of the state funding formula to guarantee equity funding to urban and rural school districts to eliminate state funding inequities that have forced the SCSD to eliminate large numbers of instructional personnel and essential resources.

2-2a. Establish Fiscal Equity for State Funding: We support the goals advocated by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) to advance the legal rights of all New York schoolchildren to a sound basic and quality education under state and federal law. We call for full implementation of the Foundation Aid Formula established through the Education Budget and Reform Act of 2007 that was designed to ensure adequacy and equity in state school funding by establishing a relationship between state aid, the needs of students and a district's ability to raise revenue; and the restoration of all funds lost in the intervening years due to state budget cuts.

2-2b. Give the SCSD Board of Education Full Tax & Budget Authority: Local taxes comprise about 18% of the current SCSD budget. We support state legislation to give the "Big Five" city school districts, which includes Syracuse the option to have the same financial authority held by other school districts in the state. The Syracuse City School Board, which sets educational policy, should have the power to set spending levels and tax rates for the SCSD, subject only to a public vote as is the case for other districts throughout New York State.

2-2c. Use Progressive Taxes to Support Public Education: We believe that the quality of a child's education should not depend upon the wealth of their local community. Therefore, we believe that the long term solution to inequities in school funding requires progressive, broad-based taxes as an alternative to the regressive property tax. The state must guarantee that adequate funding is available for schools in every community to meet minimum standards for education.

2-2d. Link Economic Development and Educational Policy: We call for the city and county to link economic development and educational policy to focus on inner city economic revitalization and mandate a percentage of jobs created be available for local residents so students can believe their education will lead to real job opportunities and improvement in the quality of their lives.

2-3. Create Neighborhood-Based Community Schools: The Green Party believes that student and community interests are best served by neighborhood-based community schools that have strong partnerships with the communities in which they are located. We believe that schools which are fully integrated into the community by contributing to the quality of life of the neighborhood and benefiting from its support are safer and stronger with students who are more committed and successful.

2-3a Redraw School Feeder Patterns to Increase Diversity: We recognize the effect that race, class and housing discrimination have in low performing schools thereby causing many families to transfer away from their neighborhood schools. To address this problem we call for the SCSD to redraw school feeder patterns so as to reduce segregation and increase diversity in schools (see also section 3-2).

2-3b. Distribute Resources Equitably: The SCSD must distribute resources among schools to create an equitable allocation that provides all students with the resources required to meet their educational needs at their neighborhood schools.

2-3c. Increase the Percentage of Students Who Choose Neighborhood schools: We believe that by allocating resources equitably across all schools, more students will choose to attend their neighborhood schools, thus reducing the number of administrative transfer requests and saving a significant portion of 5% of the district's annual budget that is currently spent on busing. Funds not spent on busing students who transfer to schools out of their neighborhood could be reallocated to the classroom to improve classroom instruction and enhance classroom resources.

2-3d. Open Schools for Life Long Education, Recreation and Socialization: We consider schools to be valuable community assets that are underutilized. Schools belong to the community and should be open from early morning to late evening to provide life-long educational, recreational, and social opportunities for community members.

2-3e. Use the Community as a Classroom: Communities offer learning opportunities for students, such as ecology education at local parks, entrepreneurship education at local businesses, and civic engagement at Neighborhood Assemblies and neighborhood organizational meetings. We call for engaging students in community educational activities during and after the school day.

2-3f. Provide Neighborhood Services in Schools: We believe that schools should serve as neighborhood centers housing services such as health and mental health care, day care centers, food pantries, recreational activities and continuing education for all ages, and space for Neighborhood Assemblies and other community organizations to meet.

2-3g. Provide Residency Incentives for SCSD Staff: The Green Party believes that administrators, teachers, and other staff who live in the communities they serve are better equipped to understand the dynamics of specific neighborhoods and student needs. We believe the best way to advance community residency for SCSD staff is to establish a proactive incentive program that rewards them for living in the City of Syracuse.

2-4. Engage Community Stakeholders in the Shared Responsibility of Education: The Green Party strongly supports the SCSD "Family and Community Involvement Policy" (#1900) that states, "Education is the shared responsibility of the student, family, school, and community." We consider the strength of partnerships developed between community stakeholders and schools to be a vital factor in determining student success and find the district's efforts to engage community stakeholders in the work of education to lag far behind what is required. Therefore we call for the district to redouble its efforts to develop, implement and evaluate its community involvement policies and practices.

2-4a. Convene a District Wide Shared Responsibility Task Force: We call for the formation of a district-wide task force comprised of students, family members, teachers and other school personnel, and community members to create greater opportunities for effective community stakeholder engagement. Members should be self-selected for this task force based on an expressed interest and a commitment to do the necessary work, and the task force should identify steps to be taken at the neighborhood and district levels to better implement SCSD Policy #1900.

2-4b. Restructure & Expand Shared Decision-Making in Site Based Planning: We call for restructuring and expanding the current school improvement process to develop and advance authentic family and community stakeholder participation in site-based-planning and shared decision-making to address barriers to parent and community member participation, such as when meetings are held, how agendas are created, how meetings are conducted, how information is shared and the balance between community stakeholders and staff members.

2-5. Support Teachers & Instructional Staff: We strongly believe that teachers and other instructional staff play a vital role in the growth and academic success of students. We object to the way that Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and “high stakes” testing are being used in the evaluation of teachers (see also section 2-7). These practices, along with the an excessive reliance on “outside consultants” as change agents devalues the knowledge and experience of teachers as professional educators and undermines the support they need to be effective. It is essential that teachers and other instructional staff are provided with the necessary time, material resources and support to fully utilize their knowledge and experience in educating students and working collaboratively with all stakeholders to create classroom and school environments conducive to the growth and academic success of students.

2-6. Focus Resources on Classroom Instruction & Student Growth: The Green Party calls for the SCSD to target any increased revenues that become available for classroom instruction and direct student support to improve the material conditions of students and educators. Activities that we deem especially worthy of additional funding are:

- Universal Pre-K;
- Up-to-date textbooks, classroom technology;
- Remedial programs for students not achieving at grade level;
- Enrichment programs for advanced students at all levels;
- Reduced class size.

2-7. Create a Positive Educational Culture with Safe & Orderly Schools: The Green Party believes a positive educational culture is an essential component of academic success. We support the development and implementation of an effective Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in every school that offers incentives for positive student engagement and defines universal expectations for positive student behavior to create a positive learning community in every school.

2-7a. Provide Alternative In-School Education & Support for Disruptive Students: We believe that every school must provide space and personnel for alternative educational programs and support services for disruptive students who need to be removed from the classrooms for disciplinary reasons. We call for the district to ensure that students on in-school-suspension (ISS) receive at least the same level and intensity of instruction as they would in the classroom and additional support services that address the root causes of the disruptive behaviors.

2-7b. Use Out-Of-School Suspension as a Means of Last Resort: We assert that out-of-school suspension (OSS) should be the option of last resort to be utilized only when the well being of students or school personnel is threatened. We are mindful of the ways in which race, ethnicity, class and gender factor into ISS and OSS, and we implore the district to ensure that disciplinary problems are handled evenly across all demographic categories.

2-7c. Update and Consistently Apply the District-Wide Disciplinary Policy: We recognize the efforts that the SCSD is taking to address current issues related to the content and application of the district's code of conduct. We fully support an open and transparent process that involves students, teachers and other building personnel, district-wide personnel, families, and community stakeholders in the continuing review of the *Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities and Code of Conduct* and related SCSD disciplinary policies. Any resulting policy must insure the civil and educational rights of all students. Penalties imposed for disruptive behaviors must take student learning into account. Students and parents must be fully informed of their rights and responsibilities with regard to disciplinary action, and OSS must be the action of last resort. Any disciplinary action taken in the schools must be imposed equitably across all gender and demographic categories. The use of "termination of the day" disciplinary action must cease immediately.

2-8. Develop an Assessment System Focused on Student & Teacher Growth: The Green Party considers qualitative and quantitative assessments of student progress and teacher effectiveness to be essential to achieving growth and accountability. We recognize the value of a comprehensive assessment system to provide teachers with qualitative and quantitative data that guides instruction, promotes student learning (including critical thinking skills) and ensures accountability.

2-8a. Assert Local Control over Student, Teacher & Administrator Assessment: We believe that teachers and school building administrators must be accountable for student intellectual development, including classroom instruction and creating building environments conducive to learning. We call for teachers to be given greater authority in decision-making regarding student assessments than is currently the case under the existing Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) protocol and state mandated testing protocols. Decisions to reassign or fire teachers and close schools should not be based upon student performance on standardized tests, but rather on an assessment system based upon multiple factors using locally developed or approved tools that meet state standards.

2-8b. Empower Families, Educators & Communities to Control Their Schools: We are fundamentally opposed to the proliferation of "high stakes testing" implemented in response to federal and state mandates that creates a test focused ethos and draws valuable time and resources from teaching and learning. We are especially troubled by the growing power of corporate educational consultancies that are using the conjunction of the Common Core State Standards (know as Common Core Learning Standards in New York), high stakes testing, and data mining to influence the educational agenda in ways that usurp public control of schools and the education of their children. We believe the SCSD should not outsource control over the assessment of students' intellectual development to private companies that seek to re-organize education in ways that serve their ideological and market interests rather than the educational interests of students and the local community. We call for efforts to educate students, families and school personnel about their options regarding high stakes testing. We encourage the district to join others in resisting state and federal mandates that threaten reduced funding for schools that opt-out of high stakes testing and we call for an end to data mining programs that provide private corporations with access to student and family data.

2-9. Provide Differentiated Instruction & Targeted Supports: The Green Party believes that for all students to achieve at a level commensurate with their talents it is essential to provide differentiated instruction and targeted supports based on the learning style and needs of each student. To this end, classroom teachers must be provided with the authority, adequate support staff and necessary resources in the classroom to individualize instruction, content and technique to maximize individual student learning.

2-10. Provide a Diverse Curriculum beyond the Required Basic Education: The Green Party supports the 2003 court's decision in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity vs. State of New York case which defined the constitutional responsibility of New York "to provide a system of common schools wherein all children may be educated," to mean "a sound basic education" that includes an "opportunity for a meaningful high school education, one which prepares them to function productively as civic participants." We understand this to include a basic core curriculum that prepares students to meet the minimum requirements for a high school degree in New York State and a robust, differentiated curriculum with offerings in career, technical and vocational education, technology and engineering, the arts and other courses that provide opportunities to expand students' educational horizons, explore their interests, develop their talents to the fullest extent possible.

2-11. Provide Healthy School Environments that Support Sustainable Communities: The Green Party calls for the SCSD to address the nutritional and environmental health of students and provide them with healthy ways to communicate, relate, make decisions and resolve conflicts. The district should provide healthy school meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, and offer plant-based vegetarian options. The sale of sodas, sweet drinks and junk food should be replaced by healthy snacks; and pouring rights programs that use schools as vehicles for corporate promotions should be banned.

2-11a. Teach Non-Violent Strategies: We encourage the teaching of non-violent communication and decision-making to students, such as cooperation over competitiveness, consensus building, and the impact of language on relationships in order to help reduce violence in the schools and community. Non-violent communication and decision-making should also be practiced at all levels within the school environment.

2-11b. Develop Farm-to-School & School-Based Gardening Programs: We urge the SCSD to develop relationships with local growers leading to farm-to-school programs that provide food from local farms and educational opportunities for students to learn about sustainable agriculture. We also urge schools to enhance existing school-based organic gardening programs and establish new programs in as many schools as possible that educate students in areas such as ecology, biology, math and English language arts and provide food for school meal programs and to be taken home for family meals.

2-11c. Provide Students with Daylight Illumination Wherever Feasible: We recognize research that documents the greater benefits of natural lighting over artificial fluorescent lighting and urge the design of schools to take advantage of daylight illumination in educational spaces wherever possible.

2-11d. Test for Toxins & Provide Remediation as Required: We call for the district to provide a healthy environment for students that is free of toxins in building materials and of particulate matter that filters into classrooms from idling buses and other machinery.

2-11e. **Provide Outdoor Time for Students in All Grades:** We find compelling evidence to support the relationship between times spent in outdoor activities and increases in the health and well-being of individuals. We consider the elimination of recess time for younger students in favor of increased instructional time to be a false economy; and we believe that scheduling should provide time for students to be out-of-doors during the school day for recreational or education purposes.

2-12. **Enhance the JSCB Master Plan Implementation:** The Green Party supports the Joint School Construction Board (JSCB) Phase II legislation (S3435-A DeFrancisco / A-472-A Magnorelli) and implementation of Phase II construction to continue the school district's facility modernization program for an additional 20 facility projects. We also urge the JSCB to be more proactive in developing a Phase III plan as soon as the funding and plan for implementation of Phase II is in place. We oppose recent changes to the composition of the JSCB that reduce the 3 seats currently held by Syracuse Common Councilors and the 3 seats currently held by Board of Education Commissioners to 1 Councilor appointed by the Mayor and 1 Commissioner appointment by the SCSD Superintendent.

Section 3 Housing & Neighborhoods

Introduction

The Green Party vision for the future of Syracuse includes building communities that nurture families, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate children, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions.

All people have a right to a home and to be secure in their tenancy. However, there is a lack of affordable, code compliant housing throughout the City of Syracuse. The lack of affordable housing is a special problem in more stable neighborhoods where low income people and people of color are often denied housing based upon a generalized financial profile or group affiliation and not their individual circumstances. Instead of enacting zoning laws to increase affordable housing, the trend has too often been to increase the proportion of land zoned for commercial property at the expense of residential property. Instead of providing funding to increase affordable housing, amount of funds dedicated to this purpose is decreasing. Housing discrimination against people of color, immigrants, disabled, single people, gays and lesbians, and families with children remains a serious problem.

Compounding these concerns is the long-term stagnation of workers' real wages, which further exacerbates the housing availability and affordability crisis. At the same time those who are not housed are often hounded, threatened, and often cannot obtain badly needed services. While increased affordable housing can help alleviate the problem of homelessness, the homeless have additional needs that go far beyond housing.

The Green Party views social diversity as the wellspring of community life where old and young, rich and poor, and people of all races and beliefs can interact individually and learn to care for each other, and to understand and cooperate. Syracuse neighborhoods should function like mini-villages within a larger metropolitan area, offering basic retail, green space, and social opportunities within a reasonable walking distance that are safe, offer high quality of life to its residents, and provide opportunities for people to come together in community. Many neighborhood business districts are filled with vacant storefronts, commercial establishments that do not offer basic retail services, are crime ridden, and are surrounded by deteriorating infrastructure and inadequate lighting that does not support safe pedestrian and bicycle travel to commerce and social opportunities.

We support the development of neighborhood based retail districts and community-based worker-owned enterprises. We call for increased public transportation, convenient playgrounds and parks for all sections of cities and small towns, and funding to encourage diverse neighborhoods. We support a rich milieu of art, culture, and significant (yet modestly funded) programs such as the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. We emphasize a return to local, face-to-face relationships that humans can understand and care about as the foundation of civic life and political engagement.

Section 3 Housing & Neighborhoods

Policies

3-1. Assert the Right to Quality, Affording Housing: The Green Party asserts that all people have a right to affordable, code-compliant housing and security in their tenancy. Guaranteeing this right requires increased availability of a range of housing options, access to resources for housing, maintenance, and means for individuals to access housing opportunities.

3-1a Increase Affordable Housing for Low to Median Income Families: We recognize that the only way to guarantee the right to housing is to ensure an adequate supply of affordable, code-compliant housing that can be maintained over time. We call for the City of Syracuse to create a Local Housing Trust Fund that is capitalized in part by funds collected by City Housing Court to match federal and state resources to provide affordable housing for low to median income families.

3-1b. Provide Adequate Housing for Homeless & Vulnerable Populations: We understand that homelessness is a multi-faceted problem that warrants a multi-faceted response. An adequate supply of affordable, no cost emergency housing and affordable transitional housing must be developed and maintained along with an interconnected service delivery system that works with individuals and families to address the root causes of homelessness. Day facilities, either at homeless and transitional housing sites, or as a separate facility, must be established to enable homeless individuals and families to be sheltered during the day and kept from roaming city streets. Interventions are needed to assist vulnerable individuals and families who are unduly burdened by the cost of housing, or “doubled up,” to prevent them from becoming homeless as well.

3-1c. Provide Assistance to Owner Occupants to Maintain their Homes: We recognize that many homeowners do not possess the resources to address the maintenance of their deteriorating older homes. Effective code enforcement is a necessary tool to identify homes that are in need of rehabilitation, particularly those not fit for human habitation. However, we believe the city should go beyond code enforcement to create a local Housing Trust Fund that is capitalized to match federal and state resources in providing grants and loans for income eligible home owners to enable them to maintain their homes in code compliant condition.

3-1d. Provide Effective Code Enforcement for Investor Owned Homes: We support a code enforcement system that not only cites investor owners for code deficiencies in their single and multi-family homes, but also has adequate tools to force remediation of code deficiencies. As an alternative to permitting owners to vacate code deficient structures, we believe the city should have the authority to use rents and fines to put occupied properties into receivership and remediate deficiencies.

3-1e. Ensure that Vacant Properties Do Not Adversely Impact Neighborhoods: The Green Party believes that the city must use all tools at its disposal to reduce the large number of vacant properties blighting Syracuse's neighborhoods. This should include implementation of a Vacant Property Registry that requires owners of vacant properties to register them and pay an annual, escalating fee to retain them as vacant properties. We also call for the city to reach out to owners of vacant properties and encourage them to donate their properties to the Greater Syracuse Property Development Corporation (Land Bank) and receive a tax deduction for their donation. As

a last resort, we support using the right of eminent domain to seize vacant, tax delinquent, code deficient properties and turn them over to the Land Bank for management in order to rid neighborhoods of blighted, unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

3-1f. Encourage the Development of Non-Traditional Housing: We understand that not all individuals are physically, mentally, or economically able to maintain their existing housing and a variety of options are needed to re-house these individuals/families. We believe the city should consider adjusting its zoning and code enforcement regulations to permit various non-traditional housing types in all zoning areas, as well as to permit construction of ramps in the fronts of houses.

3-2. Diversify Homogenous Neighborhoods: The Green Party values diversity and calls for the city of Syracuse to identify, develop, and implement policies and practices that promote economically, racially, ethnically and socially diverse neighborhoods.

3-2a. Promote Mixed Income Housing throughout the City: We call for the creation of affordable housing options throughout the city for low income individuals and families and incentives for higher income individuals and families to locate in lower income neighborhoods. This should include targeting resources to lower income neighborhoods to make them more attractive to prospective middle and higher income residents. This should also include utilization of tools like Community Land Trusts to protect low income residents against being driven out of their neighborhoods by rising property values, rising rents, and gentrification.

3-2b. Use Zoning Tools to Foster Diversity: We believe that tools such as inclusionary zoning can be important mechanisms for diversifying neighborhoods. We support using inclusionary zoning to integrate low income individuals and families into new or substantially rehabilitated developments of five or more units.

3-2c. Make Enforcement of Fair Housing a High Priority: We support using neighborhood assemblies, libraries, schools, places of worship, and other venues where people congregate to provide fair housing education and to recruit testers of fair housing regulations. We call for adding “source of income” as a protected class to insure that persons on public assistance or Section 8 vouchers are not denied housing based on their sources of income. We also support amending the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to increase access of eligible families to higher income communities, by including higher rents where necessary, improving administrative portability of vouchers across jurisdictional lines, re-establishing housing mobility programs to assist voucher-holders seeking to move to higher opportunity areas, creating strong incentives and performance goals for administering agencies, and providing incentives to recruit new landlords into the program.

3-2d. Protect the Right to Housing in the Neighborhood of Choice: We believe that all individuals have the right to housing in any city neighborhood they choose regardless of the group or class with which they may be identified. No individual should be denied the right to housing in a chosen neighborhood based upon negative, reputed stereotypical behaviors of members of the group or class with which the individual may be identified, regardless of whether or not that group is a protected class under fair housing laws.

3-3. Create Safe Neighborhoods with Access to Essential Services: The Green Party calls for planning and policy that advances the creation of safe neighborhoods with easy access to essential services and the means for a high quality life. We believe required features of such neighborhoods are:

- Accessible sidewalks that are well maintained;

- A municipal program for snow removal from sidewalks;
- Crosswalks that are in good repair & uniformly marked throughout the city;
- Sidewalk level lighting;
- Mass transit/parking options to facilitate movement of people;
- Community policing & staffed police storefronts in neighborhood business districts.
- Improve enforcement of parking, trash, noise & other quality of life ordinances.

3-4. Promote Neighborhood Retail Districts & Worker Owned Enterprises: The Green Party supports the development of neighborhood based retail districts and worker owned enterprises by focusing economic development resources on establishing and maintaining neighborhood-scale essential retail services in neighborhood business districts. This should including providing seed money for worker owned cooperatives and incentives for neighborhood-based retail establishments to hire local residents (see also sec. 4-5 through 4-8).

3-5. Promote Neighborhood Based Civic Engagement, Education & Recreation: The Green Party believes that the quality of life and genuine citizen participation in civic affairs is most vital and rewarding when it is grounded in daily life at the neighborhood level. Neighborhood Assemblies (see also sec. 1-2 through 1-2c) will offer opportunities for citizen engagement and leadership development. Neighborhood schools that serve as community centers can provide opportunities for lifelong learning, the delivery of health care, socialization and recreation to complement existing community centers and neighborhood organizations and libraries (see also sec. 2-3 through 2-3f).

3-6. Use Parks for Recreation Activities that Bring People Together: The Green Party supports actions by the Syracuse City Department of Parks, Recreation and Youth Programs to sponsor and promote activities that bring people together in socialization, recreation and celebration. This should include providing large parks serving multiple and diverse neighborhoods with professional staff who are able to bring together a diversity of residents and engage them in social and recreational activities. We also support provide a mix of recreational and social activities in parks during all seasons; and the use of a multi-media approach to market recreation and social activities in parks.

3-7. Promote the Greening of Syracuse at the Neighborhood Level: The Green Party supports the development and promotion of neighborhood based leadership and action in the Greening of Syracuse. We support the development of partnerships that bring the expertise of SUNY ESF and other organizations or businesses with green expertise to disseminate knowledge about tree stewardship, gardening, rainwater savings, and other green activities to neighborhood leaders and provide neighborhood leaders with resources to share what they have learned with residents. We believe that a focused effort between the City of Syracuse and its partners in the greening of Syracuse based on neighborhood leadership and action would result in desired outcomes like:

- Neighborhood tool-lending sheds;
- Neighborhood seed & plantings exchanges;
- Reforestation of neighborhoods through tree planting & resident tree stewardship;
- Development of greenways between parks & other green spaces;
- Support pedestrian traffic through improved sidewalk & crosswalk infrastructure;
- Create & maintain a comprehensive system of bike pathways.

3-8. Encourage the Strategic Re-densification of Syracuse's Neighborhoods: The Green Party calls for the identification of zones within City neighborhoods to be targeted for housing development

and neighborhood improvement to attract residents. These zones should be adjacent to schools and neighborhood business districts and should promote the rehabilitation or reuse of existing housing.

3-9. Promote Rehabilitation & Deconstruction over New Construction & Demolition: The Green Party supports the prioritization of rehabilitation over new construction. We support requiring funded housing development agencies to exhaust all rehabilitation opportunities before being permitted to engage in new construction of affordable housing. Similarly, we support promoting deconstruction when possible rather than demolition with earmarked funding for deconstruction and a strong partnership with Habitat for Humanity to expand the scope of ReStore and improve its retail capabilities (see also sec. 7-1e & 7-4 to 7-4b).

Section 4 Jobs & Community Enterprise

Introduction

The Green Party believes there is plenty of work to be done to close the gap between the richest and the poorest in our society that will enrich our communities in ecologically sustainable ways. We must develop these opportunities by working to build a new economy in which workers and consumers exercise democratic control (and ownership) over economic decisions. Everyone who wants to work must be entitled to a stable job at a living wage.

To build this new economy the Green Party puts forth a bold vision of community based economics for Syracuse and Onondaga County. We propose to redesign our economic system and the structure of work to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy that will lead to a broader income distribution and restrict the size and concentrated power of corporations without compromising efficiency or technological innovation.

Unemployment in Syracuse has hovered around 10% since the summer of 2009. It has been estimated that in the city's poorer neighborhoods and among people of color and youth, this rate is as high as 50%. This lack of employment leads people to engage in illegal enterprises, such as the manufacture and sale of Schedule 1 drugs and prostitution in order to generate income to support themselves and their families, leading to mass incarceration of young men of color. While inner city residents languish without jobs, neighborhood business districts no longer provide essential retail and social opportunities.

We offer both short and long term solutions to address these issues by creating employment opportunities at living wages for Syracuse residents and homegrown, locally-owned businesses, including worker-owned cooperatives and stock corporations where voting shares are restricted to city residents (like the Green Bay Packers model) to assure that private enterprises that receive public support remain in Syracuse employing its residents. In the short term, Syracuse needs a Community Hiring Hall, an expanded Living Wage Law, and a return to the enforcement of the Equal Employment Opportunity ordinance to bring living wage employment opportunities to city residents. Public job banks should be established so that people who cannot find decent work in the private sector can take a quality publicly funded job. These public jobs would be the core of a democratically organized system of rewarding and ecologically sustainable work that fulfills community-defined needs and promotes ecologically sound development.

Longer term solutions we propose include large scale development of locally owned businesses, including worker cooperatives and city resident-owned enterprises, through the creation of a Municipal Development Bank; public ownership of utilities and public control of public access to the city's cable franchise; and a community full employment program.

The Green Party supports reforms that give communities more control over their own local economies. We support decentralization, and call for a community-based economy whose aim is local prosperity and self-sufficiency. We support local production, local manufacturing, local sales, and local recycling wherever whenever possible. We encourage face-to-face relationships with local business owners and shopkeepers. Successful local Green communities nurture people of all ages, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; thereby creating cities and towns that educate everyone, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources. Green communities build local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivate citizens to participate in decision-making.

Section 4 Jobs & Community Enterprise

Policies

4-1. Update & Enforce the Equal Employment Opportunity Program: The Green Party believes that the quickest way to get living wage jobs to city residents is to insure they are getting their fair share of jobs created by public spending with City of Syracuse contractors. The Equal Employment Opportunity Program authorized in City of Syracuse Ordinance 302 in 1973 is not being enforced. The ordinance authorizing the Equal Employment Opportunity Program should be updated to incorporate hiring goals for minorities and city residents that correspond to the demographics of Syracuse today. The staffing of the Division of Contract Compliance and Minority Affairs in the City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development should be increased so it can monitor and enforce the Equal Employment Opportunity Program. The Syracuse/Onondaga Human Rights Commission should be re-established to monitor and help enforce the City of Syracuse's Equal Employment Opportunity Program and other anti-discrimination policies in the city and county.

4-2. Enforce & Expand Living Wage Laws: The Green Party supports the enforcement and expansion of living wage laws to ensure that full time workers are paid enough to make their families economically self-sufficient. The Syracuse Living Wage Ordinance requires covered workers to be paid an hourly wage of at least \$12.19 with health coverage and \$14.40 without health coverage. This ordinance should be expanded so that it covers all workers of the City of Syracuse and its contractors, including employers receiving economic development benefits who are now not covered. The Green Party also calls for Onondaga County to pass a comparable expanded living wage law.

4-3. Establish Community Hiring Halls: The Green Party calls for amending the Living Wage Ordinance to require that the City of Syracuse and its contractors adhere to a first source hiring agreement that requires they first seek qualified new employees at city-certified Community Hiring Halls. The Community Hiring Halls should be operated by community-based nonprofits and a city agency that gives hiring priority to qualified city residents for jobs created through city departments, city contracting, and publicly subsidized economic development projects if they are not meeting minority and city resident employment goals. Community Hiring Halls would serve as the principal form of affirmative action to meet the numerical goals and timetables of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program.

4-4. Create a Community Full Employment Program The Green Party believes the right to a job at a living wage should be a constitutionally enforceable right. The city should partner with its state and federal legislators to work to create programs of direct public employment to provide good jobs to every working age person willing and able to work who cannot find private employment. Pending the enactment of such programs at the state and federal level, the city should enact a Community Full Employment Program. A federal program would be the most cost effective, because the savings from safety net expenditures of unemployment insurance and various forms of federal public assistance for income, food, housing, health care, heating, and the like would largely offset the cost of employing people to meet community needs. But the city can enact a demonstration program, using what funding is available, to use revenue producing public enterprise, as well as public service jobs, to employ unused resources (labor, physical plant) to satisfy unmet needs (child care, youth recreation, snow removal, smaller school class sizes, replacement of imported consumer goods that can be made locally, recycling and reprocessing waste into raw materials, housing rehabilitation, energy conservation, city

parks restoration, and so on). Like the Depression era Works Progress Administration, where cities and counties designed public works and public service projects that were 90 percent funded by the federal government, the city can plan such projects and begin to employ the unemployed to the extent local resources permit and to the extent state and federal funding can be obtained.

4-5. Create a Municipal Development Bank The Green Party believes that in the long term Syracuse needs a more proactive approach to job creation and business development through the creation of a Municipal Development Bank with an entrepreneurial planning department to create community enterprises where the ownership structure anchors the business to the community and its net income (profit) remains in the community. While the bank's planning department would assist conventional proprietorships, partnerships, and corporate enterprises, it would prioritize community enterprises like worker and consumer cooperatives, municipal public enterprises, and stock corporations where share voting rights can only be exercised by residents (like the Green Bay Packers).

4-6. Prioritize Economic Development Incentives for Community Enterprises: The Green Party recognizes that creating a Municipal Development Bank will take time to develop and have an impact. In the short term The Green Party supports promoting the development of community enterprises through existing economic development resources like the Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO). The Green Party believes that if the taxpayers pay for it, the public should own it. Development subsidies should be transformed into public investments in both municipal public enterprises and private enterprises anchored to the community, such as cooperatives and community held stock-corporations. The Green Party also supports the following reforms to the City of Syracuse's economic development programs:

4-6a. Provide SEDCO Loans for Non-Profits & Cooperatives: We believe that the City of Syracuse's policy that prevents SEDCO loans to non-profits and cooperatives should be changed to make SEDCO loans to non-profits and cooperatives an important development tool.

4-6b. Create a Cooperative Incubator: We support the creation of a business start-up incubator to assist workers of new cooperatives to plan, finance, and start the business. When the workers are capable of managing the business on their own, they would purchase it out of business revenues and loans, with the money recycling to the incubator to finance further new cooperatives. This incubator would become the entrepreneurial planning department at a Municipal Development Bank.

4-6c. Educate on the Development of Cooperatives: We believe education on the development of cooperatives should be provided by a cooperative business incubator or municipal bank and the business curriculum at Onondaga Community College and other area colleges.

4-6d. Establish Cooperative Zones: We call for transforming the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County Economic Development Zones into Cooperative Zones where the economic subsidies and other benefits are prioritized for cooperatives or other community-owned businesses.

4-6e. Legalize Municipal Deposits in Credit Unions: We support changing New York State law to permit local government funds to be deposited in credit unions as well as the Municipal Bank once it is established.

4-6f. Guarantee Credit Union Loans for Worker-Owned Cooperatives: The Green Party believes that credit unions should be a vehicle for providing loan capital for worker-owned cooperatives in advance of the creation of a Municipal Development Bank. The City should guarantee these credit union loans, which will increase the volume and size of business loans credit union can make under current federal banking resolutions. The Greens also support changes

in those federal banking regulations to remove the limits on the volume and size of credit union business loans.

4-7. Reform Industrial Development Agencies: The Green Party believes that public investment has an important role in shaping the kind of local economy we want to have, but the existing process must be more democratic and more conditioned on meeting explicit development goals. We call for reform of the Syracuse and Onondaga County Industrial Development Agencies (IDA). The city and county IDA's have become conduits of corporate welfare grants, loans, tax exemptions, bonding, credits, and similar mechanisms that have often wasted taxpayer money on failed businesses and granted benefits to politically connected businesses that did not need or deserve them. Hence, we also call for the following reforms of the city and county IDA's.

4-7a. Guarantee Labor & Community Representation on IDA Board: We believe, as an immediate reform, that the IDA boards should be comprised one-third each of representatives from business, labor, and the community.

4-7b. Invest Public Funds in Economic Democracy: We believe that first preference in awarding public subsidies, tax breaks, and other incentives should go to cooperatives and community enterprises that are owned by workers or community institutions anchored to our community.

4-7c. Establish Performance Goals: We believe that the receipt of public subsidies, tax breaks, and other incentives should be contingent upon Community Benefit Agreements with enforceable performance goals like:

- A minimum number of jobs retained & created;
- Compliance with labor, civil rights, & environmental laws;
- Neutrality in union organizing drives;
- A 2-year early warning of intention to move or close;
- Worker or community right of first refusal to buy if the firm or plant is to be sold;
- Prevailing wages;
- Health coverage for all employees;
- Surety to reimburse the public treasury if the company fails to meet performance goals.

4-8. Establish Community Owned Utilities: In addition to developing a Municipal Development Bank (see also sec. 4-5), the Green Party calls for the development of three additional community owned enterprises to provide essential public infrastructure and services as public utilities operating at cost, not for profit.

4-8a. Create a Public Power Utility: The Green Party supports the municipalization of National Grid's electric and gas utility in Syracuse. Based on the record of more than 2,000 public power systems in the United States, including more than 50 in New York State, public power provides electricity and gas at lower cost than investor-owned utilities (IOUs) because they operate at cost rather than for profit for shareholders. In addition, under New York State law, public power companies, unlike IOUs, have the right to generate as well as distribute power, thus enabling a municipal power company to build clean, carbon-free, renewable sources of electricity and heat for Syracuse. We favor a public power system run by an independent public authority with a board elected by the people, rather than a department of city government, as a more democratic structure and an entity able to secure financing without affecting the city's constitutional debt limit.

4-8b. Develop a Nonprofit Community Media Organization: The Greens call for the pending renewal of the cable franchise agreement with Time Warner to include the use of funding from franchise fees for a community controlled nonprofit organization to provide programming, staffing, and training for interested community members in all forms of community media, including cable channels devoted to Public Access, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) programming, as well as radio, web-based media, and other media. This non-profit organization will be governed by a board elected by members who will pay an affordable membership fee and participate in the organizations' programs. This non-profit community television organization will enable staff and hundreds of volunteers to produce and cablecast Public Access, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) programming and other community media at a downtown Community Media Center and satellite facilities in the neighborhoods. The organization will be Syracuse's local C-SPAN to broadcast local government meetings, including Common Council, County Legislature, school board, and other public agencies, as well as public hearings, news conferences, candidate forums, and the like. It will work with local schools, colleges, and universities to broadcast educational programs. It will support residents in the production of their own programs for public access channels and other media. Time Warner and its corporate predecessors have utterly failed to provide responsive and adequate PEG programming and other public access media. It is time for Syracuse to join the more than 1800 communities in the US that provide PEG programming and Community Media Centers for themselves with funding from cable franchise fees.

4-8c. Establish Community Broadband: The Green Party calls for Syracuse to join 54 fiber, and 79 cable, community owned broadband networks in the U.S. that are providing lower cost, faster broadband (internet, cable TV, phone) than the oligopoly of big corporate telecoms now provides in the United States. Dozens of countries have now surpassed the U.S., which was the world leader in broadband in 1990s. Now broadband systems in countries like South Korea, Japan, and France provide the "triple play" of internet, cable TV, and phone at four times the speed for about a third the price we get from Time Warner. Verizon just stopped laying fiber optic networks in the city after cherry picking the more affluent neighborhoods. Syracuse's second rate broadband system makes our city less attractive for businesses and for anybody that wants to be well-connected to the new digital economy and world of cultural and public affairs. Community Broadband could be set up as a separate community-owned utility company, or as part of a public power company as many other communities have done. It would not take over Time Warner's franchise. It would compete with Time Warner for customers.

4-9. Promote Regional Self-Reliance & Local Production for Local Use: The Greens believe that, to the extent possible, the CNY region should substitute local products for imports and local ownership for absentee ownership to gain control of its economic destiny. In the short term local governments should support "Buy Local" initiatives. In the long term economic development efforts by local governments should aim to increase self-reliance through production of an increasingly greater portion of goods and services by locally-owned firms and development of a local currency circulating in the CNY region to purchase local goods and services as well as the development of a Municipal Bank (see sec.4-4) and member-owned credit unions. Greater self-reliance on locally-owned and produced goods and services not only makes good economic sense, but it also makes good ecological sense by reducing the use of energy and pollution resulting from transportation of goods from outside the region.

Section 5 Public Safety & Criminal Justice

Introduction

The Green Party believes the surest path to ensuring public safety involves a strategic approach to building strong neighborhoods and healthy communities where police work together with residents to assess neighborhood problems and craft responses. These joint efforts reduce crime and spur revitalization of our community. To this end many of the actions proposed in previous sections regarding the creation of economically vibrant communities with integrated neighborhoods where people who are actively engaged in civic life work, socialize and recreate together applies directly to increasing public safety

The United States has the highest incarceration and recidivism rates of industrialized countries, while our nation's criminal justice system in general is too often inhumane, ineffective, and prohibitively expensive. With less than five percent of the world's population, the United States locks up nearly a quarter of the world's prisoners. Our law enforcement priorities place too much emphasis on drug-related and petty, non-violent crimes, and not enough on prosecution of corporate, white collar, and environmental crime. The majority of prisoners are serving terms for non-violent, minor property and drug related crimes (e.g. manufacture, sale, possession or use), or violations of their conditions of parole or probation, while the poor, the under-educated and various racial and ethnic minorities are over-represented in the prison population. Our priorities must include efforts to prevent violent crime and address the legitimate needs of victims, while addressing the socio-economic root causes of crime and practicing policies that prevent recidivism.

The Green Party calls for an end to the "war on drugs," and for treating drug abuse or addiction as a health issue, not a criminal justice issue. The "war on drugs" has been an ill conceived program that has wasted billions of dollars misdirecting law enforcement resources away from apprehending and prosecuting violent, white collar, and corporate criminals, while crowding our prisons with non-violent drug offenders and disproportionately criminalizing youth of color.

We also call attention to the fact that more than forty percent of those 2.3 million who are incarcerated come from the one eighth of the United States population that is black. The Green Party recognizes that our nation's ostensibly color-blind systems of law enforcement, from police practices to prosecutorial prerogatives, to mandatory sentencing and zero-tolerance, has effectively constituted an ubiquitous national policy of racially selective mass incarceration, a successor to Jim Crow as a means of social control, a policy that must be publicly discussed, widely recognized, and reversed. The nearly universal, though largely unspoken nature of this policy makes piecemeal reforms not accompanied by addressing root causes of the larger policy ineffective outside the context of a broad social movement.

Section 5 Public Safety & Criminal Justice

Policies

5-1. Build Neighborhoods & Healthy Communities: The Green Party believes the surest path to ensuring public safety involves a strategic approach to building strong neighborhoods and healthy communities with quality affordable housing and living wage jobs where police work together with residents to assess neighborhood problems and craft responses. To that end many of the actions called for in the previous sections will advance the cause of increasing public safety and reducing criminal activity.

5-2. Expand Youth Job & Recreational Opportunities: The Green Party believes that jobs and recreational activities for low-income and at-risk youth are effective anti-crime measures in terms of both costs and results. We support expanding the City of Syracuse Parks, Recreation and Youth Programs department and using schools as community centers (see also sec. 2-3d through 2-3f) to provide more opportunities for youth to be engaged in constructive activities. Community Hiring Halls (see also sec. 4-3) should also serve as Youth Hope Centers that would be one-stop stations where youth can get their lives on track. The Youth Hope Centers should be staffed with case managers who can provide linkages to support services like assistance in passing the GED or literacy training, job readiness assessment and training, information on jobs that are available in the public and private sectors, and related support services like life skills education, child care, transportation, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, counseling, and recreational programs during the day and during after-school and evening hours.

5-3. Increase Support for Community Policing: The Green Party supports the concept of community policing and calls for a greater allocation of resources of the Syracuse Police Department budget to establish community policing units in all city neighborhoods. We believe this is an essential strategy to promote relationships and cooperation between the police and community members to work together to reduce quality of life and nuisance complaints, as well as address more serious crimes, such as burglaries, robberies and violent crimes against people.

5-4. Reestablish a Syracuse Police Activities League: Police Activities Leagues (PAL) have a long history of success in many cities of providing programs for youth that help to build character, strengthen police-community relations, and keep children off the streets and out of trouble. Formerly referred to as "Police Athletic Leagues" that focused on providing competitive sports programs coached by police, most are now called "Police Activities Leagues" because they now focus on youth enrichment, educational and leadership programs and not just sports. Syracuse once had a vibrant PAL and the Green Party Supports reestablishing a PAL as a useful part of community policing (see also 5-3 & 5-8).

5-5. Guarantee Public Safety Services to Meet Evidence-based Need: The Green Party calls for municipal support for police and fire personal and equipment to the levels necessary to meet evidence-based need. Essential public safety services should not be subject to budget-balancing cuts.

5-6. Provide Residency Incentives for Law Enforcement Officers & Firefighters: The Green Party believes that police officers and firefighters who live in the communities they serve are better equipped to understand the dynamics of specific neighborhoods and are more likely to be responsive and

accountable to their communities. We believe the best way to advance community residency for police officers and firefighters is to establish a proactive incentive program that rewards them for living in the City of Syracuse.

5-7. Achieve Greater Transparency & Police Cooperation with Citizen Review Board: The Green Party believes that an effective Citizens Review Board (CRB) is an essential mechanism to ensure that the Syracuse Police Department and individual officers are responsive and accountable to the community. Reconstitution of the current CRB has been a step in the right direction; however problems with transparency in the Chief of Police's response to CRB recommendations and individual officers' resistance, with the encouragement of the Police Benevolent Association, to participate in the review board's proceedings must be addressed to assure full cooperation with CRB proceedings. We call for the Mayor and Common Council to demand as much. The CRB ordinance should be strengthened by giving the CRB the power to initiate legal action without the approval of the city's lawyer.

5-8. Refuse to Enforce the Federal War on Drugs & Advocate for its End: The Green Party believes that the federal war on drugs must end, and until such time as the federal or state government moves to legalization and control, the Syracuse Police Department should refuse to participate in federal drug policy enforcement, an action taken in New York State regarding non-enforcement of federal alcohol prohibition. The Green Party considers the causes of drug abuse to be health issues that are better addressed by the health care and mental health care systems, not through the criminal justice system. We support using the funds saved by not participating in federal drug enforcement to help finance a PAL (see 5-4).

5-9. Encourage & Support Restorative Justice: The Green Party urges authorities in the criminal justice system to adopt a restorative justice approach – a positive approach to justice that applies consequences for infractions and builds hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging as an alternative to incarceration. Jails and prisons should be the sentences of last resort, reserved for violent criminals. Those convicted of non-violent offenses should be handled by alternative, community-based programs including halfway houses, work-furlough, community service, electronic monitoring, restitution, and rehabilitation programs. These approaches should offer psychological and medical care and rehabilitation services for mentally ill prisoners and release of prisoners too old and/or infirm to pose a threat to society to less expensive, community-based facilities.

5-10. Make Reduction of Recidivism a Primary Goal of Parole: The Green Party supports treating parole as a time of reintegration into the community, not as a continuation of sentence. As such it should include providing community reentry programs for inmates prior to release. After release, parolees should be provided with access to education, health and mental health services, substance abuse treatment, job training and work. Services provided after release should also be offered to members of parolees' families to help them with the changes caused by parolees' return.

5-11. Ensure Equal Employment Opportunities for Ex-offenders (Ban the Box): The Green Party calls for a local "Ban the Box" law that prohibits employers from asking a potential hire to check a box on the initial job application indicating whether the applicant has a criminal history. Employers would retain the right to know an applicant's criminal history, but the inquiry would be deferred until a conditional offer of employment. A "Ban the Box" law will stop the practice of automatically excluding applicants who are fully qualified for a specific job and ready for a productive role in society.

5-12. Segregate Juvenile Offenders from Adults: The Green Party believes that juvenile offenders should never be housed with adults; and violent juvenile offenders should be housed apart from non-violent juveniles. We support continuation of education for juveniles while in custody and for substantially decreasing the case load of juveniles assigned to judges and caseworkers who oversee juveniles' placement and progress while in the juvenile justice system.

5-13. Establish a County Public Defenders' Office: The Green Party supports establishment of a County Public Defenders' Office to ensure that individuals accused of criminal offenses who cannot afford to retain an attorney are guaranteed their constitutional, sixth amendment right to counsel. A Public Defenders' Office would provide more efficient, effective, affordable, and accountable service than the current Assigned Counsel Program.

5-14. Join the International Sanctuary City Movement: The Green Party believes that Syracuse, which was an important stop on the Underground Railroad, should take action to join the International Sanctuary City Movement. We call for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County to pass a "City and County of Refuge" Ordinance (also known as the Sanctuary Ordinance) similar to the 1989 ordinance passed in San Francisco which prohibits city and county employees from helping Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with immigration investigations or arrests unless such help is required by federal or state law or a warrant. We urge our fellow citizens, faith based groups and organizations committed to unity to welcome persons from other countries into our community and to assist them to obtain material, legal, and moral support.

5-15. Assure City Defendants are Judged by a Jury of their Peers: The Green Party calls for changes in state law governing how juries are selected to assure that defendants who are residents of the City of Syracuse have the same rights as defendants in towns to a jury of their peers from the same municipal jurisdiction that they reside in..

5-16. Create Community Residential Facilities for Juvenile Petty Crime Offenders: The Green Party calls for the creation of residential placement opportunities for juveniles who repeatedly commit non-violent crimes against people or property. Currently, juveniles who commit serious violent crimes are housed at Hillbrook Detention Center, but those who commit petty crimes against people or property are returned to the streets, where many continue to commit petty crimes that tie up police services and reduce resident quality of life. Since many families lack the resources to manage these juveniles, community residential facilities are needed to provide youth with opportunities for education, training, or work as a deterrent to repeat criminal activity.

5-17. Create a No Drone Fly Zone in the City of Syracuse: The Green Party calls on the City of Syracuse, to the extent permitted by law, to designate Syracuse a "Warrantless Surveillance Drone Free Zone" where drones are banned from city airspace until regulations for legal deployment have been fully vetted and adopted that adequately protects the population as guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We also call for the Syracuse Common Council to adopt a policy that stipulated that surveillance drones will not be purchased, leased, borrowed, tested or otherwise used by any agency or department of the City of Syracuse until regulations for legal use are developed and implemented.

Section 6 Progressive Taxation & Fiscal Policy

Introduction

Political democracy remains a distant promise without economic democracy. A principal instrument for achieving economic democracy is our tax system. Taxes are the means whereby we fund our public services. Public services are the avenues of private commerce. Business will not locate and thrive in the City of Syracuse without first-rate schools, safe streets, and fully-staffed police, fire, parks, codes, sanitation, and other departments for their businesses and their families. Poor schools and public services induce those who can afford it to flee the city.

In recent years, Syracuse has shut the Ida Benderson Senior Center and cut school teachers and programs year after year. The Parks and Recreation Department has a fraction of the staff it once had. Police and fire department staff have been cut and now fire stations are being closed. The constant refrain from Democratic and Republican leadership is, "There is no money. We must cut services."

The claim that there is no money is a smokescreen that obscures the truth about what has transpired with state revenue over the past three decades. The richest 1 percent of households in New York State has more than tripled their share of all income statewide from 10 percent in 1980 to 35 percent in 2007; but taxes on the rich have been radically reduced and taxes on working people have been radically increased. Since the late 1970s, the top state income tax bracket on high incomes has been more than halved, while the bottom tax bracket on low incomes has been doubled. The state collects over \$15 billion a year from the Stock Transfer Tax, yet since 1981 has rebated 100% of the revenues to the stock traders. The state Finance Law until recently promised the state will share 8% of its revenues with municipalities to pay for state spending mandates on local governments, but annually exempted itself from that law and provided revenue sharing of less than 2% of state revenues.

The combination of tax cuts for the rich and cuts in state revenue sharing has forced local governments to make up the difference with higher sales and property taxes. Sales and property taxes are regressive, which means they tax working and middle class people at higher rates than rich people. In 2013, the poorest 20% of households in New York (average income of \$10,000) will pay 13.4% of their income in sales and property taxes. The middle 20% of households (average income of \$44,700) will pay 8.8%. The richest 1% (average income of \$2,235,600) will pay only 3.1%. The Greens call for reversing the rates paid by rich and poor through progressive tax reforms at the city and state levels.

To remedy this outrageously unjust tax system the Green Party calls for comprehensive tax reform that includes progressive taxation, taxing "ills" not "goods," taxing unearned income at the same rate as earned income, taxing speculation on Wall Street, and cutting corporate tax giveaways. We can afford to cut taxes for most people if we make corporations and the super-rich pay their fair share. Then we can cut them even more when we halt our nation's wasteful spending on wars, weaponry and militarism.

The Green Party proposals for progressive tax reform is not about "soaking the rich," or taxing away their wealth. These proposals are about making the rich pay the taxes they used to pay in order to fund the city services and schools. If the rich in New York State paid the taxes they used to pay, and if the state shared the revenues they promised to, there would be no fiscal crisis in Syracuse or the scores of other cities, towns, and school districts now facing insolvency. Syracuse should be receiving that money and spending it on improving our schools, police and fire protection, and parks and recreation and investing in the infrastructure and businesses that can build a sustainable prosperity for our city.

Section 6 Progressive Taxation & Fiscal Policy

Policies

6-1. Greater Utilization of NYS Progressive Income Tax through Revenue Sharing: The Green Party supports greater utilization of the progressive New York State income tax and revenue sharing to reduce reliance on property and sales taxes and assure adequate funding for the City of Syracuse and the Syracuse City School District and other municipalities and school districts. This is essential to provide revenue for necessary services, infrastructure maintenance and repair, development and maintenance of affordable housing options for low income and homeless individuals/families, and maintenance of parks and green spaces. Adoption of a New York State single payer, universal public health insurance program would reduce municipal and school district payroll costs by more than 30% (see section 8 for detailed items regarding state income tax and revenue sharing and controlling health care costs through a universal, single payer public health insurance program).

6-2. Adopt Long Term Budget Planning: The Green Party calls for the City to develop five-year budget projections and adopt annual budgets that fit within those five year plans. Long term budget planning facilitates decision-making on annual revenues and expenditures and early identification of fiscal problems.

6-3. Ensure Funds Appropriated by the Common Council are Used as Intended: The Green Party supports a change in the Charter for the City of Syracuse to remove the power of the Mayor to impound funds appropriated by the Common Council in the annual budget.

6-4. Institute a Progressive Local Income Tax: The Green Party urges adoption of a progressive local income tax, similar to the New York City and Yonkers income taxes, at the County level with a fair sharing of revenues between the county and its municipalities and school districts. Pending adoption of a progressive county income tax and revenue sharing, the City of Syracuse should seek New York State approval to levy a tax on income earned by residents and commuters to offset the regressive tax on properties (where about 50% of city properties are exempt) and generate revenue from commuters who use city infrastructure and services while working at tax-exempt governmental, higher education, and health care institutions.

6-5. Institute Progressive Property Tax Reforms: The Green Party calls for progressive reforms of the City property tax to prevent low-income people, including low income working people and families and retirees, from being forced to leave their homes due to property tax burden.

6-5a. Establish Progressive Property Tax Rates: We support establishing progressive rates based on the total value of each property owner's real estate, with reduced rates for farms.

6-5b. Institute a Property Tax Circuit Breaker: We support implementation of a property tax circuit breaker that would limit the percent of income one must pay in property taxes to protect homeowners with limited and fixed incomes from being unduly burdened by property tax.

6-5c. Establish a Renter's Property Tax Rebate: We support employing a rebate program that limits the percent of one's income one must pay in property taxes through rents, which include property taxes passed on by landlords.

6-5d. Use Land Value Taxation: The Green Party advocates allocating funds to study the viability

of employing land value taxation as a tool to reform local property taxes. Land value taxation levies taxes based upon the market value of land but not its improvements (homes and businesses). The purpose of land value taxation is to restrict property taxes to the unearned income derived from appreciation of all land in the community, which reflects social investments in good schools, parks, and other infrastructure and amenities, not the actions of the owner. By discouraging speculative investment in abandoned city lots and buildings and sprawl, land value taxation stimulates inner city redevelopment and encourages compact development, supporting the anti-sprawl goals of city and county development plans. Because land ownership is far more concentrated than the ownership of home and business assets, land value taxation tends to make the property tax progressive.

6-5e. Move Toward Utilization of User Fees for Direct City Services: The Green Party calls for a restructuring of the City tax bill to re-categorize direct services, such as road repair and maintenance and trash collection, as user fees paid by all property owners, and the establishment of a user fee for municipal take-over of sidewalk maintenance and repair, including sidewalk snow removal.

6-6. Cut Sales Tax: The Green Party supports cutting the sales tax. Sales taxes are the most regressive local tax that hits poor and working people hardest. Sales tax revenues should be replaced with more progressive taxes, such as progressive income and property taxes.

6-7. Institute Eco Taxes: The Green Party calls for selective local eco-taxes on environmentally harmful products, pollution, and waste. Revenues from eco-taxes should be used to fund public services and reduce the regressive county sales tax. For example, the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency could be authorized to charge an eco-tax on trash headed for the incinerator on a “pay as you throw” fee schedule, scaled to the amount of waste put out for collection. This eco-tax would compensate OCRRA for lost revenue from burning trash and encourage households and businesses to reduce waste. Another example could be a county gasoline tax to supplement the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro) budget, improving our public transportation system and providing an incentive for commuters to use public transportation instead of private cars, thus reducing traffic, air pollution, and road maintenance costs.

6-8. Demand Resources to Comply with Mandate Requirements: The Green Party urges the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County to demand financial compensation from the federal and state governments for the costs of compliance with federal and state mandates.

6-9. Accept NYS Pension Smoothing: The Green Party calls for the City of Syracuse and the Syracuse School District to accept the pension stabilization plan approved in the 2013-14 state budget. The plan allows local governments and school districts to opt in to a payment plan that amortizes their costs for current pension payments over a 12-year period. It is similar to a plan put in place by the New York State Comptroller three years ago. The plan is reviewed periodically to ensure the payments are not too high or too low to meet expected costs. The pension stabilization plan also facilitates long term budget planning.

Section 7 Ecological Sustainability

Introduction

The human community is an element of the Earth and all human endeavors are situated within the dynamics of the biosphere. If we wish to have sustainable institutions and enterprises, they must fit well with the processes of the Earth. Any loss of the ecosystems is merely an “externality” in conventional economic thought and any problems can be addressed later by a technological fix. We are now living through the painful consequences of that arrogant perspective. Many of our children suffer from accumulations of lead, mercury and other toxins in their neurological systems, environmentally related cancer is on the rise, and our air and water are increasingly polluted. Meanwhile, our ecosystems are being compromised by the spreading presence of genetically engineered organisms.

Our houses and buildings, manufacturing processes, and industrial agriculture were all designed with the assumption of an endless supply of cheap, readily available fossil fuels. Pollution and despoiling the land were not part of the thinking. The Green Party, however, is optimistic about the alternatives that now exist in such fields as clean energy, energy efficiency, organic agriculture, and green manufacturing.

We also challenge the grip of the oil, automotive, and automobile insurance industries that have managed to block or roll back progress in public mass transit and vehicles that use alternative power sources. The gutting of subsidies for the railroads has meant not only fewer passenger routes but also the addition of thousands of large freight trucks on our highways, decreasing public safety and increasing pollution. We are committed to extending the greening of waste management by encouraging the spread of practices consistent with the reduce, return, reuse, and recycle paradigm. We strongly oppose the recent attempts to roll back the federal environmental protection laws that safeguard our air, water, and soil.

The health of the life-support ecosystems on our continent is of paramount importance. Inherent in the efficient dynamics of those ecosystems is a vital profusion of biodiversity. Therefore, the Green Party calls for a halt to the destruction of habitats, which are being sacrificed to unqualified economic expansion. Humans have a moral responsibility to all of our animal relations, many of which are facing extinction because we carelessly and permanently halt their long evolutionary journey.

The Green Party also supports the spread of organic agriculture and the careful tending of our nation’s precious remaining topsoil. We support easy access to birth control and family planning to stabilize human population growth that is pressuring the ecosystems, and we especially support reducing the consumption of the world’s raw materials by the rich industrialized nations.

The Green Party honors and seeks to follow the teachings of the Haudenosaunee who implore us to consider the impact of our decisions on the well being of the next seven generations. We embrace the wisdom of this principle in our deliberations regarding policy and practices in all areas of life, but especially so with respect to the environment.

Section 7 Ecological Sustainability

Policies

7-1. Plan for a Sustainable Syracuse: The Green Party believes that if we wish to have sustainable institutions and enterprises we must create mechanisms for comprehensive long-term planning to develop means of production, distribution and lifestyles that fit within nature rather than exploit the natural processes of Earth. The goals of comprehensive planning should be a sustainable regional economy based on renewable energy sources; renewable materials that are non-toxic biodegradables or recyclables, and zero toxic emissions. The planning process should include the development of a time table for replacing non-renewable fuels and materials of our present economy with viable renewable technologies that will provide a sustainable, self-reliant economic base for the region. At present, with a declining farming and manufacturing base, Onondaga County is increasingly dependent on wealth-draining imports, the decisions of distant investors, corporations and governments, and the movements of prices and interest rates in a world market over which we have no control. The Green Party believes that with incisive planning for a sustainable economy we can achieve a revitalized farming and manufacturing foundation, the service and retail sectors will have plenty of customers, and the public sector will have ample revenues. To achieve this we call for public policies and investments that promote ecological wisdom and local sustainable production with a future focus.

7-1a. Promote Ecological Farming: We call for developing and promoting a regionally self-reliant organic food and agriculture system that links urban consumer cooperatives to family farms and farm cooperatives.

7-1b. Promote Individual & Community Gardening, & Urban Agriculture: We recognize the well established benefits of individual and community gardening, and urban agriculture. We call for individual and community garden, and urban agriculture initiatives to be encouraged and supported on vacant lots within the city in order to promote access to healthy, fresh food as well as maintain green spaces, mitigate storm water runoff, and increase property values in our urban neighborhoods.

7-1c. Promote Ecological Manufacturing: We support policies and investment strategies that promote worker or community-owned manufacturing cooperatives using eco-technologies based on nontoxic biodegradables and recyclables and renewable energy sources. This should include maximizing the use of local agricultural raw materials for nontoxic biodegradable and recyclable products that are manufactured locally.

7-1d. Promote Ecological Transportation: We believe that it is essential for a sustainable ecology to bring work and shopping back within walking distance in neighborhoods. We call for construction of a convenient network of paths for bikes and electric carts, and the redevelopment of a light rails transportation system like the trolley car system we once had, and municipally maintained sidewalks and crosswalks. CENTRO buses and mini-vans powered by diesel and natural gas should be replaced by vehicles powered by electric or non-polluting hydrogen fuel cells. Rideshare and community car use programs such as Cusecar, and the development of other means for shared transportation, such as bike sharing, should be promoted.

7-1e. Promote Ecological Construction: We support providing tax breaks, targeted loans and other inducements to promote building new structures and retrofitting old structures with nontoxic materials that maximize energy and water efficiency and are powered by on-site renewable energy sources. We also support the prioritization of rehabilitation over new construction and promoting

deconstruction when possible rather than demolition with earmarked funding for deconstruction and a strong partnership with Habitat for Humanity to expand the scope of ReStore and improve its retail capabilities (see also sec. 3-10).

7-1f. Employ Social and Ecological Accounting: We call for the development of a system of social and ecological accounting that includes all costs and benefits, and all assets and liabilities that impact the ecology and affect our quality of life, not only those monetized in the market. A system of social and ecological accounting would use a variety of indicators (not just government fund balances or gross product measures) to give a more complete picture of the state of our community, thereby challenging profiteers and the underpayment of workers, and documenting best practices in energy efficiency. Ecological accounts would enable audited governmental units to track their eco-efficiency, give planners a more complete view of Onondaga County's economy and environment by accounting for natural as well as human-made capital, and assist municipal governments in making ecologically intelligent policies and adopt practices that protect and restore the ecological foundations of our local economy and environment.

7-1g. Conduct Environmental Audits: We call for the City of Syracuse Auditor, the Onondaga County Comptroller, and comparable officials in other municipalities to institute a program of periodic environmental audits that run parallel to their fiscal audits. The environmental audits will document the unnecessary use of toxics, waste of energy and resources, and identify opportunities for “eco-efficiency”—the greater utilization of non-polluting materials and the more efficient use of energy, paper, and other materials, which saves taxpayers money and reduces adverse impacts on the environment.

7-1h. Develop a Greenway Network: We support development of a countywide Greenway Network linking parks, wildlife preserves, and other green space to all neighborhoods, schools, and shopping districts through a comprehensive and usable system of walkways and bikeways. Urban community gardens, the reforestation of urban areas, and establishment of permanent natural habitat preserves to foster biodiversity should be part of the Greenway Network.

7-1i. Replace the I-81 Viaduct with a Mixed Use Green Commons. The Green Party calls for deconstructing the I-81 viaduct and replacing it with a car free, mixed use neighborhood commons with sidewalks, bike paths, gardens, trees, recreational space and retail shops with upper-level housing. Through traffic should be rerouted around Syracuse using I-481 and “park-and-ride” facilities should be provided with improved public transportation to bring people into commons, its surrounding businesses, neighborhoods and cultural amenities.

7-2. Prevent Pollution: Pollution is a universal problem that must be addressed globally and locally. The Green Party believes there are actions we can take in the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County now to reduce our exposure to disease-causing pollution and toxins.

7-2a. Require Public Notification of Pesticide Applications: Pesticides are potent neurotoxins that have been associated with birth defects, cancer, immunological disorders, and hormonal disruption. We believe that, at the very least, the public should know when pesticides are being applied.

7-2b. Phase-Out Synthetic Pesticide Use by Local Governments: We call for reducing synthetic pesticide exposure to municipal workers and local citizens by phasing out all uses of synthetic pesticides by local government, including in parks, with exceptions only for public health emergencies. Reliance on pesticides usually means the underlying causes of pest infestation are not being addressed. Non-toxic pest control measures result in long-term solutions that save lives and money over the long term.

7-2c. **Promote Clean Air & Water:** Clean air and water are essential for all forms of life. We support strong regulation to prevent the release of industrial pollutants into the air and water. Any industrial process that cannot be certified as safe to the air or water should be banned. We support the current city and county ban on hydrofracking and call for a permanent ban throughout the state. We also support continuing and expanding existing efforts where feasible to mitigate storm water pollution through education of our citizens, enforcement of our laws, and holistic watershed management by advancing storm water technologies that detain, treat, filtrate, and use storm waters near where it is collected.

7-2d. **Require Notification of All Food Additives & Genetically-Modified Food:** We support regulations that require consumer notification of all food additives and genetically modified food sold in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

7-2e. **Ban Commercial & Public Vehicle Idling:** We believe that all fossil fueled commercial and public vehicles should be banned from idling when not being driven. We also support strong regulation and restricted use of fossil fueled generators.

7-3. **Adopt a Zero Waste Strategy:** The Green Party believes that the vision of zero waste is an attainable goal, not an impossible dream. A waste-free society is essential to public health and the integrity and sustainability of the biosphere. Natural ecosystems are self-sustaining and generate no waste. We humans are a part of these ecosystems, and while we obtain resources from them, we have a responsibility to return only those things that can be re-absorbed without detriment. Waste is not an inevitable part of production and consumption, as it is viewed in the current economic model. A zero waste strategy leads us to look for inefficiencies in the use of materials, energy and human resources. To achieve a sustainable future, extreme efficiency in the use of all resources will be required in order to meet the needs of all of the earth's inhabitants. A zero waste strategy directly supports this requirement. The Green Party calls for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County to adopt a Zero Waste Strategic Plan for dealing with the waste problem.

7-4. **Reduce, Reuse & Recycle:** The zero waste strategy the Green Party supports places the highest priority on waste reduction and reuse followed by recycling. The reduce, reuse, and recycle chain places an emphasis on phasing out materials that cannot be reused or recycled in tandem with a move toward total reuse and recycling through reducing the amount of waste and disposable products produced, reusing items and materials whenever possible, and recycling as much as possible that which we cannot reuse.

7-4a. **Impose a Real Green Fee on Solid Waste:** We support a "pay as you throw" fee schedule, scaled to the amount of waste generated, in order to encourage waste reduction and reuse.

7-4b. **Choose to Reuse:** Reuse has numerous advantages over recycling. Reuse means taking products that would otherwise be discarded and using them again in their current form, or with few repairs or changes. We call for a robust reuse program for businesses, institutions, governments and households as part of the Zero Waste Strategic Plan referred to above.

7-4c. **Require OCRRA to Collect All Plastics & Styrofoam for Recycling:** We call for OCRRA to accept all single use numbered plastics and Styrofoam for recycling.

7-4d. **Pass a Syracuse Plastic Bag Ordinance:** We support passage of a City of Syracuse ordinance similar to those passed in several New York municipalities that encourage the use of reusable checkout bags and ban the use of plastic bags for retail checkout of purchased goods. The Green Party also supports enacting additional ordinances that aim to protect the environment and reduce the waste stream like:

- Banning single use water bottles;
- Implementing a “receipt by request” regulation for retail businesses;
- Requiring take-out food containers & utensils to be recyclable or compostable.

7-4e. **Promote Composting by Residents & Retail Establishments:** We call for educating residents and retailers about the values of composting and we advocate passing a mandatory ordinance like the “San Francisco Mandatory Recycling and Composting Ordinance” (2009), which requires universal source separation of all organic material, including food residuals. Neighborhood composting facilities should be created to accept compostable materials and soil from composting should be easily available for residential use.

7-4f. **Require Zero Waste Strategies at Festivals & Parks:** We urge city and county governments to require all festivals and users of public parks and green spaces to practice zero waste strategies.

7-4g. **Provide Public Receptacles for Waste & Recyclables:** We support the strategic placement of receptacles in business districts and neighborhoods for placement of trash, recyclables, compostables and deposit containers to eliminate the excessive trash on city streets and properties and to assure proper disposal of these products.

7-4h. **Provide Incentives for Materials Recovery Industries:** We support targeting economic incentives to businesses that reuse, repair, recondition, recycle, or resell waste materials. OCRRA and the county Economic Development department should work closely to help develop these industries.

7-4i. **Impose Green Fees on Non-Recyclables:** We support passage of a county trash reduction law with a schedule of Green Fees on non-recyclable packaging and products sold in the county.

7-4j. **Promote Buying Recycled & Recyclable:** We call for local and county governments to increase purchases of recycled and recyclable products, especially from local sources.

7-4k. **Invest in Recycling Industries & Infrastructure:** We support the creation of locally owned businesses offering secure, living wage jobs to handle waste materials. This ecological approach is also an economic development approach: for the same volume of trash, recycling creates more than six times more permanent jobs than incineration. These industries should receive the highest priority to receive county economic development incentives and assistance, particularly for the formation of worker-owned cooperatives. We call for public investment in expansion of the infrastructure for composting, reuse of deconstructed building materials, and recycling of construction waste.

7-4l. **Provide Public Education & Training on the 3 R’s:** The Green Party calls for improving public education and outreach to increase recycling and minimize solid waste, including a long-term program of public service announcements on buses, in media, in schools, and in workplaces. The budget for public education programs by Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) needs to be increased and its programs should emphasize the need to reduce of the waste stream, especially for hazardous household wastes, and for education on how to buy recycled and recyclable products.

7-5. **Make Land Filling & Incineration Options of Last Resort:** The Green Party recognizes that until we reach the point of zero waste, land filling will remain a necessity. Any use of landfills should be environmentally safe, and Onondaga County trash should not be dumped in unlined landfills where pollution leaches into the soil and water and vents into the air.

7-5a. **Phase-out Incineration:** We call for phasing out trash incineration at the earliest feasible opportunity. The OCRRA Rock Cut Road trash incinerator which began operation in November of 1994 has an original lifespan of 20 years that was increased to 40 years with upgrades. Therefore, we call for the development and implementation of a plan to phase out incineration by 2034 at the absolute latest date.

7-5b. **Maintain Public Control of Trash Incineration:** The current OCRRA contract for operation of the Rock Cut Road incinerator by Covanta Energy Corp. expires in 2015 and includes an option for Covanta to purchase the facility for \$1.00. Covanta is a corporation that answers to its stockholders and not the public. We call for OCRRA to maintain control over trash incineration until the Rock Cut Road incinerator is closed.

7-5c. **Take Public Title to County Trash:** We support state legislation to allow municipal governments to take title to all trash placed at the curb for disposal in order to control its solid waste system. We see this as a way for the county to maintain control of its solid waste system. With the title to trash, the county can emphasize waste reduction, reuse, and recycling instead of using trash flow to feed the incinerator or to be dumped in landfills. Without title, there are few options for public regulation of the waste stream and its uses.

7-5d. **Elect the OCRRA Board:** There Green Party believes that the public interest in management of its waste stream would be best served if the OCRRA Board was elected rather than filled by political appointment as is currently the case.

7-6. **Heal Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake:** The Green Party fully supports the Onondaga Nation's Land Rights Action and its "Vision for a Clean Onondaga Lake." Within the context of the Onondaga Nation's vision and its land rights action the Green party supports:

- Returning ownership of Murphy's Island to the Onondaga Nation;
- Removal of the western shore "White Cliff" waste beds;
- Reclaiming the Onondaga Creek and lake waterfront for public use;
- Completing the "Loop-the-Lake trail;
- Transforming the existing "Sainte Marie" historical site into a Haudenosaunee Museum.

Section 8 Advocating for State & Federal Policy

Introduction

County, city, town and village governments are the bottom tier of our state and federal governments. The City of Syracuse is dependent on state and federal aid for 25% of its 2013-14 budget. The Syracuse City School District is dependent on state and federal aid for 74% of its 2013-14 budget. Given this situation local elected officials have both the right and the responsibility to advocate for the people of Syracuse on state and federal budgets and policies. Green Party candidates who win election for local offices will use their office as a platform for advocacy and as an organizing center for mobilizing the community and labor to demand responsive state and federal, as well as local, government.

In the absence of a real urban policy, federal and state policies such as the interstate highway system and subsidies to the private housing market have hollowed out inner cities and made sprawl the de facto development policy. For fifty years, progressives have called for an urban policy to rebuild the infrastructure and public services of deteriorating central cities. The 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was not only a call for civil rights, but also a call for economic justice. The march was initiated by A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, President of the Negro American Labor Council, and Vice President of the AFL-CIO. In his “I Have a Dream Speech” at the 1963 march, Martin Luther King, Jr. said:

“...we have come to our Nation's Capitol to cash a check. When the architects of our great republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir.... It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given its colored people a bad check, a check that has come back marked 'insufficient funds.'”

Randolph followed the march with demands for a Freedom Budget to serve as a “Marshall Plan for the Cities.” He called for \$185 billion over ten years to put the unemployed to work building affordable housing, modern schools, public transportation, and the other physical and social infrastructure needed to revitalize the slum conditions growing in our cities. King went on to organize the Poor People's Campaign of 1968 to demand jobs, housing, and an income above poverty for all Americans.

Inner city conditions were better in 1963 than they now are. The unemployment rate and the poverty rate were both far lower than they now are. City schools weren't as devastated. Neighborhoods still had businesses. Abandoned housing and storefronts were far fewer. The gap between rich and poor was much less. Adjusted for inflation, Randolph's \$185 billion translates into \$1.3 trillion today.

The Randolph and King initiatives drew explicitly on President Roosevelt's 1944 State of the Union address calling for a second, economic bill of rights and urging Congress to enact legislation securing for every American the right to jobs, living wages, food, recreation, adequate income for the sick, disabled, and elderly, decent housing, good education, and comprehensive health care.

It is time for Syracuse and other cities to collect our promissory note. It is time for city officials to work with other cities, our state and federal representatives, and the public to demand a fair return on the state and federal taxes Syracuse citizens pay. That fair return should include increased revenue sharing and state and federal funding to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure, build a clean energy system, fully fund our schools and city services, and guarantee economic rights to jobs, income, health care, housing, and education.

Section 8 Advocating for State & Federal Policy

Policies

8-1. Enact Progressive State Tax Reforms: There are many progressive tax reforms that the Green Party advocates at the state level, including cutting corporate tax breaks, but here we will highlight three that could provide significant revenues for the state. If the rich would pay the tax rates they paid 40 years ago, the state would have revenue to cover both its own expenses and its spending mandates on local governments.

8-1a. Retain Stock Transfer Tax Revenue: We support keeping the \$15 billion a year collected by the Stock Transfer Tax enacted in 1906 instead of rebating 100% of the tax to the stock traders as it has done since 1981.

8-1b. Restore the More Progressive State Income Tax Structure: We support restoring the more progressive state income tax structure of the early 1970s, when the lowest bracket was half of what it is today and the top bracket was almost double what it is today. 95% of New Yorkers would get an income tax cut while the state would take in about \$10 billion more a year.

8-1c. Establish a Bankers' Bonus Tax: The Wall Street financial elite has been paying themselves over \$20 billion a year in bonuses since the federal government began bailing out their banks out in 2008 and which it continues to do through a variety of Federal Reserve programs to the total tune of trillions of dollars. We call for establishing a 50% Bankers Bonus Tax on bonuses over \$50,000, which would yield about \$10 billion more a year.

8-2. Provide State Mandate Relief: The two biggest state mandates are health care related: Medicaid expenses that counties must cover, and public employee health care costs. The state Finance Law, until recently, had a provision requiring the state to share 8% of revenues to cover state spending mandates to local governments; but the state routinely wrote itself an exemption in each year's state budget and now shares only about 2%. The Green Party calls for targeting these areas for immediate mandate relief, rather than attacking public employee bargaining rights to cut their wages and health care coverage and calling for consolidation, which does not have sufficient savings to rescue cities, towns, and school districts from insolvency.

8-2a. Enact a Single Payer Health Care Plan: We call for enacting a single-payer health care plan for all New Yorkers. This would take county Medicaid costs and public employee health care costs off the budgets of all local governments. A 2009 study commissioned by the state found that single payer would save New Yorkers \$28 billion a year in health costs by 2018 while providing comprehensive coverage free at the point of delivery to all New Yorkers. A single payer bill has been introduced in the state legislature. It is time to get it passed.

8-2b. Restore the 8% New York State Revenue Sharing Obligation: We call for New York State to reinstate in finance law the obligation to share 8% of its revenues with local government and to fulfill this obligation annually.

8.2c. Provide Equitable State Funding for the Big 5 Schools: We call for full implementation of the Foundation Aid Formula established through the Education Budget and Reform Act of 2007 that was designed to ensure adequacy and equity in state school funding by establishing a relationship between state aid, the needs of students and a district's ability to

raise revenue; and the restoration of all funds lost in the intervening years due to state budget cuts that have disproportionately impacted the Big 5 Districts, including SCSD (see also 2-2a).

8-3. Maintain Existing Funding Levels for Social Security, Medicare, & Medicaid: The Green Party is opposed to all proposed cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits. Social Security can be funded indefinitely by lifting the Social Security tax exemption on income over \$113,700 a year. Medicare and Medicaid costs can be controlled by creating a universal Medicare for All system. Medicare for All would save \$570 billion a year from administrative efficiency and the end of monopoly profits by drug, medical supply, and hospital corporations. Private insurance bureaucracy and paperwork consume 31% of every health care dollar. Medicare administrative costs are 3%. Streamlining payment through a single nonprofit payer would save nearly \$400 billion per year, enough to provide comprehensive, high-quality coverage for all Americans. Medicare for All would save an additional \$180 billion per year in monopoly profits now captured by the drug, medical supply, and hospital corporations.

8-4. Create a Freedom Budget – A Marshall Plan for Cities: Cities like Syracuse do not have the income, sales, or property tax bases to sustain themselves while paying for national policies that promote imperialism abroad, environmentally and socially destructive segregationist suburban sprawl at home, and services for tax free institutions like hospitals, colleges and government properties. The Green Party believes it is time to answer the call of the 1960s civil rights movement as it turned to economic human rights and called for a Freedom Budget to rebuild our deteriorating cities. The need is greater today than when the call was first issued.

8-5. Pass an Economic Bill of Rights: The Green Party support legislation to realize the economic rights President Roosevelt called on Congress to secure, including the rights to jobs, living wages, income and retirement security, decent housing, and good education. Bills in these areas have been introduced, such as the H.R. 870: Humphrey-Hawkins 21st Century Full Employment and Training Act of 2013.

8-6. Include a Green New Deal in an Economic Bill of Rights: The Green Party support making a sustainable environment one of the economic rights included in an Economic Bill of Rights. We call for a World War II scale program to put Americans back to work building a sustainable clean energy system that is carbon-free and climate friendly by 2030. A generation is losing its jobs, homes, and educational opportunities. The planet is accelerating toward climate catastrophe. We have no time to lose.

8-7. Support the “We, The People Amendment” to the U.S. Constitution: The Green Party calls on the Syracuse Common Council and the Onondaga County Legislature to pass resolutions urging Congress to support the proposed “We, The People Amendment” to the U.S. Constitution in order to establish that people, not corporations and money, govern our country. The “We, The People Amendment” would assert that inalienable rights belong to human beings only. It would also declare that money is property and not a form of free speech protected under the First Amendment. The amendment would repeal the doctrine of “corporate personhood” and establish that corporations are legally artificial persons (not natural persons) granted privileges by the people through our government and therefore regulated by “We, The People.” The amendment would overturn the U.S. Supreme Court decisions related to campaign finance regulations, including Citizens United v. FEC (2010), which permitted direct corporate funding of election campaigns, and Buckley v. Valeo (1976), which equated money with speech in abolishing limitations on campaign expenditures, on independent expenditures

by individuals and groups, and on expenditures by a candidate from personal funds. The amendment would thus constitutionally establish regulation by “We, The People” of political campaign funding in public elections.

8-8. Implement Cuts in Military Spending & a Just Transition Program: Our government has yet to take to heart these words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in his 1953 “Chance for Peace” speech:

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.”

Syracuse residents now pay \$95 billion a year in taxes to the Department of Defense. Those military related taxes swell to over \$140 million in military-related expenses when nuclear weapons, Homeland Security, and war-related interest on the national debt are added in. That is almost half of the city budget and a quarter of the combined city and school budget.

The Green Party calls for an immediate 50% cut in military spending, back to the level of the 2001 budget when the United States still spent nearly as much as the rest of the world combined on the military. We also call for redirecting those savings to needed domestic spending, including a Just Transition for all workers who lose their current jobs in the military and in military contractors due the reallocation of spending from military to civilian purposes. The Just Transition Program should maintain these workers' income and benefits until they find new employment at comparable compensation. Cuts in military spending should not result in cuts to compensation or benefits to active duty military personnel or cuts to benefits for military veterans.