

# **Green Party of New York State Platform (Approved June 11, 2016)**

The Green Party is committed to value-based politics, as expressed in our ten key values. These values aim to strengthen the democratic power of people and promote social, racial, economic and environmental justice through direct action targeted at the root causes of problems. The Green Party of New York State endorses the Green New Deal, as embodied in the platform of the Green Party of the U.S. The state party platform supplements the national platform to reflect additional state concerns.

## **1. Adoptee Rights**

Introduction: Due to current laws, millions of adults that were adopted as children are now being denied access to vital records regarding their births. The Green Party supports creating the necessary transparency between adoptees, their mothers, and adoptive parents. Access to birth records is essential to guaranteeing basic human rights for adoptees.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Immediate and direct access to all identifying birth, hospital, foster care and adoption agency records and files concerning the adult adoptee (including the original adoption plans and any contracts that pertain to the adoptee or in which they are mentioned) to assist with researching their genealogy, medical history, and the truth regarding the circumstances surrounding their adoptions and, if applicable, their time in foster care.
- As New York currently prevents access to original birth certificates from adoptees, the state should establish a fund as a form of reparations to provide financial assistance for counseling, registration fees, and private investigators that adoptees and their biological family members may need to use in order to reunite with each other.
- Strict financial penalties need to be enforced when birth/adoption records have been lost or destroyed while under the care of agencies, hospitals, lawyers, etc. that have assumed the responsibility for storing these vital records.

## **2. Animal Rights**

Introduction: Animals are sentient beings and should be free from exploitation and abuse for profit. A humane and ethical approach to animal welfare is needed.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

### **Animal Testing**

- Phase out animal testing for consumer products and institute immediate labeling of animal testing or animal byproducts in existing products
- Utilize alternatives to animal testing for medical research whenever possible and move funding toward prevention and health care that eliminates the need for testing invasive procedures and drugs on animals

### **Farm Animals**

- Support a rapid phase out of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) not only because of their adverse impact on the environment, but also on food safety (e.g. disease epidemics), public health, and animal protection.
- Eliminate the subsidies that mask the true costs –environmental, physical and moral– of animal-intensive diets, while providing resources to enforce animal safety standards on farms.

#### Use of Animals in Entertainment

- Phase out the use of animals in entertainment by transfer to or development of appropriate sanctuaries. This includes animals held in captivity for circuses and zoos for entertainment.

#### Companion Animals

- Governments should aggressively fund spay/neuter programs
- Governments should provide financial assistance to local shelters and rescues, and encourage the development of well-run, no-kill shelters
- Governments should support microchipping of all companion animals whether adopted through rescues and shelters or purchased through breeders so all animals can be traced to a responsible guardian
- Change department of health codes to allow groceries the use of companion animals, e.g., “bodega cats,” for pest control while ensuring that such animals pose no health risks
- Ban the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in pet stores and instead encourage adoptions by partnering with shelters and rescues
- Ban the importation and trade of wild or non-domesticated species as companion animals
- End the mutilation of companion animals for human aesthetics or convenience, such as tail docking or de-clawing
- Oppose breed specific companion animal legislation as it results in unscientific discriminatory practices
- End housing discrimination against companion animals by eliminating no pet clauses in multi-unit rentals while allowing rental responsibility and liability clauses as needed

### **3. Cannabis and Hemp**

Introduction: We call for the immediate legalization of the growth, sale and possession of cannabis and hemp under NY State law, and for legal opposition to Federal prosecutions for the same. Prohibition of cannabis and hemp and the resulting “drug war” have unjustly incarcerated countless individuals and scarred communities, often along racial and class lines, while draining resources from society. In addition to criminalizing personal drug use, cannabis prohibition deprives society of the industrial benefits of hemp at a time when we must make use of every ecologically responsible resource to provide materials and energy in the face of looming environmental crises.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Allow for the establishment of cannabis dispensaries for recreational and medicinal use. Replace the Compassionate Care Act with the Marijuana Regulation Taxation Act.
- Support home and community grown cannabis, which will not be taxed.
- Eliminate legal obstructions to the agricultural cultivation and processing of hemp for its many useful forms, especially where hemp use might mitigate deforestation and bring greater ecological stability.
- Expunge the criminal records of people with prior non-violent marijuana convictions.
- Give people previously incarcerated for marijuana-related crimes grants and licenses to buy marijuana businesses as part of reparations for their unfair incarceration.

## 4. Civil Rights and Equal Rights

Introduction: The foundation of a democratic society is the guarantee of equal rights and protection under the law. This topic is covered in the national platform. We are committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and self-determination of all people; and that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, class oppression, ageism, and the many ways our culture separates us from working together. We support affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights and to provide equal opportunity under the law. All individuals have a right to be free and protected from violence.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

### Women's Rights

- Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right to fully participate in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination, and with autonomy over reproductive choices. Women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that access to birth control, family planning resources, and safe, legal abortion remains available. Much more must be done to ensure equality in wages and employment; to end the feminization of poverty; and, to recognize that much of the work that society assigns primarily to women is presently unpaid.

### Racial Discrimination

- We commit to full reparations to the African American community of this nation for the past four hundred plus years of genocide, slavery, land-loss, destruction of original identity and the stark disparities which haunt the present evidenced in unemployment statistics, substandard and inadequate education, higher levels of mortality including infant and maternal mortality and the practice of mass incarceration. We understand that until significant steps are taken to reverse the ongoing abuses; to end the criminalization of the Black and Brown communities, to eradicate poverty, to invest in education, healthcare and the restoration and protection of human rights, that it will be impossible to repair the continuing damage wrought by the ideology of white supremacy which permeates the governing institutions of our nation.

### Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

- The Green Party affirms the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The Green Party

recognizes the equal rights of persons who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex, transsexual, queer, or transgender to housing, jobs, marriage, medical benefits, child custody, and in all areas of life including equal tax treatment. We support legislation such as the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act to outlaw discrimination based on gender identity or expression; GENDA also expands the state's hate crimes law to explicitly include crimes against transgender people. We support increased funding to assist queer homeless youth.

#### Right to Boycott

- Uphold the right to boycott as a form of political free speech and oppose legislation that penalizes supporters of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement as an unconstitutional and undemocratic threat to free speech.

#### People With Emotional Illnesses

The Green Party opposes mental health legislation that has the following components:

- Provides for or expands the use of involuntary outpatient commitment, also known as assisted outpatient treatment
- Restricts or intrudes upon existing federal programs such as PAIMI, the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness, which provide information, rights protection, direct legal advocacy, and other support for the self-determination and rights of people labeled "mentally ill"
- Attempts to distract the political attention of people concerned about violence and mass murderers from gun control legislation to legislation that blames mental illness
- Spreads misinformation about psychiatric services and the efficacy of pharmacological interventions

## 5. Divest Public Funds from Fossil Fuels

Introduction: The climate crisis demands immediate investment in renewable energy resources and divestment of public holdings in fossil fuel interests.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Immediately cease from permitting any of New York City's and New York State's pension funds from making any new investments in fossil fuel companies and completely divest from them within 5 years.
- Require SUNY and CUNY to divest from the top 200 fossil fuel companies in the university's college portfolios
- Ban local, county and state governments from granting subsidies and tax waivers to fossil fuel corporations in their many manifestations (pipelines, compressor stations, metering stations, etc.) under the pretext of job creation.

## 6. Ecological Sustainability

Introduction: The human community is an element of the earth and all human endeavors are situated within the dynamics of the biosphere. Sustainable institutions, enterprises, and energy sources must support ecological health. 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 in our deliberations of policy and practice in all areas of life, and in particular, with respect to the environment. Toward this goal, NY should establish a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Establish a Green New Deal Energy Plan For NY of \$460 billion in investments over 14 years, resulting in 4.5 million construction period jobs and 58,000 permanent jobs to convert New York State's all-purpose energy system to 100% carbon-neutral energy. This would create \$314 billion (\$22.4 billion per year) in wages and salaries during the 14-year building phase and \$5 billion per year for ongoing operations and maintenance. This plan would rely on securing the compliance of current NYS energy providers to gradually shift their \$66 billion annual revenues currently spent on non-renewables toward renewables. This would prevent the construction of a redundant and competing grid, facilitate job training for displaced workers, and lower the state's funding obligation down to \$8.5 billion per year.
- Oppose all new fossil fuel infrastructure in New York. Prohibit any more oil or natural gas pipelines from being built. Stop the construction of a proposed liquid natural gas storage facility next to Seneca Lake.
- No hydrofracking for natural gas. We support a rapid transition away from natural gas through the implementation of changes including investment in offshore wind power, weatherization, energy efficiency, geothermal (ground-source heat pumps), passive solar, solar thermal, and sustainable biofuels with the sequestration of carbon (e.g., biochar) in soils.
- Implement the rapid phase-out of nuclear power for environmental, health, safety, and economic reasons and the replacement of that power with clean renewable sources so that nuclear power has no future in New York State. Oppose any public subsidies for nuclear power that are not directed toward decommissioning of existing plants.
- Impose an immediate and safe termination of the nuclear reactors at Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, NY, with no further operations licenses or extensions granted to Entergy Corporation.
- Electrify transportation using clean renewable electricity to power electrified trucks and cars on roads and a radical increase in the more energy-efficient transport of people and freight through electrified freight rails, intra-urban mass transit, inter-urban rails, and a more advanced high-speed rail for longer inter-urban travel as an alternative to carbon-intensive air travel.
- Solar energy (and other renewables, where feasible) installations should be required for all state, county, and local properties, excluding nature preserves and parks. All renewable energy projects must source from local, state, or U.S. manufacturers when possible, and must avoid conflict area materials.
- Make energy efficiency a central goal with specific targets and timelines, as efficiency is the least costly, fastest way to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- Source reduction of waste and toxic products. Ban known toxic chemicals in consumer products.

- Ban the importation of all solid and liquid wastes from fossil fuel or other industrial extraction process, excluding potable water, or goods intended for emergency response purpose.
- Protect biodiversity, including species and genetic diversity
- Remove waste sites, incinerators, polluting industries, generators, transportation hubs and highways from oppressed communities
- Turn waste streams into revenue streams. True sustainability is not possible unless we treat all wastes as potential resources. Local wastewater treatment facilities should be first priority, moving them to anaerobic digestion-methane capture facilities.
- Impose a moratorium on the transport of crude oil by rail through New York cities and towns and by ship on New York waterways until essential safety improvements are in place and spill response and firefighting capabilities are demonstrated to be adequate to cope with “worst case scenario” spills and fires.
- Require unlimited liability for all rail lines which carry hazardous chemicals or fossil fuels through New York state. Ban any company from doing such transport if they have been involved in a rail accident involving fossil fuels or hazardous chemicals. Ban all new fossil fuel and hazardous chemical import/export and processing / refining / storage facilities in New York; phase out existing facilities by 2025. Immediately remove such facilities if located within a 1/4 mile of any body of water, and within 3 years if located within a 1/2 mile of a residentially zoned area. Ban the transport of fossil fuels and hazardous chemicals by barge or transport ship in New York's waterways.
- Direct the DEC to conduct a full environmental review of pending applications to expand oil terminal operations in Albany and applications to expand operations in New Windsor, and immediately reassess all previous permit modifications regarding crude oil moving through the Port of Albany
- Assess local spill response capacities and invite county and local officials from communities at risk from crude oil shipping to join the state agency review at the outset
- Investigate and require companies currently operating in New York that are storing, handling and transporting petroleum products, including crude oil, to provide proof of financial ability to respond to clean up efforts and claims resulting from such a spill in order to continue to lawfully operate in New York (currently required in California and Alaska).
- Ban the exportation of potable water from New York to other states for the purpose of fossil fuel extraction.
- Move New York to becoming a zero-solid waste state by 2030, with state funding provided for all municipalities to comply.
- In an effort to reduce solid waste and increase recycling, expand New York's bottle bill law to include non carbonated beverages such as iced tea, iced coffee, and juices.
- Enact a statewide ban on polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) food and beverage containers.
- Enact a statewide ban on plastic carryout bags.
- Commit to a zero-discharge (or near zero) goal of industrial and agricultural pollution in our waterways, and watersheds that flow into water bodies shared with other states and countries.

- Require full liability to be assumed by all companies operating in New York, despite bankruptcy or merger, for all waterway and land clean up projects proposed.
- Allow citizens to bring suit for violations of New York's environmental conservation laws.

## 7. Education

Introduction: The purpose of education is to produce critically thinking, civically-engaged, responsible adults committed to building and maintaining a just and sustainable democracy. All children in New York State deserve a quality public education, pre-K – college, that fosters critical thought and creativity. Learning is a lifelong and life-affirming process and all people, regardless of age, should have equal access to education.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Fully fund public schools with an equitable state aid formula. Funding for education is unfair to poor, rural and urban districts because it is based on outdated formulas and dependent on local taxation. We propose detaching education funding from local taxation. Education in NYS should be funded by the state operation fund. A statewide minimum should be provided and supplemented by local districts if they wish to do so.
- Fully funded, full day, and developmentally appropriate Universal Pre-K and Kindergarten with certified and unionized educators available to all.
- Opt out of high-stakes testing for students, teachers, and schools. Eliminate the standardized testing model. Transition to a student-and-knowledge-centered model of teaching.
- Opt out of Common Core and Race To The Top.
- Opt into common standards, curricula, and diagnostic tests written by professional teachers in the schools, not by outside corporate contractors.
- Opt into teacher and school evaluations based on collaboration.
- Opt into affirmative action to reduce school segregation by race and class, such as regional inter-district transfer programs.
- State legislation to mandate reduced class sizes and caseloads, building an expanding schools network when necessary.
- Fully fund CUNY, SUNY, and Community Colleges and provide free higher education to all. Implement a policy of open admissions for high school graduates.
- Increase the number of permanent, tenure-line faculty at state higher educational institutions through new hires until they are the majority of instructors in state higher education.
- Mandate per-course pay equalization with permanent faculty for contingent faculty teaching courses at state higher educational institutions. Provide a path for contingent faculty to become permanent hires.
- Oppose the allocation of any public tax money being used for charter schools and the use of school vouchers for private and/or religious schools.
- Stop the school to prison pipeline. Prohibit the use of police officers assigned within schools and automatic suspensions. Support restorative justice programs in public

schools, which can be effective in teaching non-violent, constructive methods for conflict resolution.

- Oppose the top down mayoral control of NYC public schools. Support a school system that is democratically run with the participation of the community and teachers.

## 8. Food Systems and Nutrition

Introduction: Access to adequate, safe, and nutritious food is a human right. Those who produce food have a right to a fair return for their labor. Food should be grown in a sustainable manner with adequate environmental and health protections.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Ensure a food system that provides an adequate income to farmers, food entrepreneurs, and food workers, along with safe and fair working conditions.
- Achieve an end to hunger through entities that provide universal access to ample, affordable, local, healthful, sustainably produced, and culturally meaningful food.
- Establish public support for producer and consumer cooperatives, community kitchens, Community Supported Agriculture, urban agriculture, and community farms and gardens.
- Provide support to communities suffering high incidences of food insecurity and diet-related disease.
- Provide for inclusive, democratic community participation in food system policy at all levels of government.
- Create a resilient regional food system that will better withstand the effects of climate change and other emergencies.
- Establish a food hub in every county with a population over 100,000.
- Institute an organic approach to food that opposes the use of chemicals in our food system.

Farming

- Limit government subsidies to only be provided to family farmers that practice sustainable farming.
- Implement farm gate pricing: the prices paid to farmers for the produce from their farms should cover the full costs of production, including living wages for the farmers themselves and everyone who works on the farm, benefits including health coverage, retirement and workers comp for farmer and workers, and funds to enable additional training and investment to cover maintenance and improvement of the farm. Contracts between farmers and their buyers should be negotiated, fair and equitable.
- Adopt the NYS Farm worker bill of rights that protects the labor rights of farmworkers regardless of immigration status.
- Increase funding for preservation of farmland.
- Encourage legislation that assists new farmers and ranchers, that promotes widespread ownership to small and medium-sized farms and ranches, and that revitalizes and re-populates rural communities and promotes sustainable development and stewardship.
- Support new farming and growing opportunities and urge the inclusion of non-traditional crops and foods in farm programs.

- Decentralize agricultural lands, production, and distribution.

#### GMOs and Food Labeling

- Apply the Precautionary Principle to genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Support a moratorium until safety can be demonstrated by independent (non-corporate funded), long-term tests for food safety, genetic drift, resistance, soil health, effects on non-target organisms, and cumulative interactions. Support eliminating patent rights for genetic material, life forms, gene-splicing techniques, and biochemicals derived from them. Support the labeling of GMO foods.
- Government should buy local food, that does not contain GMOs, starting with school meals.
- Require mandatory “Picked Premature” labeling of all fruits and vegetables, showing both location of origin and point in the growing season when harvested.

## 9. Fracking for Natural Gas

Introduction: Hydrofracking means injecting toxic-laden fresh water and sand at extremely high pressure into rock layers to shatter the stone and release natural gas. Each frack injects 2 to 9 million gallons of water with 20,000 to 90,000 gallons of toxic chemicals. Natural gas is not “clean” energy but rather another polluting, non-renewable fossil fuel that releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Hydrofracking will almost certainly destroy more jobs than it creates. The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- A ban on the hydrofracking of natural gas in New York State.
- Criminalization of hydraulic fracturing as outlined in New York Public Law 1 of the state's Penal Code.

## 10. Grassroots Democracy and Election Reform

Introduction: The Green Party of New York State believes that everyone should have the right and opportunity to participate in the political and economic decisions that affect our lives. We need to end the ability of wealth and special interests to dominate our government and elections. The Green Party of New York State asserts that all elected and appointed state and city officials are subject to the same laws that are placed on all residents.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

#### Citizen Engagement

- Permit initiative and referendum processes in New York State, and its political subdivisions, in which citizens can initiate and vote on proposed laws.
- Participation in every stage of the process should be open to all constituents and the role of money mitigated to the fullest extent possible, through the use of citizen assemblies. Every jurisdiction should have a well organized, fully transparent, and citizen moderated online citizens' forum for the collaborative drafting, and communal deliberation of proposals, to allow for easy participation in all stages of lawmaking.
- Establish face to face citizen assemblies in each neighborhood and town as the legislative power in society, with legislative authority in their own communities and

legislative control from below over the larger jurisdictions (municipal, county, state) with which they are associated. Citizen assemblies should be guaranteed sufficient funding to insure that they can hire the staff and experts needed to play an autonomous role in the decision-making process.

- Empower citizen assemblies to give binding instructions to their representatives and the use of immediate recall to enable voters to remove elected officials who no longer are representing the will and interests of the local residents.
- Enact participatory budgeting statewide

#### Campaign Finance

- Enact real ethics reform to curb corruption in Albany. Ban or limit legislators' outside income and eliminate the LLC loophole in campaign contribution limits.
- Support full public financing of campaigns. Publicly financed candidates should receive sufficient funds to reach all the voters of their district with their message. Candidates should accept spending limits and give up private contributions once they have qualified for public funding. To qualify for public campaign financing, candidates should demonstrate a threshold level of public support, by collecting a reasonable number of \$5 contributions during a pre-qualifying period.
- Eliminate "bundled" contributions from PACs.
- Put a limit on how much any candidate can spend on his/her campaign.
- All ballot-qualified parties and candidates should receive free and equal broadcast time on all television and radio stations

#### Electoral Reforms

- End partisan control of the Board of Elections and institute rigorous transparency to banish the patronage, unprofessionalism and incompetence resulting from the current system
- Form an independent and nonpartisan commission charged with the duty of re-apportioning the legislative districts within the state, in order to end the manipulation of district boundaries by legislators and powers within the dominant parties.
- Enact proportional representation for legislative bodies. Seats are allocated to political parties based on the percentage of votes received. Our winner take all electoral system is fundamentally anti-democratic.
- Enact instant runoff voting for the election of single-member offices (Governor/ Lieutenant-Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, U.S. Congress, State Legislature). With instant runoff voting (IRV), also called preference voting, the voters rank candidates in order of preference.
- Enable non-citizens to vote in local elections.
- Same-day voter registration for general elections and eventually move to a more European-style system where citizens of age are automatically registered to vote by default, instead of "opt-in" registration.
- Move the deadline for party affiliation changes to at least 90 days before the first primary election of the year

- Eliminate the "Opportunity to Ballot" rule and reform "fusion" voting so that candidates are not incentivised to put their name on as many ballot lines as possible in every election
- Abolish the Electoral College and elect the President by popular vote

## 11. Healthcare and Drug Policy

Introduction: All people should have the right to health care guaranteed as a human right regardless of income, employment status, or immigration status. The Green Party supports a single payer, Medicare-for-all health care system that prioritizes wellness and prevention. A market-driven health care system will continue to restrict access while costs continue to skyrocket. After full implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the New York State of Health, 1.5 million New Yorkers will still be without any health insurance and many others will be forced to spend funds they don't have to pay for health insurance that will prove to be inadequate. In addition, the classification of drug use as a criminal activity when the drugs are illegal or the use is outside the bounds of medical prescribing has led to the creation of an underground drug economy that has endangered the health and well-being of users and led to high rates of incarceration, particularly in communities of color which have been targeted disproportionately by law enforcement.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Establish a publicly funded single payer health insurance program covering all residents in the state.
- Rebalance the state Medicaid program to provide long term care in the community where people wish to receive it.
- Use the funds saved through the Medicaid Global Cap to reduce health disparities and to address the social determinants of health such as safe housing, healthful food, and opportunities for education and employment.

Drug Policy

- Promote the principle of harm reduction to reduce the harms associated with drug use.
- Provide compassionate alternatives to arrest and incarceration.
- Implement overdose prevention programs, including the use of overdose reversal medication such as naloxone.
- Fund evidence-based treatment (including buprenorphine and methadone) on demand regardless of insurance or legal status.
- Provide sterile syringes and related equipment to decrease the transmission of blood-borne diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C.
- Permit supervised injection facilities to provide sterile injection equipment, access to medical care, and treatment referrals.

## 12. Housing

Introduction: The Green Party of New York State believes all people have the right to quality, affordable ownership and rental housing in neighborhoods of their choice.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

#### Public Housing

- Construct and maintain sufficient public housing to ensure an end to homelessness.
- Provide public funding of housing to non-profit builders only.
- Replace debt financing with public capital grants, to reduce the costs of public housing construction
- Build all new public city housing to LEED Gold Standard or above.
- Eliminate compulsory work service for residents of public housing.
- Require that all public authority housing boards are elected directly by the voters in the area covered by that authority.

#### Rent Regulated Housing

- Make the state's rent control laws permanent and extended to every municipality with less than a 5% vacancy rate.
- End unfair evictions.
- Eliminate Vacancy Decontrol, which leaves new tenants of vacant housing without any rent or eviction protections.
- Strengthen rent protections for Market Rate Tenants, including prevention of sudden rent increases.
- Provide rent stabilization coverage for all Mitchell-Lama and project-based Section 8 buildings that leave or have left government supervision.
- Declare a moratorium on buyouts and give tenants right of first refusal to purchase rent-regulated apartments, at prices set by an appraisal board.
- Close so-called "Preferential Rent" and "Owner-Use" loopholes for rent-stabilized apartments.
- Establish a rent cap for persons living with HIV or AIDS, so that they pay no more than 30 percent of their disability income towards rent.
- Suspend the Maximum Base Rent system that requires rent-controlled tenants in New York City to pay 7.5 rent increases annually, and to pay for fuel and labor pass-alongs.
- Make rent increases for Major Capital Improvements temporary surcharges, so that once tenants have paid them off, the rent increase disappears.
- Reform New York City and suburban rent boards.
- Repeal the Urstadt Law, to restore Home Rule to New York City on rent regulation.
- Assist small landlords to upgrade their property with below-market value loans and technical assistance.
- Require that seniors and persons with disabilities who are tenants do not pay more than 30% of their net income in rent.

#### Source of Income

- Ban source of income discrimination in rental housing. Source of income is defined as legal, verifiable income paid directly to the tenant or his or her representative. Sources of legal income include Section 8 vouchers, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), veteran's benefits, public assistance, child support, alimony, unemployment insurance, pensions, and wages from any occupation.

#### Rent Subsidies

- The Greens support the establishment of a rent subsidy program to assist households with income below 150% of the poverty level, and which require rental subsidies in order to obtain or maintain standards of health and safety.

#### The Homeless

- Support housing for homeless individuals, including providing the opportunity to renovate abandoned buildings to be used for housing.

#### New Rental Housing

- Stop inclusionary housing and zoning that subsidizes private developers who put up luxury high rise buildings that include a few “affordable” units.
- Develop affordable low rise rental housing for low, moderate, and median income individuals and families, including housing for working class individuals/families.

#### Homeownership

- Put a moratorium on home foreclosures and require lending institutions to renegotiate mortgages to current market value for those unable to afford their present mortgages.
- Provide for a state version of the New Deal-era Home Ownership Loan Corporation, a public bank that renegotiates mortgages when other banks are unable to for financial reasons.

#### Rural Rental Assistance Program

- Provide funding to the Rural Rental Assistance Program (RRAP) at levels sufficient to provide direct rental subsidies to all eligible low-income elderly, disabled, and non-elderly large families residing in multi-family housing.

#### Mobile Home Cooperative Fund

- Establish a Mobile Home Cooperative Fund to provide loans to support cooperative ownership of mobile home parks.

#### Supportive Housing Programs

- Provide state funding at levels sufficient for the development of supportive housing for special needs and low-income tenants.

#### Community Land Trusts

- Establish community land trusts to eliminate speculation and profit-taking on the ownership of land.

#### Environmental Housing

- Require that new construction maximize the use of solar energy options. For example, require single and multi-family housing to be built to the extent possible with substantial South facing exposures free from landscaping obstructions.

## 13. Immigrant Rights

Introduction: The Green Party stands firmly for social justice for all those living in this country regardless of their immigration status. Our positions on this issue are laid out in the national platform. In addition, the U.S. must aid and admit Syrian refugees and end regime-change policies that cause displacement. In New York State, the Green Party also supports the following policies:

- The Dream Act

- Restoring the rights of immigrants to vote in local elections; and
- Providing driver's licenses for all individuals

## 14. Indigenous Nations

Introduction: The Greens support New York's recognition of Native American nations as sovereign with the right to self-determination and self-government. Treaties with sovereign nations should be respected and honored in fact and appearance. The Greens recognize the sovereignty of New York's native nations.

The Green Party supports the following policies:

- Negotiated solutions with New York's indigenous nations as preferable to court-imposed solutions
- Stopping New York State's imposition of sales taxes on sovereign nations' land
- The right of indigenous people to participate in and celebrate their own culture

## 15. Jobs and Economic Development

Introduction: All people who are able to work are entitled to a stable job at a living wage. All people should receive equal pay for the same job regardless of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, or disability. The Green Party must work to build a new economy in which workers and consumers exercise democratic control (and ownership) over economic decisions leading to a broader income distribution. In addition, work performed outside the monetary system, such as child and elder care, homemaking, voluntary community service, continuing education, civic participation, and the arts, has inherent social and economic value and is essential to a healthy, sustainable economy and peaceful communities.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Introduce a Green New Deal in New York State that shifts resources to invest in public jobs creation, including the construction of affordable housing units and other capital projects, retrofitting of existing buildings to reduce carbon emissions and improve efficiency, infrastructure to mitigate and prevent flooding of residences and vital utilities, and parks improvements. The program also could expand and improve the quality of public services in areas such as health care, child care, education, recreation, elder care, and cultural enrichment.
- Increase statewide county-by-county Equal Employment Opportunity hiring targets.
- Amend the laws governing the state's economic development tax breaks to establish accountability related to job creation, including number of jobs and wages. Economic development programs should prioritize a set of performance metrics that can be used to evaluate and monitor the success of spending in relation to key goals, including local job creation and carbon emissions benchmarks. Communities must be able to easily monitor and assess the performance of their investments.
- Reduce the value of the initial Investment Tax Credit (ITC) while increasing the number of additional years (currently set at two) in which ITC beneficiaries can qualify for an Employment Incentive Credit by maintaining or increasing employment in New York.

This will reduce (and, in some cases, eliminate) the benefits available to businesses that reduce employment while increasing the benefits to businesses that maintain or increase their levels of employment in New York State over time.

- Develop and implement a mass transit-related economic development strategy.
- Establish commercial rent control for small businesses.

#### Minimum Wage

- Enact a state minimum wage of \$15 an hour, indexed to inflation.
- Allow local governments to establish a higher minimum wage for all workers.
- End the tax subsidy for hiring teenagers at the minimum wage.
- Provide tipped workers with the same minimum wage as all workers, with no tip credit.
- Expand minimum wage protection to tipped workers.
- Increase funding for the Department of Labor so that effective enforcement of minimum wages laws can be executed.

#### Assistance for Low Income Residents

- Enact policies that target government subsidized job openings to low-income households. For example, “corporate subsidies” and public contracts should be tied to the hiring of public assistance participants and other low-income New Yorkers to fill entry-level positions.
- Restore at least \$100 million in funding to the job creation related TANF Initiatives: Career Pathways, Transitional Jobs, the Green Jobs Corps and the Wage Subsidy program.
- Ensure that a minimum of 15% of labor hours and job training hours connected with the Green Jobs, Green NY program are targeted to welfare recipients and other low-income people.
- Provide public assistance participants with adequate basic employment supports, such as child care, education, transportation and job training. Welfare benefits should be raised to a living standard above the poverty level.
- Do not require welfare recipients to accept jobs that pay wages below a living wage, drive wages down, and exploit workers for private profit at public expense. Workfare, as being a form of indentured servitude, is rejected.

#### Wage Theft

- To combat wage theft, the New York State Department of Labor must increase the number of investigators assigned to wage theft cases.
- Strengthen New York State laws against wage theft so that victims of “wage theft” will be able to secure payment from their employers of unpaid wages for work already performed. Create a “wage lien” which would provide a lien remedy for all employees. and allow victims of wage theft to attach an employer’s assets during the pendency of a court action. In addition, hold personally liable the largest owners of companies that engage in wage theft.

#### Worker Organizing

- Repeal Taft-Hartley and the Taylor Law, and all anti-union laws that restrict the rights of workers to organize and go on strike

#### Economic Democracy

- Greens seek to build an alternative economic system based on ecology and decentralization of power, an alternative system that rejects both the capitalist system that maintains private ownership over almost all production as well as the old narrative of state socialism that assumes control over industries without democratic, local decision-making. We believe the old models of capitalism (private ownership of production) and state socialism (state ownership of production) are not ecologically sound, socially just, or democratic and that both contain built-in structures that advance injustices.
- Instead, Greens will build an economy based on large-scale public works, municipalization, and workplace and community democracy. Some call this small-scale, decentralized system “ecological socialism,” “communalism,” or the “cooperative commonwealth,” but whatever the terminology, Greens believe it will help end labor exploitation, environmental exploitation, and racial, gender, and wealth inequality and bring about economic and social justice. We support experimentation at the state and local levels to develop the forms of the future democratically run economy, including a basic guaranteed income for all, state start-up funding for worker owned & operated cooperatives, and an expansion of the commons.
- Production should be democratically owned and operated by those who do the work and those most affected by production decisions. This model of worker and community control will ensure that decisions that greatly affect our lives are made in the interests of our communities, not at the whim of centralized power structures of state administrators and of capitalist CEOs and distant boards of directors. Worker-owned production, embedded in and accountable to our communities, provides an incentive for enterprises to make ecologically sound decisions in materials sourcing, waste disposal, recycling, reuse, and more. Democratic ownership of the means of production is the cure to centralization of, first, workplace power and is in turn a cure to centralization of broader economic power.
- The state of New York must provide grants and technical assistance for startup loans for cooperatives, a jobs program to place unemployed people into cooperatives, asset sharing between local cooperatives to reduce overhead and avoid market pressures to compromise, and employee buyout to convert existing businesses into cooperatives.
- The state of New York must provide a basic income to all adult residents of the state through a sovereign wealth fund like the Alaska Permanent Fund.
- The state of New York must provide grants and technical assistance for the development of the commons such as libraries of things / lending libraries for objects, product service systems such as car sharing and bike sharing, community land trusts in rural and urban areas, and commons based welfare services.
- The state of New York must provide a charter for a statewide network of local digital fabrication facilities giving community access to advanced manufacturing tools for the freedom to repair, modify, and create without having to rely on distant centralized factories and corporations. The goal should be at least one fab lab / makerspace in each county and support to community stakeholders for their effective operation.

#### Complementary Currencies

- Promote the use of local complementary currencies as a means of boosting a locality's economy. Permit the acceptance of taxes and payment for services in the local currency, the issuance of municipal bonds and use of property to back currency, the chartering of local banks and currency clearing housing, and other similar actions by localities to support such currencies.

## 16. Progressive Taxation and Fiscal Policy

Introduction: The Green Party strives for economic democracy through progressive taxation and fiscal policy. This includes a progressive income tax requiring the wealthy to pay their fair share. Restoring the more progressive state tax and revenue sharing policies of the 1970s would yield over \$30 billion in additional revenue while giving the majority of New Yorkers tax cuts. This includes stopping the rebate of the stock transfer tax and eliminating the \$7 billion a year in corporate tax breaks and subsidies. The Green Party supports restoring state revenue sharing with local communities to its previous 8% level.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Require a 50% charge on all individual and organizational funds sent to offshore tax shelters, retroactive to transactions starting Jan 1, 1990. Penalty is mandatory 10 year imprisonment for all involved individuals, CEO, COO, CFO, lawyers, fiscal personnel, and all members of boards of directors.
- Support a graduated supplemental income, or negative income tax, that would maintain all individual adult incomes above the poverty level, regardless of employment or marital status.

## 17. Public Banks

Introduction: Unfair and abusive monetary and lending practices by the banking system are a major cause of the economic problems in New York State. Many small business and community initiatives are unable to raise the capital needed to finance their work and/or are forced to pay usurious rates.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- New York should create a state-owned bank to target investment into the new technologies and businesses of a sustainable green economy. Public investment is the fastest way to jump-start private job creation.
- The state bank would be capitalized by the deposits of state tax revenues, a portion of state pension funds, and private individuals, businesses, and pension funds that want to invest in the future of New York. This capital would then be invested in productive ventures in New York State that benefit the people.
- The state bank will keep the interest collected for the benefit of the people.
- The state bank would partner with local community banks and credit unions in financing new business activity. It would also refinance the mortgages of homes facing foreclosure on a reduced-principal, fixed-rate, long-term affordable basis. It should also have a technical assistance arm to develop worker and consumer cooperatives. Cooperatives

are how we can own our jobs because they are locally owned, democratically controlled, and have no incentives to move jobs and capital out of state.

## **18. Public Power**

Introduction: The Green Party's ten key values note that 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.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Facilitating the conversion of investor-owned utility companies to a publicly-owned and democratically run operation that meets the energy needs of each local municipality, including cooperatives.
- Democratize fossil-fuel producing industries so profits can be used to ramp up funding for renewable energy sources, conservation initiatives, and worker re-training as these industries are phased out.

## **19. Public Safety, Criminal Justice and Prison Reform**

Introduction: The best path to public safety involves a strategic approach to grow educated, civically-engaged residents living in strong neighborhoods and healthy communities where residents work with law enforcement to assess problems and craft responses to those problems. All individuals, regardless of age, ethnicity, race, skin color, gender, ability status, gender preference, and economic status, must be equal in the eyes of the law. People with criminal records, especially those incarcerated for drug related offenses, suffer lifelong consequences, including discrimination in housing, education, and employment after their release from incarceration.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

- Repeal the Rockefeller Drug Laws and release all individuals currently serving time for nonviolent drug offenses. Drug prohibition has only created a criminal industrial complex that targets poor and already disenfranchised people. We should legalize drugs and treat substance abuse as a community health issue. Steps toward reconciliation should include: expunging the criminal convictions of drug offenders, providing community treatment for substance abusers, and providing large scale pardons to individuals with prior drug convictions.
- Transition out (release) prisoners convicted only of a victimless crime such as minor drug offenses and develop a system to assist with this transition, including providing many jobs.
- Find alternatives to prison settings for persons with mental illnesses convicted of crimes who are not a danger to themselves or others.
- Ban the box on employment and housing applications so people can proceed with their lives and have equal opportunity to community options.

- End the practice of colleges such as SUNY using criminal history to screen applicants during the admission process.
- Expand alternatives to incarceration of nonviolent offenders, such as probation or work release for paying fines, victim restitution, and community service.
- State funding of county Public Defender offices to insure no defendant is denied competent legal counsel for lack of money. Cities should have the same rights as towns to draw juries of their peers from their municipal jurisdictions instead of the surrounding county.
- Support the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act (A08588 / S06466). It would virtually eliminate a practice that is both dangerous and torturous, while protecting the safety of incarcerated individuals and corrections officers.
- Reject life without parole sentences: They fail to recognize the human capacity to change and fully appreciate the value of each human life;
- Prioritize and provide resources for the prosecution of financial crime (aka “white-collar crime”), as the source of much more damage to society and individual lives than so-called “street crime.”
- Immediately terminate “stop-and-frisk” and broken windows, quota-based policing practices
- Justice for victims of racially-biased policing and police brutality that targets communities of color
- Provide access to education at all levels to incarcerated people in all of New York State's prisons. There are adjudicated juveniles who are court-placed or committed to youth facilities who are eligible for and would benefit from expanded college access. Any initiatives for incarcerated adults must also include juveniles.
- Given the widespread research concerning adolescent brain development we support raising the age of adult criminal responsibility from 16 to 21. NY is one of only 2 states in the country which criminalizes our youth at the age of 16. Children of 16 years are adjudicated in adult, criminal courts, held in county jails and serve their time in the adult prisons.
- Divest public funds from private correctional companies. Many pension funds include private correctional companies in their portfolios. Private prisons are much more dangerous and do not respond to medical or mental health needs because these services are expensive.
- Restore voting rights to all persons convicted of a felony while incarcerated and on parole.

## **20. Public Welfare/Human Rights**

Introduction: The Green Party of New York State puts people before profit and asserts their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness:

- All NY residents have the right to food, housing, medical care, jobs that pay a living wage, education and support in times of hardship.

- Provide the equivalent of a living wage income and adequate benefits to those who are not able to work.
- New York State must honor and fulfil all treaty obligations that entitle native peoples to land, water, food, hunting rights, fishing rights, health care, housing, education and other vital necessities. Full reparations to indigenous peoples for historical injustices.
- The Green Party supports the right of those with disabilities, including the right to voting, access to health care, enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act, support for community and home care, and to an adequate income.
- Excessive caseloads for social workers and healthcare providers undermine quality of care, jeopardize patient and client safety, and are the result of unjust budget cuts. Services must be fully-funded and pay a living wage to care providers.

## 21. Transportation

Introduction: The Green Party supports a transportation ecosystem that is ecologically sustainable. Mass transit is an integral part of that ecosystem and a society build for human need. It must be efficient, affordable, reliable, and accessible. Automobile use and its corollaries -- air pollution, climate change, suburbanization, road and highway proliferation, urban neighborhood destruction -- are hallmarks of how transit decisions made under a regime of urban industrial capitalism can endanger the planet and humanity with it. Transitioning to a regime of post-capitalist economic democracy requires intelligent mass transit choices that reduce environmental costs to a minimum and prioritize the needs of working class New Yorkers over the wealthy.

The Green Party of New York State supports the following policies:

### Mass Transit

- Develop a statewide mass transit plan that in the long run makes mass transit more economical to use than private vehicles.
- Increase federal funding to expand public transit service access to underserved areas. Federal funding covers 80 percent to 90 percent of new highway projects but only 60 percent of public transit projects. Federal contributions are often much lower in practice. Nationally, federal investment sufficient to bring the country's public transit systems to a state of good repair would create 2.5 million jobs over six years, including more than 16,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector alone in New York State.
- Fully fund the \$26.1 billion 2015-2019 MTA capital program, including restoration of the state's contribution to at least 20 percent of the program's cost.
- Commit funding to expand mass transit to connect the corridor between Buffalo, Albany, and New York City and adjacent cities with high-speed passenger rail.
- Support indigenous New York rail companies, to design & build the passenger rail cars.
- Build high-density webs of light-rail and bus rapid-transit in urban-suburban corridors across the state to reduce automobile use as much as possible. Fund them to allow them to be free or low-cost.

- Award businesses and residents a tax credit to incentivize the use of public transit and biking, based on the cost saved from road repair, decrease in air pollution, and greenhouse gas pollution.
- Transition to emissions-free buses and taxis (e.g., by vehicle electrification).
- Make mass transit accessible to the disabled by installing elevators in all stations.
- Increase access to transit options for the disabled, including paratransit and taxis.
- Designate voting members representing transit users to local boards overseeing transit systems.

#### Freight

- Re-prioritize transportation planning and funding from highways to railroads for transportation and shipping.

#### Motor Vehicles

- Create a goal of car-free cities across the state by 2030.
- Transition to emissions-free vehicles in rural areas where public transit is not a viable option.
- Encourage car-pooling and expand the use of highway HOV lanes.

#### Pedestrians and Bicyclists

- Encourage the choice of human powered transportation, by constructing pedestrian malls, greenways and walking paths, establishing bicycle lanes on most streets and roads, and making some streets and roads bicycle only.
- Allow local governments to use state road & bridge money for bike and pedestrian paths.
- Improve pedestrian facilities in urban areas by reclaiming paved open space and street space.
- Improve bicycle parking by creating secure bicycle storage and parking facilities in our cities and at all transit stations.
- Expand upon provisions in the state budget for funding Complete Streets projects and other cycling infrastructure and programs, through discretionary funding and project grants. Actively pursue funding at the Federal level, through relevant programs such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. Provide support to project applications for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants.
- Legally recognize various forms of electric bicycles as bicycles for various purposes, as in California with the passing of AB-1096.
- Revise vehicle and traffic laws to better accommodate bicycles, through modifications such as improved safe passing laws with a fixed passing distance that increases with speed, addition of rules in relation to stop signs and lights such as those in Idaho, clarification of classification of bike lanes as preferential lanes as per the MUTCD, elimination of the mandate to use separated facilities, and expansion of the exceptions to or elimination of the law regarding ride position in the lane.